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Beyond the
Pandemic:

**Leaving No
One Behind**

Edited by

Uzma Tariq Haroon | Imrana Niazi | Sarah Siddiq Aneel

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Preface*

'Leaving No One behind' is the spirit of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For simplicity's sake, let me categorise these interlinked and mutually non-exclusive Goals into three categories.

The first six Goals: eradicating poverty, hunger, and disease, ensuring quality education, gender equality, and safe drinking water/sanitation facilities for all, are what we want to achieve – these are our common destination, or what you may call, the unfinished Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, the predecessors of SDGs). The following six Goals define how to reach these. By using clean and affordable energy for inclusive economic growth based on innovation and infrastructure, we can reduce inequalities and make our communities and cities sustainable. The principles of sustainable consumption and production are the drivers to achieve the first six Goals for all without leaving anyone behind. The last five Goals define what would be under threat if we don't reach our common destination using the drivers mentioned above - we would face more climate disasters that threaten not only life on land and below water but also a peaceful co-existence on this planet.

Some criticise these Goals as over-ambitious. Others point out the global community's failure to perform on most of the eight MDGs. Irrespective of the number, we first need to remember that no country can achieve any of them while ignoring the rest. It is a 'take all or leave all' package. Hence, the SDGs cannot be achieved by a single country, ministry, or actor (public or private). Achieving this collective Agenda requires an integrated and synchronised approach from all concerned. This requires a 'whole of government' and a 'whole of society' approach.

Not following this approach may lead to a situation where often well-intended efforts become self-contradictory. For instance, we can be in a situation where one ministry or department is

* Based on Suleri, A.Q. 2022, 'The Spirit of SDGs', *The News on Sunday*, 11 September, <<https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/989849-the-spirit-of-sdgs>>.

trying to conserve the environment blocking all avenues for economic growth, and another is trying to promote growth, compromising the health of our planet.

The once-in-a-century Pandemic halted SDGs' progress and instead reversed the gains on many fronts. However, there is a silver lining to the COVID-19 situation. The world has learnt, especially the developing countries (albeit the hard way), that ignoring social sector development and not investing in human development, in other words, in SDGs, is no longer an option. To avoid devastation from the virus, the developing countries had to increase their spending on improving health infrastructure, strengthen their social safety nets and diversify their livelihood options.

The rich countries initially tried to insulate themselves by closing their borders and not sharing personal protective equipment, ventilators, vaccines, etc. However, gradually they realised that no one is safe from COVID-19 in the world until everyone is. This realisation then made them share their vaccines with developing countries.

In fact, the expedited development of vaccines, which proved effective in containing the Pandemic, is a ray of hope that new approaches, especially the use of technology, can help in accelerating progress toward controlling infectious diseases, ending poverty, fighting inequality, and reducing the impacts of climate change.

Learning from what has been working in our journey towards attaining the SDGs, what has not worked and why, especially during the Pandemic, in order to find tangible solutions for the way forward so that we leave no one behind, was the theme of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute's Twenty-fourth annual Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) held in December 2021.

Over 230 delegates from Afghanistan, Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Canada, Ecuador, Fiji, France, Germany, India, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States not only participated in the 28 concurrent panels and 10 plenaries, but also actively engaged in the side-line meetings and had informal interactions during this first hybrid SDC and tried to address the question of how to compensate for the missed progress on the SDGs so that Agenda 2030 does not turn into a mere dream.

The anthology in hand contains not only peer-reviewed papers presented at that Conference, but also the vision and commitment of the Government of Pakistan at the highest level (from the President of Pakistan, the then-Prime Minister of Pakistan, and then-Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation) on how to move beyond the Pandemic.

A synthesis of Conference deliberations is that natural catastrophes such as Pandemics (and extreme weather) can be stopped from turning into human disasters through good sets of policies and practices. The critical requirement is to be 'prepared' for such catastrophes by investing (both financially and in terms of policy priorities) in the first six Goals of the SDGs. Reaching our destination (first six Goals) through the potential game changers (the subsequent six Goals) will build resilience in societies and communities.

The Pandemic teaches us that 'Leaving No One Behind' not only means taking everyone along on this path to Sustainable Development; it also means no one should live in a false sense of having achieved sustainable development until everyone has attained the same level of development. No one is safe unless everyone is safe.

My sincere thanks and profound gratitude to Team SDPI in general and Team SDC under the leadership of Ms Uzma T. Haroon in particular for flawlessly organising this Conference and compiling the anthology.



Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri
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Islamabad, Pakistan

7 November 2022

Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind - Mapping Policy Imperatives*

Curated by Ubaid ur Rehman Zia & Ahmed Khaver**

* These policy recommendations were derived from the 38 sessions at Sustainable Development Policy Institute's Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference held in December 2021.

** While rapporteurs in each session assisted in taking down key recommendations, they were curated by Ubaid ur Rehman Zia and Ahmed Khaver. Both are Research Associates at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan.

The Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) is one of South Asia's largest congregation of academics, practitioners and legislators in the field of Sustainable Development. From the 38 sessions of the Twenty-fourth SDC, ideas and policy-relevant solutions have been curated thematically in the following areas in the hope that they find their place within the right policy corridors at the right time:

Addressing Climate Change and Environment Crisis in a Post-COVID Scenario

- ◇ Considering that sustainability is being mainstreamed into the development agenda of Pakistan, the corporate sector needs to be mobilised, and businesses must upskill their leaders and workforce to be 'foundationally competent' and equip themselves for navigating the SD agenda.
- ◇ To ensure compliance with Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Pakistan must design a current timeframe (identifying emissions in 2021-22 and the decarbonisation potential) and then mirror the best practices around financial guidelines to commit to annual reductions.
- ◇ COP26 revived the carbon market, allowing carbon trading between different countries. Since an additional charge on carbon trading is guaranteed for emerging countries, Pakistan should seek a share of finance obtained from carbon transactions and then have businesses pre-position themselves as this could further the cause of doing projects that can serve as carbon sinks.
- ◇ To bridge the gap between public and private sector organisations around the clean energy development agenda, there is a need to develop a 'Parliamentary Caucus' with an appropriately defined working framework, goals, and action plans for the short-, medium-, and long-term targets.
- ◇ Pakistan can develop a 'Joint Corporate Pledge' backed by its corporate sector to bridge the gap between public and private sector organisations.
- ◇ The provision of electricity to 50 million population living without it would require developing off-grid solutions in remote and rural areas. Along with offsetting the cost of grid expansion, this would lead to local employment and lowering the losses of transmission and distribution.
- ◇ To mobilise private sector investments in clean energy, the public sector would have to play a critical role in leveraging and de-risking the needed finance and accelerating the green capital market. The Government of Pakistan (GoP) should use fiscal policies to promote the development of green finance and use fiscal funding to guide credit funding and social capital into green investment, green credit, and green securities.

- ◇ Meeting climate targets requires international cooperation. This includes sustainable finance, technical support, transfer and exchange of low-carbon technologies, and environmental goods.
- ◇ Decarbonisation in Pakistan needs to go beyond just the power sector to sustainable fuel consumption in the power and transport sector. Through collaboration with developed countries, Pakistan needs to harvest the opportunity of hydrogen-based fuels.
- ◇ Pakistan needs to have parliamentary oversight to see how climate mitigation measures are working for the country. Effective monitoring measures are required to add value to climate change policies.
- ◇ Considering the variation in climate change impacts on different population groups, climate justice must also address issues around a just transition by considering marginalised communities in the policymaking process.

Building a Resilient Health Infrastructure and Cold Supply Chains

- ◇ Pakistan's health spending needs to shift solely from curative measures to preventive measures in the longer run (such as vaccination campaigns).
- ◇ Social support should be strengthened at the community level and social support groups and counselling services should be established at the state level to provide psychosocial support to families.
- ◇ Considering that there is a comparatively smaller number of women who are vaccinated, planning and deployment of vaccine delivery must be gender sensitive. The reasons for fewer women being vaccinated must be analysed, and awareness campaigns should be run to overcome this distribution.
- ◇ Reproductive health and family planning should be classified as essential services to ensure that they remain a priority even during a crisis. Experts on maternal and neonatal health should be included in COVID-19 response task forces in addition to infectious disease experts.
- ◇ There is a need to create a multisectoral effort with collaboration between the health sector and non-health sector to address issues related to sanitation, nutrition and safe water.
- ◇ For a sustainable transition of the health system, financing institutions, corporates, and multilateral banks must recognise climate and health as a priority focus.
- ◇ To ensure a safe and healthy environment for children's growth, there is a need for authentic and credible data relevant to child-related SDG indicators.
- ◇ For a resilient health system, there is a need to create an observatory mechanism that can enable continued support to all relevant stakeholders in research and implementation of climate change and health adaptation plans.

- ◇ Health units and medical facilities must be upgraded and facilitated with essential medicines and nutrition systems to cure health issues and diseases resulting from climate change.
- ◇ For mitigating tobacco use, the tax administration should monitor illicit trade and ‘quitting facilitation centres’ can be established to gauge tobacco dependency along with the introduction of behavioural modification techniques.

Clean Energy Transition and Green Recovery of Pakistan

- ◇ Energy policymakers of Pakistan need to focus on energy efficiency and conservation measures, review the existing ‘Net-Metering Policy’ and consider a mechanism for cost recovery from prosumers for network usage, include T&D costs in its economic assessment, and consider Levelised Cost of Storage (LCOS) for grid-connected and home energy storage systems. This would lead to medium- and long-term socioeconomic benefits.
- ◇ In power system planning, the National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) needs to reflect on operational constraints in long-term system planning and have a higher granularity of grid modelling. Further, for system planning for climate neutrality, there is a need for integrated modelling of the power sector with heat, gas, and transport systems.
- ◇ The ‘National Electricity Policy’ requires the next iteration of the Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan (IGCEP) to be accompanied by the Transmission Expansion Plan (TEP), which will allow for a better comparison of electricity generation and transmission costs.
- ◇ The role of energy efficiency and conservation in green recovery has been missing from the landscape of energy planning. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has provided a financing window for renewable energy, and the same needs to be designed for energy efficiency and conversion techniques.
- ◇ A clean energy transition agenda for the corporate sector should revolve around clean energy targeting rapid penetration of renewable energy in the system; clean materials, i.e., moving away from plastics, and providing an enabling ecosystem to enable youth for climate action in Pakistan.
- ◇ Sustainable finance must be secured at the project level for implementing partners, and at the community level for household impact and adaptation.
- ◇ To overcome long-term financial lock-in of the power sector, Energy Transition Mechanism (ETM) project in collaboration with Asian Development Bank (ADB) needs to be extensively utilised especially for the buyout of coal-based power plants.

- ◇ Authorities must update national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory and prepare for accounting Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- ◇ The government should focus more on developing a robust public-oriented green policy to enhance the adaptation capacity of vulnerable communities to prepare them for climate-induced risks.
- ◇ Management of already established parks should be focused rather than establishing new ones, and the government should involve the public in developing green initiatives with proper management plans and follow-up.
- ◇ Pakistan should invest in research to evaluate and map co-benefits provided by blue carbon ecosystems.
- ◇ Authorities should focus on improving land management by better agronomic practices and tillage, judicious fertilizer use, and restoring degraded rangelands.

Public Policy Management and Social Protection Schemes in Pakistan

- ◇ Pakistan's social protection schemes need to go beyond cash distribution to the provision of productive assets among people via socioeconomic bargains. Land distribution schemes need to be developed through stakeholder harmonisation along with the assistance of development banks such as Zarai Taraqati Bank (ZTB).
- ◇ In the wake of economic downfall due to COVID-19, public sector organisations need to develop long-term synergies and harmony with all relevant stakeholders, including academia, CSOs, and private sector organisations, to ensure a better response through social protection schemes.
- ◇ 'Quantum of need' of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) beneficiaries needs to be reduced by dignifying them and considering them as proper customers. This could lead to long-term benefits and better funding recoveries than conventional techniques.
- ◇ Considering that public policy management is highly based on stakeholder perspective analysis, it should be carefully analysed how they feel and react to interventions. An assessment framework could be developed through constitutional networks, parliamentary proceedings, interprovincial dialogues, and communication from top to bottom.
- ◇ To ensure that rural poor have direct access to procurement bags without involvement of intermediaries, there is a need to develop technological capabilities and a database for low-income potential beneficiaries.

- ◇ Rural poor protections schemes should involve capacity building and technological interventions to ensure adequate water supply among farmers, both at the upper and lower streams.
- ◇ Social protection in Pakistan requires collectively mobilising the voice of the poor by building their institutional frameworks (agencies) and empowering their supporting lobbies.
- ◇ There is a need to develop a national ‘Social Protection Council’ that can have representation from all agencies so they can sit together and design programmes in a way that utilises resources more efficiently.
- ◇ For efficient social protection schemes, the government needs to develop benchmarks of value to measure each intervention. This valuation should be built around the inclusion, participation, and governance of local communities.
- ◇ There is a need for an integrated system for social protection, development and reforms in order to create a centralised system governed by an overarching entity with access to required data. Further, there is a need for clear devolution of responsibilities under the 18th Amendment for the local government.
- ◇ Public policy experts should review current practices to shift from only income-generation modules to full packages of health and education.
- ◇ Mental health issues and socio-psychological problems need to be addressed through community mobilisation rather than just through the provision of cash assistance.
- ◇ Pakistan’s public social protection schemes should be expanded to cover climate vulnerable households, and anticipatory actions are needed to support vulnerable communities before the full impact of a climate hazard is felt.

Local Governance System and Social Inclusiveness in Pakistan

- ◇ The Constitution of Pakistan has incorporated the word of ‘devolution’, but the district tier has been omitted. There is a need to add a chapter in the Constitution that could provide the explanation of devolving powers to the lowest tier of local government.
- ◇ Local governments need to be financially independent for efficient service delivery. In this regard, a line needs to be drawn so that the provincial governments do not intrude in the decision-making process of local governments. The state should define the substantial areas in the Act while the rules of business should be left to the local government.
- ◇ Marginalisation of minorities and women in local government needs to be tackled through amendments in existing discriminatory clauses and bringing behavioural change in the country through talks and consultative sessions with relevant authorities.

- ◇ There is a need to introduce a direct voting mechanism for marginalised groups at the community level due to the low capacity to understand and navigate the standard voting system.
- ◇ For effective leadership, there is a need for decentralisation below the district level. Some community-driven initiatives must be launched at local levels for inclusiveness.
- ◇ The role of Union Councils (UCs) must be re-thought. Institutions must work with inclusiveness to provide services on equity basis to all citizens irrespective of gender, age or socioeconomic class.
- ◇ Local government must be re-structured, and the gaps of gender and age inequality must be reduced. Voices of the marginalised must be heard and brought to the front for a more informed local governance system.
- ◇ The leadership qualities in the women councillors must be polished through training and workshops with separate facility centres. Further, the syllabus of the training must be sound and up to date to strengthen women's capacities at the grassroot level.
- ◇ The judiciary needs to ensure that the litigation system at the local body level is empowered through speedy disposal of cases.
- ◇ There is a need to allocate sufficient budgets to the local bodies once their sectoral plans have been documented.

Addressing Gender Inequality and Women Empowerment

- ◇ Uptake of digital economy would require a multistakeholder approach for the capacity building of the labour market and integrate a gender perspective in policy planning.
- ◇ To create a friendly business environment for women, post-COVID recovery should promote laws regarding workplace and digital harassment along with increased funding opportunities for women-owned small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).
- ◇ To combat the vulnerabilities for single mothers, there is a need to build safety networks that provide social support, financial support, public paid work opportunities, and health cards to them.
- ◇ To support female-owned small and micro enterprises and other small-scale businesses which suffered during the Pandemic, government and financing institutions should provide marketing training to female entrepreneurs to attract more customers.
- ◇ Monitoring and implementation of existing laws to tackle Gender-Based Violence needs more attention than designing new ones.
- ◇ Public sector entities can introduce a digital media campaign to highlight the basic rights of humans. The policy gaps around issues such as violence and extremism need to be addressed through a multistakeholder engagement approach.

Promoting Culture and Tourism in Pakistan

- ◇ The design of the academic curriculum, particularly of cultural and social studies, should be left with provincial governments as they would be able to incorporate the historical and cultural context of their provinces in a better manner.
- ◇ The focus of tourism in Pakistan needs to be shifted from Northern Areas to the south of the country as Punjab and Sindh also have a rich history that can be promoted.
- ◇ In the absence of opportunities to share art and music owing to the cancellation of festivals and related events during the Pandemic, social media should be utilised as an important tool for promoting regional folk music and artists.

Poverty Alleviation and Capacity Building of Marginalised Communities

- ◇ Promoting education in vulnerable groups of the community require academia and think tanks to play a critical role in promoting 'Community Learning Programmes' that provide a safe and cordial environment of learning.
- ◇ The Ministry of Education and Information Technology departments can collaborate to introduce digital technology and digital education to overcome the barrier of discrimination and mismanagement.
- ◇ Through public-private engagement, there is a need to launch a 'Teachers Training Programme' at the middle/secondary level to enhance and encourage education, especially among young girls.
- ◇ Food system resilience in South Asian countries should be improved through the digitalisation of food supply chains, social safety meters, and better access to farm credits.
- ◇ To address the employment losses due to COVID-19, both the public and corporate sectors need to address job security issues and come up with stimulus schemes and a clear-cut agenda to put such people back in the labour market.
- ◇ For engaging youth in economic growth and development, Public-Private Partnership models must be adopted to design capacity building programmes that enable them to adapt to current market opportunities.
- ◇ For a holistic public transformation approach that caters for all population groups, the public sector must develop micro and nano finance structures not only in urban, but also in rural areas.
- ◇ For rapid upscaling of employment opportunities in rural areas, the government needs to engage with the private sector to create better infrastructure and an enabling environment for technology support.

- ◇ To overcome poverty challenges, social change linked with family planning must be integrated into the policies and initiatives on poverty alleviation and social safety nets.
- ◇ For post-COVID economic recovery in rural areas, there is a need to deploy active labour market policies, capacity building of locals and subsidising the employment and support to small businesses.
- ◇ The government must provide an enabling environment for rural areas through temporary income support, increased investments in agriculture and environment guarantee schemes.
- ◇ Enhancing the technical and vocational skills of youth requires access to affordable public services and formulation of innovative strategies and policy actions.
- ◇ Considering the importance of financial inclusion of youth for economic empowerment, there is a need to upscale skills development, vocational training, entrepreneurship support, social empowerment, and political participation.

Service-Led Growth and a Digital Economy in Post-COVID Scenario

- ◇ Uptake of the digital economy will take a whole-of-government and multistakeholder approach to integrate a gender perspective in policy planning on the digital economy and equip women with digital skills.
- ◇ The public sector needs to be engaged in developing digital platforms that specifically targets female entrepreneurs and make digital spaces safe for women.
- ◇ Pakistan's digital trade policy needs to address issues around data protection and privacy followed by electronic trade facilitation and consumer protection.
- ◇ For sustainable and inclusive trade, mutual concern and economic strengths need to be addressed by enabling SMEs to engage through the International Trade Centre (ITC).
- ◇ To develop a digital economy and a digital silk road in Pakistan, the country needs to step up exchange and cooperation on digital technologies, such as new infrastructure, mobile payments, e-commerce networks, smart factories and digital electronics.
- ◇ To boost global competitiveness in service-led growth, there is a need to exploit the complementary linkages between services export and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).
- ◇ To increase employability, there is a need to focus on both short- and long-term interventions that can boost economic growth.
- ◇ Service-led development would require major development around traceability, profitability, and capacity building.
- ◇ The recovery plan of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) from COVID-19 should address building their digital capacity and tailor-made integrated solutions, which ensures that the recovery is inclusive and greener.

- ◇ For contingency plans to deal with the lasting impacts of COVID-19, recovery needs to have a more comprehensive approach. As a global community, there is a need to find ways around lockdowns and travel bans through smart lockdowns, smart travel restrictions and developing better capacities.
- ◇ Public sector financing that is committed to green build-up should be strategically used to mobilise private sector investment. This can be facilitated through the correct value proposition of biodiversity and climate risks.
- ◇ To ensure progress on SDGs in post-COVID scenario, green financing and data restructuring should be mobilised for green projects and digital transformation.

Social Footprint of Central Banking and Monetary Policy in Pakistan

- ◇ To address inflation targets, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) needs to be independent of interference from all institutions except the Parliament. However, there must be accountability and transparency in its policies so people can understand the impact it will have on them.
- ◇ To address the challenges faced by the business community due to frequent changes in monetary policy, Pakistan must establish a long-term plan and bring back inflation monitors.
- ◇ Public policymaking process must be gender-inclusive to ensure that the interests of marginalised communities are safe and catered for.

Role of Stakeholder Engagement and Evidence-based Research

- ◇ Recovery from COVID-19 requires think tanks and academia to provide robust and rapid assessment to bring forward innovative solutions, evidence-based research and policies.
- ◇ Think tanks need to broaden their scope from only Government to on-ground influencers, CSOs, academia, and the corporate sector.
- ◇ Think tanks need to invest in human capital and be labelled as ‘Cohorts’ to allow them to advocate a common cause and be the first choice to get consultations from.
- ◇ To address data availability and transparency, procurement systems need to be made more simpler, rapid, and general such that the data and evidence can be used and reused.
- ◇ Data and evidence collection needs to go beyond the replication of government data. There is a need for aggregating the evidence in public policies and research institutions must take the lead and form a consortium of all relevant stakeholders.

Addressing National Security and Regional Development in Wake of the Global Pandemic

- ◇ Controlling the spread of COVID-19 and its upcoming variants require an inter-country approach through re-strategising a common agenda and joint collaborations.
- ◇ To build around its SDGs targets, there is a need for a broader focus on Research and Development (R&D) and joint learning through inter-country coordination.
- ◇ To build around the SDGs and international commitments, there is a need to ensure that the pledged support from countries is translated into actual actions and assistance of the target states.
- ◇ For regional security, the major focus and narrative needs to shift from ‘preventing the creation of refugees’ towards thinking about ‘how they can be assisted’ in host countries.
- ◇ To ensure economic and political stability in South Asia, regional connectivity corridors need to be further explored.
- ◇ To alleviate the economic and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, international banking channels and financing institutions must extend their aid programmes.
- ◇ Regional and global assistance to Afghanistan needs to go beyond humanitarian assistance as there is a high risk of illegal trade developments in the region.
- ◇ To address public level governance issues, the Afghan Government needs to put inclusive efforts to provide basic human rights followed by the rule of law.
- ◇ A Joint Working Group on Green China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) should be formulated, supported by the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC), to accelerate Pakistan’s green development ambitions, including green energy cooperation, green finance cooperation, green transport hub, green buildings and infrastructure.
- ◇ Under the second phase of CPEC, Pakistan must mobilise the opportunity of industrial growth by establishing Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and initiating skill and technology transfer programmes.

- ◇ Inaugural Speech
- ◇ Welcome Remarks
- ◇ Introductory Remarks
- ◇ Ehsaas Programme & Leaving No One Behind
Agenda
- ◇ Conference Message

Inaugural Speech*

Dr Arif Alvi

President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

* This is the Provisional Transcript of the speech delivered by the President of Pakistan at the Inaugural Plenary of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute's Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference titled 'Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind' on 6 December 2021 at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad, Pakistan. The speech has been transcribed by Zaina Noor, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan.

Ladies and Gentlemen, اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ

It gives me great pleasure to be here today at the Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference organised by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). I would like to congratulate Ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel, Chairman, Board of Governors and Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, the Executive Director, for organising this Conference.

It is a human trait that we like to keep increasing our knowledge and our experiences, learning from the outcomes and [focus on] how we can improve our performance.

During the Pandemic, there has been excellent performance by all the departments and the ministries under Dr [Sania] Nishtar. I must congratulate her. I am very impressed by the fact that during the COVID-19 crisis we worked with data, [through which] we were able to disburse billions of rupees to the specified, targeted population to make it easy [for them] to go through the Pandemic. There was a fair and equitable distribution, nobody claimed [or brought up any complaint] about the distribution process. There may have been small glitches here and there, however, you did a splendid job Dr Nishtar, so thank you very much.

What I have learnt from all of you today is that the way Pakistan handled the COVID-19 crisis [well], the entire society worked on it. The Prime Minister laid down a compassionate ground in which he did not opt for a total lockdown. Reflecting upon it, he was the only leader who said they could not afford a complete lockdown. People were against it, claiming if not done so, people will die on the streets, but he insisted on the smart lockdown. Implementation of which was based on data driven decision-making and people were helped accordingly.

In doing so, the government spent money from its own pocket, [keeping in mind that] it is not a rich government; therefore, it is a huge compassionate effort by the Government of Pakistan. Moreover, members of private sector and industrialists also contributed in these efforts to help the government. However, the situation created by COVID-19 has had its aftereffects due to instability in the supply chain. [Alongside], think tanks continue to come up with solutions to the problems being faced by the common man.

“ *We find it amazing that our nation, which the world deems as ‘illiterate and stubborn’, complied with the SoPs given by the government. [This comes in stark comparison to the current situation of] the Western World, where protests on restrictions are a daily occurrence.*

The Government of Pakistan initiated efforts for food security, tried to elevate people from poverty, held massive vaccination campaigns, and developed a structure which allowed the citizens to connect with the Government. This structure, which includes location identification through telephone and response through appropriate measures [will aid] in future preventive campaigns. We have come to realise that curative treatments are very expensive, we cannot build tertiary care hospitals throughout the country, but it is easier for us to adopt preventive measures. In the last couple of days, you must have come across the news of Pakistan being the fourth largest country with diabetic patients. We can overcome this too with preventive measures. COVID-19 has prepared us to investigate other illnesses and taking preventative measures against them.

Moreover, this Pandemic has boosted electronic education. I say this on every platform, the tools of electronic education have always been available, and Pakistan has needed them desperately, even though the tools have existed for the past 15 years, we did not adopt them.

“ *COVID-19, involuntarily, made us adopt distant learning. In the future, it will definitely be cheaper to have distant learning than physical brick and mortar learning. I, myself, promote virtual universities and education. From think tanks, trendsetting leadership will emerge which will recognise trends and take advantage of them.*

The philosophy of ‘Leaving No One Behind’, [is one for] the developing countries. [Echoing man’s struggle] the address by the Pope [Jorge Mario Bergoglio], delivered recently, recognised the misery that is created in the world and when people try to flee from it, they are confined and not allowed to escape. There is a contradiction, a hypocrisy in the world, [which requires a solution].

“ *I believe the efforts of Pakistan in the field of digital economy will help elevate our deprived sectors towards integration into the mainstream economy.*

Women, [in the area of digital economy] play a vital role. I believe that the disbursements of *Ehsaas Programme* were provided to women, as soon as their bank accounts were functioning, the money was automatically transferred into the accounts. In such a way, we can empower our women. The loan schemes like *Kamyaab Jawan* for the youth and the loan schemes for women will enhance skill development which will, in turn, uplift our deprived sectors.

We have to get out of this charity situation and [work to acquire] a position where the citizens themselves participate in the economy. The government would only accommodate in situation of crisis. COVID-19 not only shook us, but it also showed us ways to improve ourselves as a nation. Powerful nations are those that recognise these ways and their decision-makers act on them.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to put forth another discussion in front of you. I always say to think tanks: *Who is the buyer of your ideas?*

We have such intellect, looking around people I know, but the question is: *The papers you publish, is there anyone who buys them?*

That is a challenge you need to overcome.

Your shop is attractive, the product you are selling is immaculate, [and you need to sell your product] where it's supposed to be sold. I urge think tanks to market themselves to the right buyers. And where are these buyers? Your buyers are the decision-makers, the people sitting in the Parliament, the people in the government and the bureaucracy.

“ *If the people who have nothing to do with decision-making buy your product, the knowledge output might be great, however, the impact-based output is lost.*

In the past, the British took riches out of the subcontinent, causing the fourth biggest economy of the world to collapse. We overcame it then, but now a new kind of colonialism has emerged, neo-colonialism. Due to money laundering, money from poor countries is being transferred to the world's Swiss banks. This was all kosher till the late 80s [and] early 90s. The problem only arose when these entities hit the revenues of the Western states, only then was it not kosher anymore. However, this is something for all of you to think about.

“ *Stabilisation with respect to economy, thought and intellect, is of the utmost importance.*

Total devastation of the world happened on fake news. Iraq got destroyed, all nations took part in it, the United Nations took part in it. Same thing happened with Libya. ‘Regime change’, a new terminology the West came up with. What happened with Syria? Afghanistan? Is this not hatred towards humanity?

I am forced to think that the mixture that makes up a human does, in fact, contain hatred.

The West is of that thinking that ‘I must protect myself, the others may die’. They also decided that they will not fight each other, there is no law, no regime which decided this. But the irony is, they destroyed nations, but no one bats an eye.

The crisis that Afghanistan is in today, the Pope talked about the Mediterranean being a refugee dump, but the country [i.e., Pakistan] which has been providing refuge [to the war-torn Afghan refugees] for over 40 years without any complaints is not being talked about. None of our politicians ever said the refugees are not welcome.

We have all the ingredients to make this country strong in all aspects. We do not need to ask anyone for anything going forward. We can stand on our own feet. We must educate our people.

The world order of morality is calling out to us. The old world order – Westphalian world order – was decided after a 30-year and 100-year war in which it was decided that nations were allowed to keep weapons, however, they need to be controlled. Hence, the emergence of the United Nations.

“ *But now, weaponry is outdated, now social media is a huge weapon which has the power to change the thinking of countries. Fake news is a massive weapon.*

I do not know what will happen in the future, but I do know that if my Pakistani people understand the difference between fake and real news, we will succeed.

“ *We, as a nation, need to understand that fake news has the capability of destroying thinking power. It is easier to devastate small nations with fake news these days. The possibilities are very high since we are under continuous attack.*

I believe, we can at least learn to understand how to be cautious and how to elevate our country using the philosophy of ‘Leaving No One Behind’. Adopting this would change Pakistan in just under one generation, which mind you is not a very long period of time, towards a far better future.

And this is where think tanks and their contributions are very important.

Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Welcome Remarks*

Ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel
Chairperson, Board of Governors,
Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan

* These welcome remarks were delivered at the Inaugural Plenary of Sustainable Development Policy Institute's Twenty-Fourth Sustainable Development Conference titled 'Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind' on 6 December 2021 at Aiwan-e-Sadr (Presidency), Islamabad, Pakistan.

Honourable President of Pakistan and our Chief Guest, Executive Director SDPI Dr Abid Suleri, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the SDPI's Board of Governors, I have the honour to welcome you all at the Inaugural Plenary of the Twenty-Fourth Sustainable Development Conference. We are grateful to President Arif Alvi for inaugurating the Conference. We look forward to his guidance.

This is the second annual session of SDPI's flagship event – the Sustainable Development Conference or SDC – that is taking place against a deeply sobering backdrop formed by the cataclysmic effects of the Coronavirus causing the deadly viral Pandemic – COVID-19. At the Twenty-third SDC, many of us had hoped that the untiring efforts of the scientific community and pharmaceutical industry to develop an effective vaccine, combined with initiatives of the international community, would result in stopping further spread of the deadly virus and end the colossal human and material losses suffered by all the whole world, especially the developing countries. Unfortunately, our expectations have not materialised, and the world continues to grapple with the virus and its multiple consequences.

“ *We wish to commend the Government of Pakistan (GoP) for its efficient handling of the COVID-19 crisis, including vaccination of nearly 55 million people as well as assisting the most vulnerable segment of the population to bear the loss of livelihoods through cash disbursements and other forms of support.*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

SDPI fully complied with regulations necessitated by the imperative of preventing infections. Most staff members worked from their home and virtual means of communication have been widely used. SDPI managed to continue the bulk of its activities in support of efforts by the government and non-state stakeholders, especially the civil society to ensure sustained economic development, social justice and respect for human rights, and the protection of the environment. As in the past, SDPI activities comprised policy relevant, evidence-based research on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), advocacy regarding urgent issues such as climate crisis, poverty alleviation, and human rights-centred socioeconomic development. The relevant details shall be provided by Dr Abid Suleri.

SDPI's Executive Director Dr Abid Suleri has been appointed as a member of over a dozen advisory committees set up by the Federal and Provincial Governments on wide-ranging issues such as economic development, food security and agriculture, response to COVID-19, trade and export promotion, higher education, governance and institutional reform, and disaster management. We see this as recognition of SDPI's activities.

The themes of this year's SDC include review of progress achieved by Pakistan in implementing the national agenda towards the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development anchored in SDGs adopted by the international community in 2015; assessment of the multi-faceted impacts of COVID-19 and lessons from the Pandemic; progress made in the framework of ecosystems restoration; climate change related mitigation and adaptation; promotion of E-Commerce; education for the 21st Century; combatting inequality by promoting diversity and dialogue for addressing internal challenges; and protection of the rights of women and girls and their empowerment.

I hope that the deliberations at the Twenty-fourth SDC would be useful for the government and non-state stakeholders in their endeavours to promote Pakistan's development and the well-being of its citizens.

I would like to conclude by thanking our partners and donors whose financial and intellectual support was indispensable for the success of our Conference. I also thank the heads and members of the panels of discussion. The SDPI staff members, especially the SDC team deserves our gratitude for their untiring efforts over several months for ensuring the success of the Twenty-fourth SDC.

I hope that the Government of Pakistan, the multilateral agencies, and other stakeholders will find the recommendations articulated during this Conference useful in their endeavours to promote the goals and targets of Sustainable Development in Pakistan.

Thank you.

Introductory Remarks*

Abid Qaiyum Suleri (PhD)
Executive Director,
Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan

* These remarks were delivered at the Inaugural Plenary of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute's Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference titled 'Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind' on 6 December 2021 at Aiwan-e-Sadar (Presidency), Islamabad, Pakistan.

Excellency Dr Arif Alvi, President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr Sania Nishtar, Ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel, Dignitaries from the Diplomatic Missions, Friends from the Parliament, Government, Academia, Media, and Development Sector, Ladies and Gentlemen, Assalam-u-alaikum!

It is a privilege to introduce the 24th edition of SDPI's annual Conference. Over two decades ago, the Sustainable Development Conference or the SDC as it is now well-known, started with a focus on the South Asian region. Over the years, it has transcended regional boundaries hosting speakers from around the world. Today, it has turned into a mega congregation of people from across the world, working on and thinking about Sustainable Development.

This annual conclave is a labour of love – for those who work tirelessly every year to make it happen, and make it happen successfully; for those who make the effort to join us from different corners of the globe; for those who prepare and read out papers and presentations, and for those who come here for exchanging views and seeking knowledge. Every year, this has been so, but this year is slightly different.

It is different as we are holding it amidst the Pandemic and concerns about latest variant of COVID-19 - Omicron. However, discussing 'Leaving No One Behind', the central theme of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is more relevant than ever.

Your Excellency, around two years ago, when the world was hit by COVID-19, international agencies and experts warned the global community of three mutually reinforcing threats, a deadly Pandemic, growing hunger, and economic recession.

Thanks to the timely and coordinated actions of the Government of Pakistan (GoP), our response in containing the disease, so far, has been far more effective compared to many developed and developing countries of the world.

International commodity prices did affect our domestic food prices. However, we never witnessed any food scarcity and hunger as was witnessed among many parts of the world, including developed countries during the last two years.

“ *The GoP’s policy of smart lockdown – avoiding complete closure of economic activities; and a fiscal stimulus of PKR 1200 billion for all sectors of the economy, including disbursement of cash grants to PKR 14.9 million families in a transparent manner through the Ehsaas Program – saved Pakistan from economic recession.*

We have successfully braved two years of the Pandemic and learning to live with new variants of COVID-19. Last two years have been stressful for humanity. However, to me the light at the end of the tunnel is governments’ - all across the world - renewed focus on social sector development, especially on health, food security, social protection, and livelihoods.

Getting ourselves ready to adopt to ‘online’ ways of living our lives is yet another silver lining amidst the Pandemic. And it reminds me of Your Excellency’s inaugural address during our SDC of 2019, where you had rightly advised the nation to get prepared for turning the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution into opportunities.

However, one finds increased challenges beyond COVID, when it comes to leaving no one behind.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

“ *The idea of Sustainable Development and the ideals of a shared human future are under threat today like never before since this Conference first took place in the 1990s.*

It was also not long ago when an eminent sage told us that the world has become flat. That barriers, boundaries and borders have ceased to matter in the age of free flow of information on the internet. That the twin forces of globalisation, that is, information and communication technology and the increasingly free flow of money and merchandise across the world, has made us netizens; citizens of a virtual world where differences of language, culture and class have evaporated.

Only when the influential thinkers of the world were claiming that due to successful spread of globalisation, human history had reached its climactic end, came COVID-19.

“ Today, history seems to have made a comeback with vengeance. Hoarding of COVID vaccines and essential medicines by rich countries, vaccine apartheid due to geopolitical differences, closure of borders and supply chains for essential items across the world during COVID-19, and spending trillions of dollars as COVID fiscal stimulus for their citizens by the countries who are reluctant to collectively give USD 100 billion for climate financing to developing countries, who happen to be the least polluters, is a manifestation that the world today seems to be closing in rather than opening up. There is certainly much to despair about today but there is also much to hope for and expect. The situation is a reminder that even if we do well as individual nations, we are in danger of missing the global target of ‘Leaving No One Behind.’

This is precisely what we are going to ponder upon in our SDC.

More than 250 speakers, from 20 countries in 38 sessions during next four days would be addressing some key questions that we all have in mind:

What are some of the lessons learnt during these challenging years?

How well are we prepared for future disasters?

What were some of the opportunities gained or lost during this period when seen through the prism of the SDGs?

What can be done to catch up with the missed targets?

What midcourse correction strategy can be adopted to steer towards Sustainable Development in the coming years?

Much of it will depend upon several factors which would be discussed thoroughly in our Conference. The first factor is the geopolitical economy, especially given the situation in Afghanistan which is sitting on the verge of a humanitarian crisis. During the Conference, we would have three plenaries, with Western diplomats, with the Chinese Ambassador, and with Pakistan’s National Security Advisor on how not to leave Afghan people behind in the journey to Sustainable Development.

We would also be discussing the ability of national and sub-national governments to:

- i. plan for building forward better, focusing on resilience of the hardest hit communities in terms of health, food, livelihoods, and other shocks of the Pandemic, and climate change,
- ii. ensure adequate budgets for relief and recovery, and
- iii. form partnerships with the private sector and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

These, and many more sub-themes, will be covered in the sessions during the span of the Conference. This may help us take stock of the responses to the Pandemic and identify beyond it, the policy challenges with a futuristic perspective.

We would be sharing the policy recommendations of our Conference with your esteemed office and support the government in implementing those recommendations.

Your Excellency, I am pleased to share that at this Conference, we also launch the annual anthology based on last year's key plenary speeches and peer reviewed papers.

This year's anthology titled '*Sustainable Development in the Times of COVID-19*' also includes your online inaugural address which served as a source of guidance for our work during 2021.

Honourable President, on behalf of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, I thank you for once again graciously hosting this Inaugural Plenary of the Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference at the Presidency and look forward to your continued patronage.

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you very much for joining us today. I hope you would attend our plenaries and sessions either in-person or online.

Pakistan Payenda Abad!

Ehsaas Programme & Leaving No One Behind Agenda*

Dr Sania Nishtar
Former Special Assistant to the
Prime Minister on Social Protection and
Poverty Alleviation, Government of Pakistan

* Special remarks delivered at the Inaugural Plenary of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute's Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference titled 'Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind' on 6 December 2021 at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad, Pakistan. These remarks have been transcribed by Zaina Noor, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan.

I begin with congratulating SDPI because as a think tank, as an institution, I think they have come a very long way in institutionalising the culture of annual conferences which bring together academics and policymakers and I think that over the course of time, they have improved this annual meeting.

I also want to congratulate them because SDPI has emerged as a very important think tank over the years. They have really helped to bridge the traditional disconnect between academia, evidence and public policymaking and I wish to congratulate both Ambassador Kakakhel and Dr Abid Suleri for the efforts they have put to achieve this objective over the last several years.

The theme of the Conference, 'Leaving No One Behind', is very important. This is basically a banner that the United Nations has used for a very long time within the overall rubric of SDGs. I think that this concept in a post-COVID scenario has a specific connotation because business, as usual, is not what we are going to do in post-COVID [context].

One thing which is quite evident, whenever we get back to life as usual, there is going to be an accelerated emphasis on four things:

1. We will view health as a matter of national security.
2. There will be a more enhanced focus on sustainability and the intersections between the health of the people and the health of the planet.
3. We are, even as we speak, compelled to embrace digital ways of working and in the post-COVID scenario - this will be extended even further.
4. Because of the ravages of the Pandemic, because of the negative impact on livelihoods, social protection will need to take a new meaning.

Now, as far as social protection is concerned, as you well appreciate, as the Pandemic struck, Pakistan put in place within a matter of two weeks one of the largest social protection programmes ever rolled out in the history of the country. It was digitally executed, it was a transparent programme, totally on merit.

“ *We reached out to 15 million families with cash assistance. Globally, this was rated as the fastest deployment by the World Bank. It was also the third largest deployment of cash assistance in the COVID context within the rubric of the first wave. Globally, in terms of percentage of the population, the United States and Japan had the highest number of individuals covered and Pakistan was at number three.*

There are many lessons to be learnt in terms of importance of real-time event evaluation, in terms of the importance of the digital ways of working in a country like ours. There were many lessons with respect to the government. There were very important insights in terms of how unique identification numbers can be used in a context of internet penetration and the use of cellphones to develop systems at scale.

But more broadly, I want to share with you that the Government of Pakistan, even prior to the Pandemic, had a special emphasis on social protection under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the direction of His Excellency, the President.

The Ehsaas Programme came into being in March 2019, i.e., when it was formally announced. Throughout 2019, we were extremely busy in laying the groundwork, governance, and integrity policy of Ehsaas, development of the observatory, establishment of the delivery unit to shepherd the execution of 20 programmes which had to be rolled out, establishment of digital infrastructure, complex procurements of payment systems, SMS gateways, acceleration of work to bring to fruition Pakistan’s first digital National Census.

These were the things that had started back in 2019, and we, in fact, and of course, in terms of the backbones, the one-window architecture, which has now come to fruition with a physical and digital backend. So even before the Pandemic struck, the Government of Pakistan had a special emphasis on social protection. There was extensive spadework put into place to install a very large social protection programme and of course, post-COVID, the relevance of that has extended further.

The first MDG target of reducing by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty was achieved five years ahead of its 2015 deadline. But, now with the corresponding SDGs, the world is sliding backwards and fast because of the pain and suffering of livelihoods lost and inflation that COVID-19 has brought.

So, Ehsaas is not the only intervention, which is tackling these issues, the entire government machinery from various angles is focused on these problems, but Ehsaas clearly is the government's policy framework, its tools and strategy to reach out to the most marginalised, and in terms of 'leaving no one behind.' Ehsaas is structured in such a way that there is something for every underprivileged family in any point in the life cycle of an individual belonging to one. Ehsaas Kifalat, the large programme reaching out to 12 million families this year with twice installment of PKR 12,000, is one initiative.

We have a life course approach, as I just mentioned, different individuals within that eligible family can avail. There are programmes on conditional cash transfers on health and education, predicated on a set of health and nutrition outcomes, which involve specialised nutritional food to prevent stunting and cash stipends. When a child goes to school, from primary up until higher secondary, eligible families have access to a stipend to send their children to school, and what is salient within that rubric is that the stipend is much higher for the girl child compared to the boy child.

“ *In great humility, I would like to recall here that Pakistan is the only country in the world which offers a higher stipend amount to educate a girl child and a higher stipend amount for a girl child to have better access to nutrition.*

Then again, in terms of the life course approach to education, in terms of the social protection lens with respect to financial access to education, we run the largest undergrad scholarship programme, based on need and merit basis. There is 50% rule, so 50% of benefits are strictly reserved for girls and this four-year programme, in its second year was oversubscribed so we'll have to work our targets upwards. We've given 140 to 200 scholarships so far, on need and merit basis at the undergrad level.

Then, there is financial access to healthcare programme. There are graduation initiatives that enable a family to graduate out of poverty, with respect to access to interest-free loans and asset transfers. There are care services which have been put in place under the rubric of Ehsaas under the Prime Minister's direct interventions. You already know about his *Panah Gah* (shelters) initiative. There are other initiatives that we have been putting in place to bring the informal economy into the formal sector. *Ehsaas Rairybaan* (for vendors) is in its early stages of implementation. Then, of course, you must have heard about the programme for targeting

commodity subsidies which is underway and for which registrations are ongoing. So, this entire basket of interventions with 20 programmes aimed at different target audiences, is for underprivileged families, under the principle of 'No One Left Behind.'

Of course, there are a number of challenges that we face. There are capacity issues and issues of financial and digital literacy since we are a digital shop, and individuals living in remote places have problems of connectivity, and lack of access to cellphones, is a problem.

But by and large, programmes are making much better progress than what we had envisioned at inception two years ago. I am hoping that through better linkages, with academia, with the civil society, we can improve, we can draw on evidence in a much better way to improve our operations.

So once again, SDPI, I would like to congratulate you and I hope that your deliberations will help to inform public policy as you convene over the next three days. Thank you very much for having me over here.

Conference Message*

Imran Khan
Former Prime Minister of the
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

* This is the Provisional Transcript of the message delivered by then-Prime Minister of Pakistan at the Closing Plenary of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute's Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference titled 'Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind' on 9 December 2021 in Islamabad, Pakistan. It has been transcribed by Zaina Noor, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan.

Firstly, I would like to thank SDPI for giving me the opportunity to speak at your annual conference. ‘Leaving No One Behind’ is the manifesto of our government. Inclusive development is what we strive for. The Tehreek-e-Insaf Government believes that development cannot happen unless the lower segment of the country is not elevated. I believe that a society develops only when people are brought from the lower segment of society to the top. This was the philosophy of the first Islamic state in Madinah as well.

Our Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), created a welfare state, the first one ever. The purpose of this state was to elevate the marginalised community. It was the duty of the government to take care of the underprivileged of the state. Thus, policies were made in such a way that money, which was left after all state expenditures, was distributed amongst the said people. This included the poor, orphans, and widows. Pensions were introduced for the first time during Riasat-e-Madinah. Everyone from society and their standard of living was the responsibility of the state. This model was very successful as it was initiated by the greatest civilisation ever to exist.

I believe whichever state adopts this model, will rise. The classic example of this is China. If we compare the China of today to the China of 40 years ago, we can see a clear difference.

“ *The biggest reason for their development is that the Chinese policymakers made a conscious decision of eradicating poverty from their country. No other state, in history, has been able to upgrade the living standard of their people (70 million) in such a short period of time.*

Just like Riasat-e-Madinah, the Chinese too adopted the model of inclusive development. Moreover, they adopted meritocracy. People moved forward based on their credentials rather than their status. By adopting these two ideologies, they made their society a better place.

“ *The state ensures that nobody is left behind. This is inclusive development.*

During COVID, when the world was imposing complete lockdowns, we too were under pressure to impose strict lockdowns. The ‘chattering class’ of our society was scared, and hence, pressurised the government to impose complete lockdown throughout the country. However, we resisted the pressure because we are aware of the difficulties which might have been brought

by such lockdowns to the daily/weekly wagers and the poor people living in slums with eight to nine mouths to feed. Wuhan province in China went into a complete lockdown but they provided food at peoples' homes. We did not have such resources. We could not adopt the formula of developed nations onto ourselves. As a developing nation, we do not have the resources to provide for our poor people, therefore, we opted to go with smart lockdowns instead. By doing so, we did not let our supply chain and agriculture get affected. Moreover, we provided more opportunities for the unemployed, such as opening construction in cities. We made decisions inclusive of our marginalised community and their welfare.

“ *We are the only country which recovered from COVID in the best way possible. We not only saved our people but our economy as well.*

I am thankful to SDPI for being of assistance with their commodity dashboard [Food Security Portal], which showcases price fluctuations and the issues of supply and demand beforehand, hence, making it easier for the government to tackle the situation before a problem arises.

Once again, I thank SDPI for inviting me.

Thank you.

- ◇ Climate Impacts on Agricultural Production, Food Supply and Food Availability in Five Livelihood Zones of Pakistan
- ◇ Case Study on Urban Food Systems in Peshawar, Pakistan: COVID-19, Food Security and Resilience
- ◇ Labour Migration and Systemic Resilience: A Sending State's Perspective from Pakistan
- ◇ Service-led Growth and Rise of Digitalisation: South Asia Perspective
- ◇ Roadmap for Sustainable, Inclusive Trade and Investment: Case from Pakistan
- ◇ Gender-Responsive Intersectional Approaches in the Context of COVID-19

Climate Impacts on Agricultural Production, Food Supply and Food Availability in Five Livelihood Zones of Pakistan*

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* This chapter has been approved as a *Research Paper* by the referee.

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Abstract

In Pakistan, the impacts of climate change can lead to environmental conditions that will be extremely challenging for many forms of agricultural production critical to food security. This chapter summarises the results of a larger study that employs mixed methods research to project how climate change will impact agricultural production, food supply, and food availability across five livelihood zones by 2050. Analytical outputs from desk review, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), climate change modelling (temperature, precipitation, selected hazards), and econometric modelling using the International Model for Policy Analysis of Agricultural Commodities and Trade (IMPACT) were used to generate a series of recommendations for policy and programming to reduce food insecurity at the national and livelihood zones levels in Pakistan over coming decades. The modelled simulations predict increasing temperatures, and precipitation rainfall variability by 2050, resulting in increased drought conditions, flooding, and heat stress. These harmful trends will prevent the agricultural sector from reaching its full potential, likely causing food insecurity to become entrenched in agriculturally dependent areas where market access is limited and climate change limits the ability of vulnerable households to grow food for subsistence and income generation. To safeguard food security in this context, provincial and sub-provincial governments should be supported in implementing national climate change policies at the local level; Pakistan's social protection schemes should be expanded to cover climate vulnerable beneficiaries; anticipatory action must be prioritised to support communities before a hazard occurs; participatory interventions and the development of community assets are needed to safeguard agricultural livelihoods; and sustainable finance is required to facilitate long-term adaptation initiatives.

Introduction

As part of its Critical Corporate Initiative, the World Food Programme's Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Programs Unit, in collaboration with the Research, Assessment and Monitoring (RAM) unit, engaged the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), part of the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR), to identify means of pre-emptively supporting the climate resilience of vulnerable communities in high-risk geographies. In close coordination

with the national WFP offices, the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT identified livelihood zones, major crops, priority outcomes, and crucial climate and non-climate hazards for each country. Analysis was then conducted using a mixed methods research plan, including desk review, climate change modelling, the International Model for Policy Analysis of Agricultural Commodities and Trade (IMPACT) assessment, stakeholder workshops, and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). Conducted across nine countries globally, below is a summary of the analytical outputs and recommendations made for Pakistan.

Pakistan is a country with a varied geography, consisting of a large and fast-growing populace spread across ten agroecological zones. With nearly 100% of arable land already utilised for agricultural production, yield improvements are required to safeguard food security, nutritional security, and rural livelihoods (CIAT and World Bank 2017; FAO 2021). With 36% of Pakistan's workforce employed in the agricultural sector and 40% of Pakistan's population suffering from chronic food insecurity, climate hazards – including drought, increasing temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, flooding, and heat stress – are an urgent threat to human security throughout the country (ILO and ILOSTAT 2021; WFP 2021).

Analysis of Historical Trends and Projected Changes in Climate Indicators

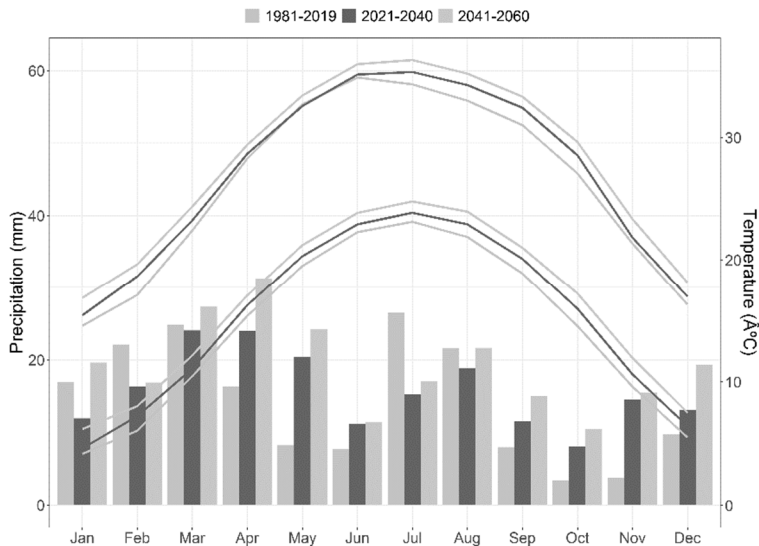
Numerical modelling is used to project climate trends at the national and livelihood zone levels. For historical precipitation and temperature trends, Climate Hazards Group InfraRed Precipitation with station data was combined with AgERA5 agrometeorological indicators derived from the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecast's ERA5 dataset (Copernicus Climate Change Service 2019; CHC UC and USAID n.d.). For future projections, an ensemble of downscaled Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP6) products were used, including the following models: ACCESS-ESM1-5, EC-Earth3-Veg, INM-CM5-0, MPI-ESM1-2-HR, and MRI-ESM2-0 for SSP5-8.5 scenario. These models were selected based on the climate sensitivity of 40 CMIP6 models; five models with lower sensitivity were selected.

The socioeconomic basis for the results presented here is Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 5 (SSP5), a policy, population, and GDP trajectory characterised by rapid industrialisation, high levels of technological innovation, and improving education alongside fossil fuel-driven industrialisation with little effort to mitigate the impacts of climate change (Robinson et al.,

2015).¹ Assumptions regarding future temperature increases due to carbon concentration and radiative forcing are captured in different Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs), which account for long-term changes in temperature and precipitation but not for changes in climate variability or the incidence of extreme weather events (Ibid.). For this study, RCP 8.5 is assumed – the most pessimistic carbon concentration scenario available – which projects a mean global temperature rise of 1.4-2.6 degrees Celsius by 2050 over the 2005 level. Overall, the combination of SSP5 with RCP 8.5 envisions a bleak climate change outlook, aggravated by increased fossil fuel use. However, some of the worst impacts in terms of food availability are partly offset by an optimistic forecast of enhanced technology and education levels.

The analysis focuses on both near-term (2021-2040 or the ‘2030s’) and medium-term (2041-2060 or the ‘2050s’) projections to provide a general indication of trends over multiple time horizons. Data from 2020 is excluded because full-year data was unavailable at the time of analysis.

Figure 1: Historical and Future Projected Monthly Mean Maximum/Minimum Temperature & Precipitation in Pakistan



Source: Authors' own.

¹ IMPACT does not account for perturbations resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

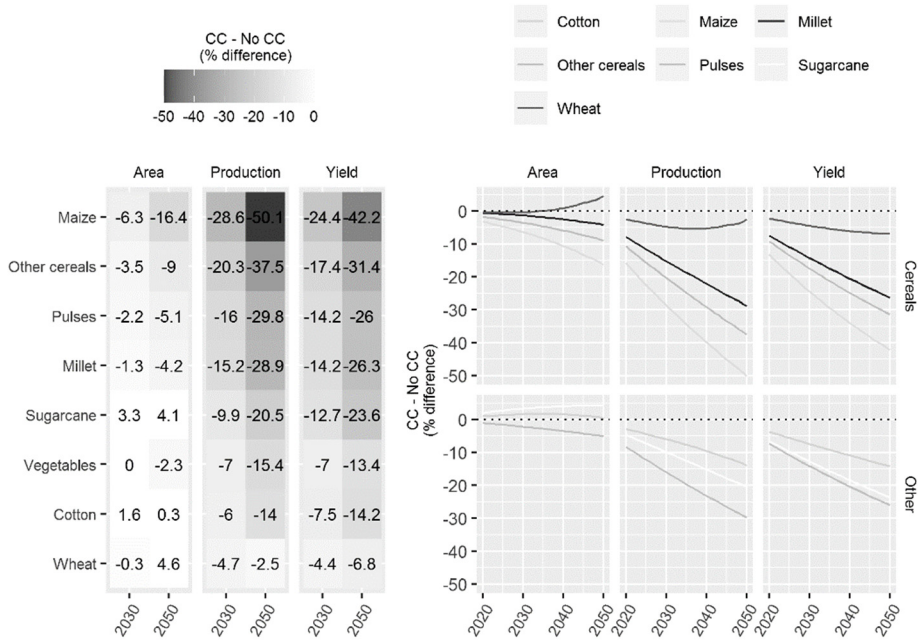
Nationally, projections through 2050 indicate slow but steady increases in temperature throughout the year, gradual but consistent increases in temperature, and moderately increased precipitation. Increased precipitation during the early (cultivation) and late (harvest) months of *kharif* (March-November) and *rabi* (October-June) seasons, along with drier periods during the growing season may complicate agricultural production (Figure 1). These trends begin in the decades leading to 2030, continue through 2050, and are common to both seasons.

Economic Analyses at the National Level Using IMPACT Model

The following analysis utilises IMPACT model, which explores interlinkages between future scenarios related to climate change, socioeconomic development, agricultural suitability, and trading patterns. IMPACT uses projections concerning biophysical suitability, price signals, comparative advantage, and anticipated technological developments to produce modelled agricultural yields for specific production systems at the national level. The outputs below are based on an RCP 8.5 and SSP5 scenario. In addition to projections for the years 2030 and 2050, a 'no climate change' (No-CC) scenario functions as a benchmark against which to compare the impacts of climate change. IMPACT outputs present a signal possible scenario of future conditions at the national level that may be used to provide general guidance on policy and development interventions.

By 2050, the production of key agricultural commodities in Pakistan is projected to be significantly lower under climate change than under the No-CC benchmark (Figure 2). Decreased production is notable for cereals, except wheat. This is mainly a result of lower projected yields, though decreased growing areas also play a small role. Wheat exhibits the most resilience to climate change of all commodities modelled, down from the No-CC benchmark by -4.7% in 2030, and by -2.5% in 2050. This is mainly attributed to increased growing areas that offset lower projected yields.

Figure 2: Difference between Climate Change and No Climate Change Scenarios for Area, Production & Yield of Key Crops

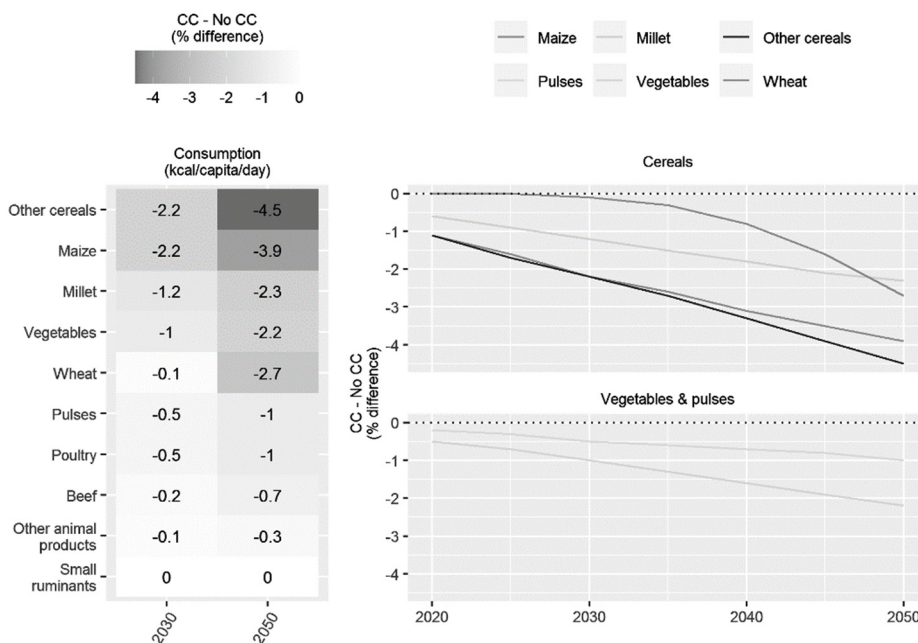


Source: Authors' own.

Note: For each year, the difference is calculated as the percentage difference between the CC value and No-CC value.

The caloric availability of key commodities is also projected to be lower under CC than under the No-CC benchmark (Figure 3). This is especially pronounced for maize, while the caloric availability of wheat, conversely, exhibits relative resilience to climate change till 2030, although a negative impact becomes evident thereafter. Caloric availability for pulses and livestock per capita exhibit the most resilience, with little difference between climate change and No-CC benchmark trajectories.

Figure 3: Percentage Difference between Consumption (Kcal/Capita/Day) of Key Commodities with & Without Climate Change

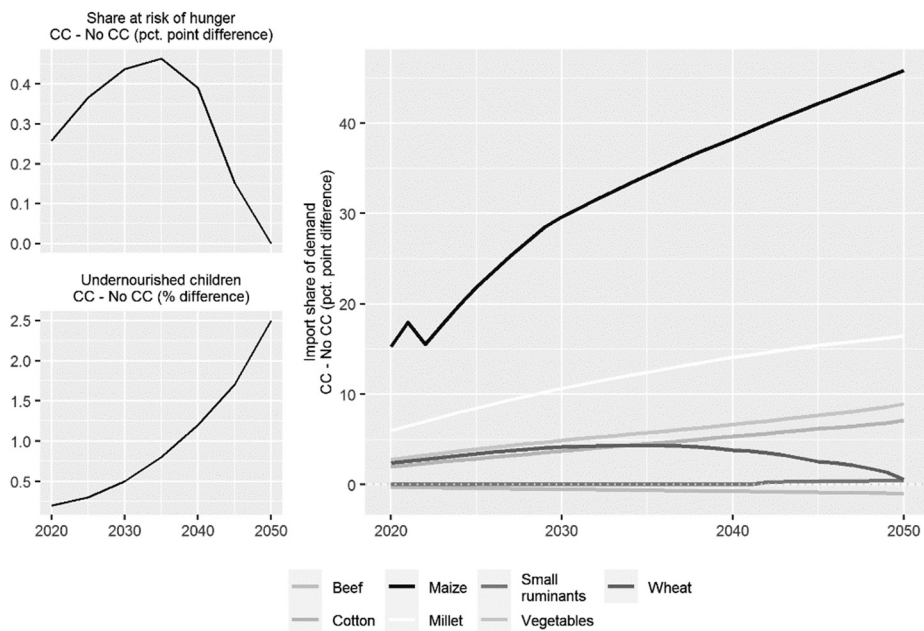


Source: Authors' own.

Note: For each year, the difference is calculated as the percentage difference between the CC value and No-CC value.

Compared to the No-CC benchmark, the share of population at risk of hunger is projected to be less than one percentage point higher by 2050 under climate change, while the number of undernourished children is more differentiated. Likewise, the number of undernourished children under climate change is less than one percent higher than the No-CC projection to 2030, with the variance increasing to 2.5% by 2050 (Figure 4, left panel). This is in line with the lower projected caloric intake under climate change relative to No-CC, as seen above. Projected import dependence for key commodities is significantly higher under climate change versus the No-CC benchmark and is notable for both maize and millet (Figure 4, right panel).

Figure 4: Difference between Climate Change and No Climate Change Trajectories for Key Food Availability Indicators & Commodities



Source: Authors' own.

Note: For the undernourished children indicator, the difference is expressed as the percentage difference between the CC and No-CC values. For the share of population at risk of hunger and import dependence, the difference is expressed as a percentage point difference since these indicators are reported as percentages.

In summary, while maize, millet, and other cereals show vulnerability to climate change, wheat exhibits resilience. This indicates that additional investment in improved wheat varieties may be critical to securing future staple food availability, especially given wheat's long-standing role as the single largest source of caloric intake in Pakistan. Maize and millet, though less significant than wheat for human consumption, are primary sources of livestock feed. Thus, to insulate the livestock sector from the negative impacts of climate change, additional Research and Development (R&D) may be required to address the projected vulnerability of these crops. Alternatively, it may pay to investigate substitute feed crops that exhibit greater resilience to climate change. Cassava, for example, generally exhibits greater climate resilience and is commonly used as livestock feed elsewhere. Although livestock exhibit the greatest resilience of all commodities examined, the impacts of climate change on livestock are still poorly understood and decisions should not be made on the basis of these results alone.

Climate Change Impacts on National Food Availability and Stability through 2050

Despite climate trends that are projected to decrease the production quantities and yields of all agricultural commodities modelled, overall food production and availability are expected to improve by 2050. Similarly, per capita calorie availability and consumption are likely to increase in coming decades, as the risk of hunger and malnourishment decreases. Such improvements are due to socioeconomic development trends, innovation in productive technologies, and educational gains that, together, are projected to offset the predominantly negative climatic trends facing Pakistan's agricultural sector. As average temperatures and precipitation levels rise by 2050, temperature increases outstrip those in precipitation, increasing conditions of drought and heat stress that are expected to diminish production. Shifting rainfall patterns further harm production during both the *kharif* and *rabi* seasons by complicating periods of cultivation, growth, and harvesting. These trends begin in the decade leading to 2030 and continue through 2050. In Pakistan, water for agricultural sector is sourced from surface water, groundwater, rainfall, snow, and glacial melt – sources that are all under increasing stress and pollution levels (Khosro and Ansari 2015; Sleet 2019). Increasing drought conditions will further strain the water supply, potentially limiting the amount of water available for agricultural production and safe drinking.

While positive socioeconomic trends are expected to decrease rates of hunger and malnourishment, climate change will continue to entrench risk through its physical impacts on agricultural production and by degrading livelihoods in rural and food-insecure areas through 2050, and especially from 2030 onwards. Production is projected to increase through 2050 for wheat, vegetables, sugarcane, cotton, poultry, beef, and small ruminants. However, maize and millet production are expected to decrease over the same timeline, causing increased import dependency for livestock and negative impacts on maize calorie availability. Import dependency will be further heightened as industrial applications and livestock feed continue to drive most maize and millet demand.

The stability of Pakistan's food supply is under threat from disruptions due to negative climate trends, environmental shocks that are more frequent and severe, and the climate's harmful effects on socioeconomic development. Increasing temperatures and precipitation in Pakistan's northern areas are likely to drive Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) and increased flooding throughout the Indus River Basin, potentially endangering areas where most of

Pakistan's agricultural production takes place. Flooding and erratic rainfall, especially in Sindh's desert regions, will exacerbate pest and disease outbreaks, including desert locust infestations.

Food access faces significant risks by 2050, including production challenges, growing import dependence, and poor market accessibility. Food utilisation is threatened by poverty and disease. Climatic risks can threaten agricultural households' access to food in two ways: by reducing the quantity of food they can grow for subsistence, and by lessening the amount they can spend on food purchases (WFP, SDPI and MoCC 2018). Food prices are likely to increase as import dependency ramps up from 2030 onward, rendering nutritious food out of reach of poor households. In Pakistan's remote regions, including swaths of Balochistan, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, market access is highly limited, and the co-occurrence of climate and non-climatic hazards is common. Here, poor food utilisation is likely to be driven by poverty, while erratic rainfall and increased flooding will drive the spread of waterborne diseases, contribute to malnutrition, and kill livestock (Ibid.).

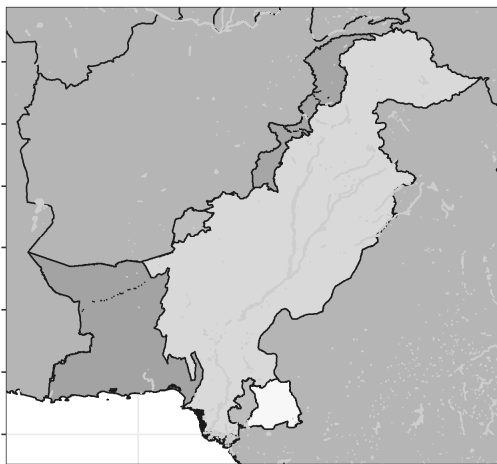
Livelihood Zone Level Climate Modelling and Impacts

Pakistan's climatic conditions differ widely across provinces, districts, and tehsils due to its geographic scale and varied topography. To account for this climatic diversity while still seeking to produce locally contextual projections, five agro-ecological zones, that function as proxy for Livelihood Zones (LZ), were chosen for closer examination. In line with Pakistan's 18th Constitutional Amendment, which devolved the power to implement national policies to provincial administrations, the generation of local level climate information is critical to the effective implementation of policies targeting climate resilience at the community and household levels (Rana 2020). These livelihood zones were selected based on their overlapping vulnerability to food insecurity and key climate and environmental hazards, as revealed by WFP's 2017 Integrated Context Analysis (NDMA and WFP 2017). Selected LZs are listed below and illustrated in Figure 5:

- ◇ LZ1: Irrigated Plains in SE Sindh (Badin, Mirpurkhas)
- ◇ LZ2: Sandy Deserts in SE Sindh (Umerkot, Tharparkar)
- ◇ LZ3: Dry Mountains in NW Balochistan (Pishin, Killa Abdullah)
- ◇ LZ4: Dry Plateau in SW Balochistan (Awaran, Chagai, Gwadar, Kech, Khara, Lasbela, Panjgur, Washuk)

- ◇ LZ5: Dry Mountains in NW Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Bajaur, Chitral, Lower Dir, Upper Dir, Khyber, Kurram, Mohmand, Orakzai, Swat, North Waziristan, South Waziristan)

Figure 5: Selected Livelihood Zones in Pakistan



Source: Authors' own.

Mean Climate Projections across Livelihood Zones through 2050

Temperature

Average temperatures are projected to continuously increase across all LZs through 2050, particularly during *kharif* season. While southern areas of Balochistan (LZ4), southern areas of Sindh (LZ1, LZ2), and northern and eastern areas of KP (LZ5) will likely experience the greatest increases, a 1-3 °C rise is expected across most areas of all LZ. Warming in northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during *rabi* season is notable for its potential to cause glacial melt, leading to GLOFs in the region and flooding all the way south to the Indus Basin in Sindh.

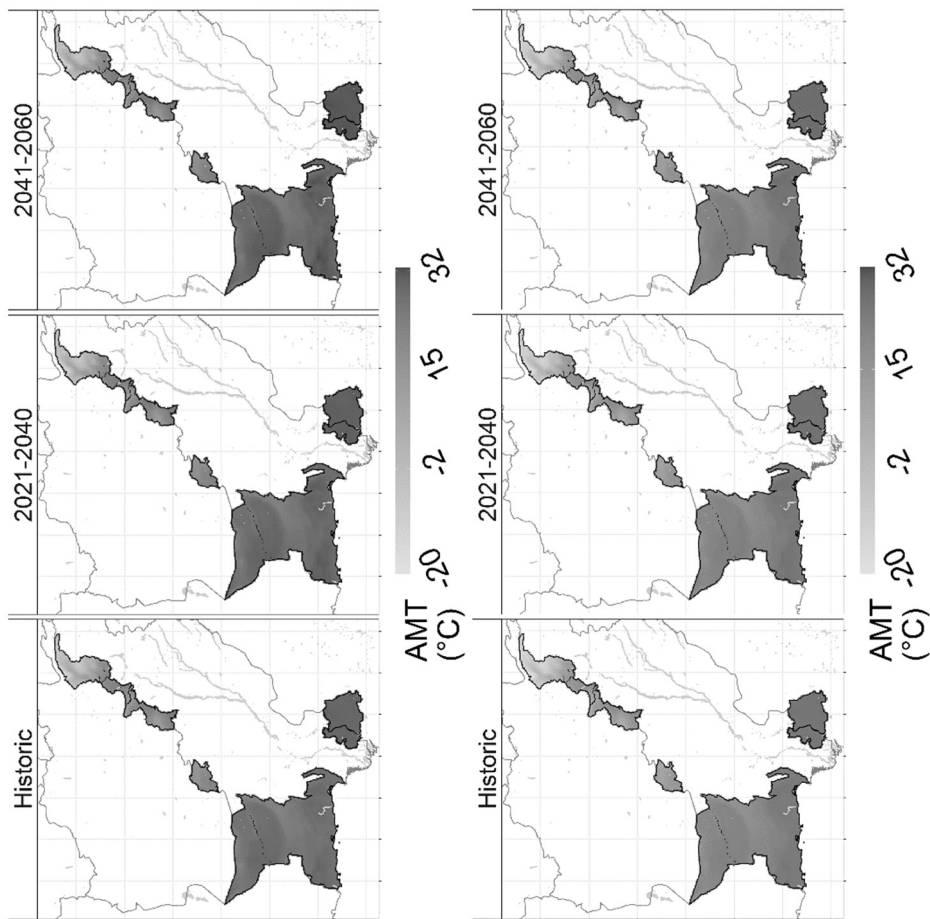
Precipitation

Generally, increases in mean temperatures are expected to exceed increases in mean precipitation, leading to a continuation of extremely dry conditions across Sindh (LZ1) and Balochistan (LZ3, LZ4). However, significant increases in precipitation, in combination with

increasing temperatures, may drive flooding and landslides in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (LZ5), particularly in Chitral, Upper and Lower Dir, Kurram, Khyber, and Orakzai. In Sindh's sandy deserts (LZ2), increasingly erratic desert rainfall may lead to sporadic flooding and worsen desert locust infestations by increasing available forage.

Figure 6 (Left): Historical Trends and Future Projections for Annual Mean Temperatures during Kharif Season

Figure 7 (Right): Historical Trends and Future Projections for Annual Mean Temperatures during Rabi Season

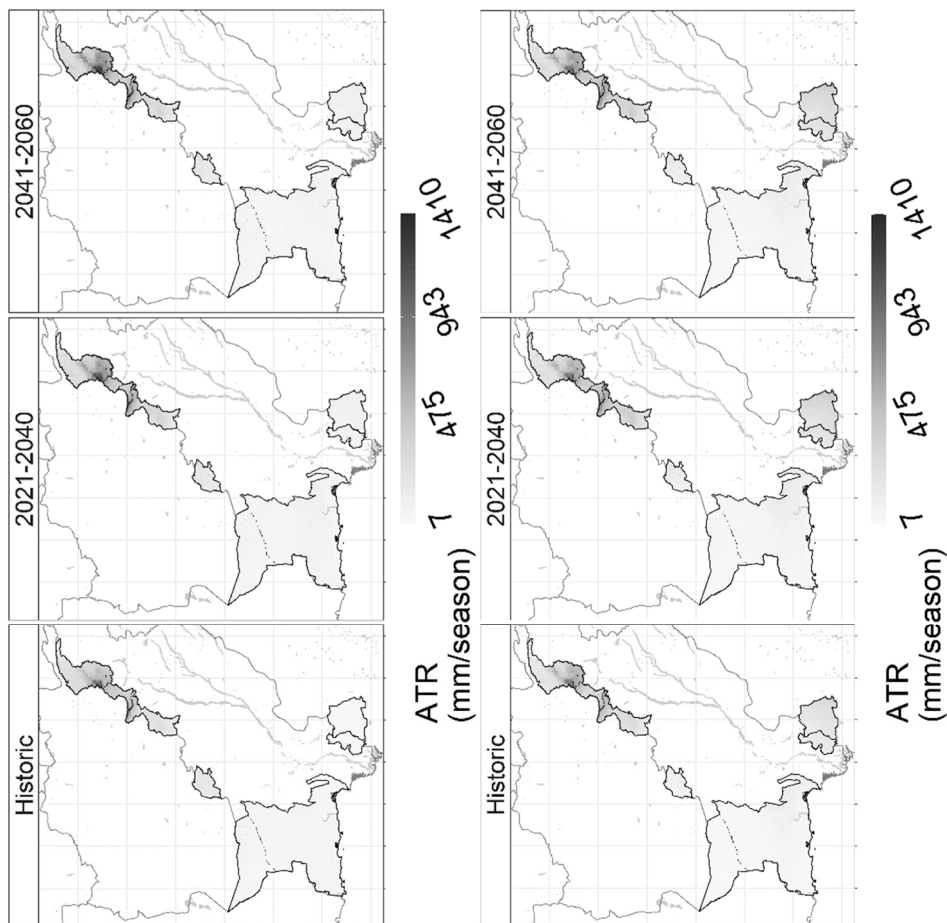


Source: Authors' own.

Note: Colour Gradient Indicating Absolute Temperatures in °C.

Figure 8 (Left): Historical Trends and Future Projections of Annual Total Rainfall (ATR) during Kharif Season by 2030 & 2050

Figure 9 (Right): Historical Trends and Future Projections of Annual Total Rainfall (ATR) during Rabi Season by 2030 & 2050



Source: Authors' own.

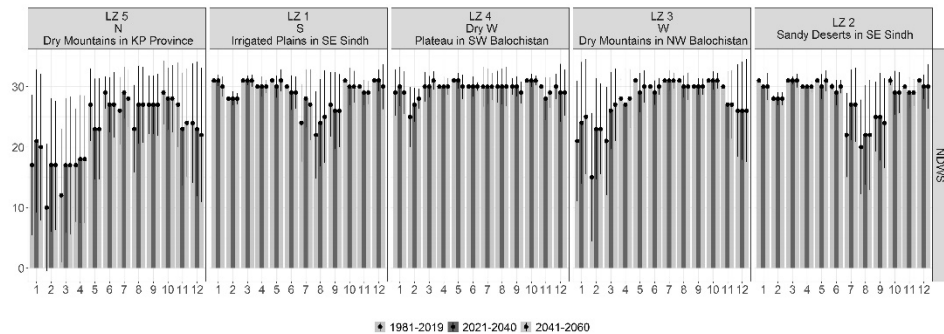
Projections for Select Climate Hazards across Livelihood Zones through 2050

Drought

The risk of droughts will remain severe throughout the year and across all LZs through 2050. Drought is defined here by a moisture stress indicator that calculates the number of days with

the ratio of actual to potential evapotranspiration below 0.5 for every grid cell. The red line below indicates a single month with 20 or more days of drought conditions, severely endangering humans, crops, and livestock. With the exception of LZ5 during the first four months of the year, all LZs currently experience severe drought conditions during the year and will continue to do so through 2050.

Figure 10: Monthly Variation (X Axis) in Drought Risk or Water Stress in Historical & Future Projections



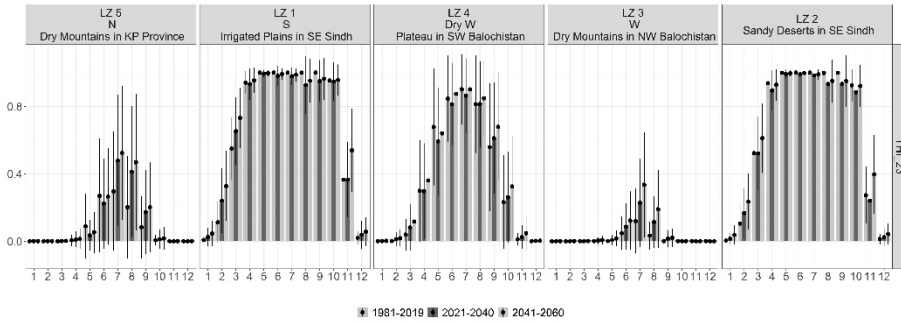
Source: Authors' own.

Note: The dotted line represents the threshold (number of days per month, Y Axis) above which water stress has a detrimental impact on agricultural production.

Heat Stress

Heat stress is calculated here as a probability that indicates the percentage of days per month that experience conditions exceeding specific Temperature-Humidity Index (THI) values, leading to moderate and severe heat stress for livestock (Rahimi et al., 2021). It is most severe in lower Sindh (LZ1, LZ2) and the plateau region of Balochistan (LZ3) and will continue through 2050. Heat stress will increase in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (LZ5) throughout the summer months and will extend later into the year in south-eastern Sindh (LZ1, LZ2).

Figure 11: Monthly Variation (X Axis) of Heat Stress in Historical & Future Projections



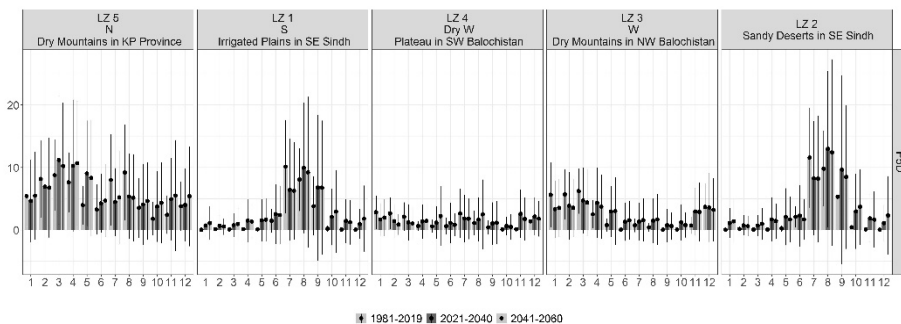
Source: Authors' own.

Note: The dotted line indicates the threshold, in the percent of days per month (Y Axis), above which heat stress has a detrimental impact on livestock production and mortality.

Pluvial Flooding

Rain-induced flash flooding is projected to remain limited and follow historical rainfall patterns, with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's dry mountains (LZ5) and Sindh's irrigated plains (LZ1) facing the greatest threat through 2050. The expected increase in flood risk during summer months in Sindh's sandy deserts is due to the increasingly erratic occurrences of cyclonic rainfall (see *Section under Precipitation*) occurring within a context that is overwhelmingly dry. It should be noted that the projections given below do not account for riverine flooding, storm-induced coastal flooding, or GLOFs.

Figure 12: Monthly Variation (X Axis) of Flood Risk in Historical & Future Projections



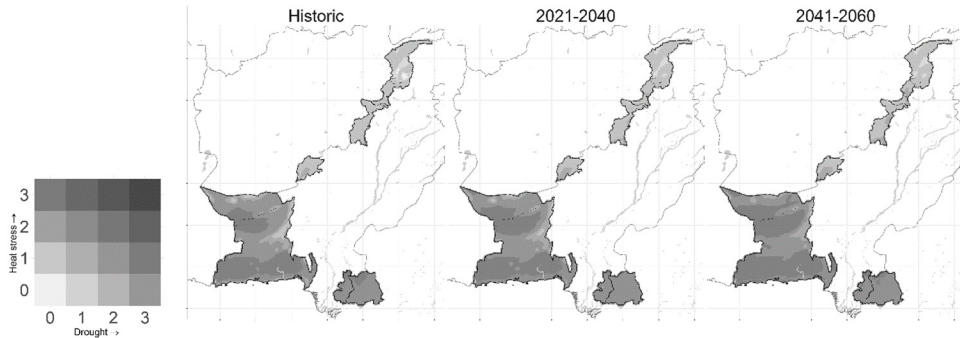
Source: Authors' own.

Note: The dotted line indicates the threshold, in the percent of days per month (Y Axis), above which the flood risk has a detrimental impact on agricultural production.

Co-occurrence of Droughts and Heat Stress

The co-occurrence of droughts and heat stress is projected to grow more common, severe, and widespread by 2050. While Southern LZs (LZ1, LZ2, LZ3) are likely to be worst impacted during *kharif* season, co-occurrence will expand to new areas in north-western Balochistan (LZ4) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (LZ5). While the impacts are expected to be less severe, increases are expected during the cooler *rabi* months as well. Drought and heat stress will continue to affect much of south-eastern Sindh (LZ1, LZ2) all year round through 2050.

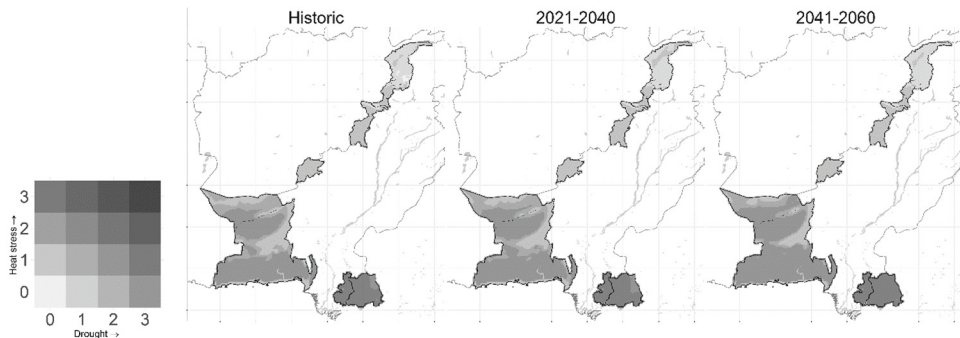
Figure 13: Historical and Future Spatial Projections of the Co-Occurrence of Droughts & Heat Stress during Kharif Season in Pakistan



Source: Authors' own.

Note: The darker the colour, the more severe the occurrence of one hazard or their co-occurrence.

Figure 14: Historical and Future Spatial Projections of the Co-Occurrence of Droughts & Heat Stress during Rabi Season in Pakistan



Source: Authors' own.

Note: The darker the colour, the more severe the occurrence of one hazard or their co-occurrence.

Recommendations

Based on the above climate projections, a series of recommendations have been formulated for policymakers and humanitarian-development stakeholders operating in the selected livelihood zones. These recommendations focus on building the resilience of vulnerable communities to food insecurity related to climate change, climate variability, and climate hazards through 2050.

Provincial, and sub-provincial administrations should be supported in implementing provincial climate change policies through partnerships with humanitarian-development organisations.

While national climate policies are robust, implementation has been devolved to provincial governments, who often lack the resources and/or capacity to realise plans on the ground. Partnerships are a crucial means of ensuring that Pakistan's forthcoming National Adaptation Plan, National Climate Change Policy, and related Implementation Framework 2014-2030 are implemented in climate vulnerable areas (UNEP n.d.).

In Sindh (LZ1, LZ2) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (LZ5), a well-developed network of climate, food security, and disaster risk policies lack full implementation. Sindh's Climate Change Policy calls for a disaster risk reduction 'assessment and compensation mechanism' to help communities rapidly recover from natural disasters (Government of Sindh 2019). The implementation of early warning systems, support for livelihood diversification in vulnerable farming communities, improvement of water storage and distribution infrastructure, and strengthening of pro-poor agricultural value chains are additional recommended policy actions that require implementation within climate vulnerable districts (Ibid.). In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and particularly in Merged Areas (ex-FATA) government capacity is low, and disaster risk reduction/management initiatives should be supported by external partners. These include a similar loss assessment and compensation mechanism, alongside remote sensors, early warning systems, and easily accessible last-mile climate services.

Though there are fewer policies on the books and generally lower governing capacity in Balochistan (LZ3, LZ4), according to several experts consulted the provincial government is keen to work with humanitarian-development partners to adapt and implement national climate resilience strategies at the local level. Balochistan's Provincial Disaster Management

Authority (PDMA), in particular is eager to address drought, heat stress, and other climate hazards threatening food and human security. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Localization Plans, in which UN agencies coordinate with local governments to develop district level strategies to achieve SDGs, are already being convened in Nushki, and can be replicated in other districts, if successful.

For all of the above, partnerships between local administrations and humanitarian development organisations, and collaboration among the latter, will play an important role. Capacity gap analyses can be used to identify specific actions that provincial administration would like help in implementing. Government agencies should be engaged, including the following agencies and their provincial and district offices: Ministry of Climate Change, National Disaster Management Agency, Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Ministry of Planning, Development, and Social Initiatives, and the National Agricultural Research Center. UN agencies should also be involved, including the World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Partnerships with agricultural research organisations, both internationally (such as with CGIAR centres) and at local level (University of Agriculture, Peshawar; Sindh Agriculture University; and the Balochistan Agriculture College) will be critical for identifying climate-smart agricultural strategies in hazard-prone areas. At the community level, local Non-Governmental Organisations, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), and Village Development Organisations (VDOs) should be included as their support is critical to local service delivery and community ownership.

Pakistan’s public social protection schemes should be expanded to cover climate vulnerable households.

Vulnerability mapping exercises and long-term climate projections should be employed to add climate vulnerable beneficiaries to the rolls of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Ehsaas, and other federal and provincial social protection schemes. To ensure the availability of short-term weather forecasts and long-term climate projections, partnerships can be pursued with the Pakistan Meteorological Department, the World Meteorological Organization, and the Regional Integrated Multi-hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES). Vulnerability metrics (that aggregate risk or are specific to individual hazards) that account for both slow and rapid onset risks will need to be developed. Households, projected to face

increased risk in the future, can then be identified and supported with cash and other resource transfers to facilitate household investment in adaptation initiatives. Identifying vulnerable households and establishing mechanisms to provide support will also enable forecast-based finance and anticipatory action initiatives.

Anticipatory actions are needed to support vulnerable communities before the full impact of a climate hazard is felt.

Remote sensors and early warning systems are required to accurately understand and predict short and long-term climate hazards, and alert local communities along with public authorities and humanitarian-development actors that action needs to be taken. Across LZs, a capacity gap analysis is needed to identify where existing monitoring systems need to be upgraded, or new infrastructure installed. Where relevant, local monitoring systems can be combined with down-scaled global satellite data through technologies such as the WFP's Platform for Real-time Impact and Situation Monitoring (PRISM) for greater accuracy and actionability (Fara and Bidault 2021). Early warning systems should also be used to provide last-mile climate advisory services directly to impacted communities, serving to 'democratise the weather' and empower rapid and informed household decision-making.

With monitoring systems in place and climate-vulnerable households identified and within the reach of social protection schemes (*see earlier recommendation*), forecast-based finance can be employed to automatically disburse cash assistance when certain environmental thresholds are reached. This would involve stakeholders (communities, PDMA, humanitarian development actors, etc.) agreeing on pre-determined financing actions to be disbursed in the event of a hazard, setting a forecast trigger to indicate that a hazard is imminent, and then automatically releasing funds should that trigger be exceeded (WFP n.d.). This system can then be monitored and improved over time for greater impact and accuracy. Pairing forecast-based finance with anticipatory action initiatives can further increase impact.

Climate-vulnerable livelihoods can be safeguarded through the creation of community assets.

Where drought and heat stress are likely to grow more intense and widespread (all LZs), the pre-emptive construction of livestock shelters, water storage infrastructure (rainwater capture facilities, shallow and deep-water ponds, community reservoirs), and water distribution mechanisms (solar lift irrigation, drip irrigation) can alleviate negative impacts for crops and livestock. In flood-prone areas (LZ1, LZ5), embankments, dikes, protective *bunds*, and

livestock shelters can protect crops and livestock from water damage. All of the above can be employed in tandem with landscape-level interventions to promote soil water holding capacity, soil conservation, tree plantation (especially in partnership with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's provincial government's Billion Tree Tsunami programme), and shade cropping. Assets that promote market connectivity, such as post-harvest storage and processing, means of transport, and rural roads can further help enhance livelihoods and thus, strengthen resilience of climate-vulnerable households.

Initiatives to create community assets can be made more cost-effective through private sector partnerships. For example, in-kind donations can be solicited from Pakistan's cement subsector – already a significant contributor of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) donations – for the construction and upgrading of physical assets key to climate resilience (PCP 2017). Cement could be used to rehabilitate or construct livestock shelters, poultry and dairy production facilities, embankments, dikes, and *karez* restoration initiatives to address floods, droughts, water-use efficiency, and value-added agricultural production. Similar partnerships should be sought with other sectors aligned with varying asset creation plans.

Community-based participatory planning should be employed to safeguard agricultural livelihoods.

Climate vulnerable communities should be at the centre of planning processes seeking to build resilience. Community-based planning forums, potentially convened by district level authorities, in partnership of local and provincial administrations, along with international and community-based development partners, can be a means for sharing long-term climate forecast with communities and leveraging indigenous knowledge for climate resilience. These forums can be used to educate communities on the climate risks they are facing and improved means of adaptation, help to identify locally suitable alternatives for crops likely to be adversely affected by long-term climate trends, such as maize, millet, and cereals, and promote diversification into locally validated and climate-smart alternatives, such as (potentially) legumes. Further, community-based planning forums are a good vehicle for bringing stakeholders together to generate village profiling plans, which have been recommended by provincial climate change policies in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (LZ1, LZ2, LZ5). Such plans can then inform future climate resilience, agricultural development, and poverty reduction strategies locally, and be used to connect smallholders with financing opportunities.

Sustainable finance must be secured at the project level, for implementing partners, and at community level, for household impact and adaptation.

Due to the protracted nature of the climate crisis, short-term projects will fail to build long-term resilience. Longer lifecycle projects (lasting at least 5-10 years) that target the economic, political, and social root causes of vulnerability are required to successfully boost resilience. This can be achieved, in part, through stronger partnerships between the UN agencies, who often act as an intermediary for large-scale climate finance to flow between multilateral development banks or climate funds, and national implementing partners. Greater alignment between the Rome-based agencies in particular – WFP, FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) – is required to ensure food and nutritional security despite increasingly harsh climatic conditions across Pakistan. An upcoming rural transformation project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, funded by IFAD and jointly implemented by WFP and FAO, may serve as a model for future initiatives given its scope, scale, and collaborative nature.

At the community level, finance must flow directly to ‘underbanked’ and climate vulnerable households. Public and commercial banks specialising in rural loans, such as the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and Faysal Bank, alongside microfinance organisations, including the Pakistan Microfinance Network, Aga Khan Development Network, and FINCA Microfinance Bank Limited, can be supported in providing no- or low-interest loans to micro, small, and medium-sized agricultural enterprises. To reduce the risk for financiers, loans can be designed and disbursed in-line with local adaptation plans that have been developed in partnership and validated by larger public and international organisations.

Conclusion

Although Pakistan’s agricultural production is expected to increase through 2050 while hunger and malnourishment decline, climate change poses a severe threat to the food security of households that depend on smallholder production for subsistence and livelihoods. Rising temperatures and erratic precipitation will imperil the production of key commodities through increasingly severe drought, heat stress, and flood conditions. Small agricultural households in climate vulnerable areas are likely to bear a disproportionate burden of the negative impacts of climate change, and policies and interventions are required to distribute production and economic gains at the national level to climate vulnerable households in all livelihood zones assessed: south-eastern Sindh’s irrigated plains, south-eastern Sindh’s sandy deserts, north-

western Balochistan's dry mountains, southwestern Sindh's dry plateau, and north-western Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's dry mountains. Recommended interventions include enhanced support for provincial and sub-provincial administrations to implement national climate change policies at the district, tehsil, and Union Council level; an expansion of Pakistan's social protection schemes to cover climate vulnerable beneficiaries; introduction of anticipatory action initiatives to pre-emptively provide support in the case of an impending climate hazard; participatory interventions that are focused on safeguarding agricultural livelihoods and building community assets in climate vulnerable areas; and the provision of temporally sustainable finance to implement long-term climate adaptation initiatives.

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Case Study on Urban Food Systems in Peshawar, Pakistan: COVID-19, Food Security and Resilience *

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Martyn Clark, Nicolas Bidault, Arshad Jadoon &
Sophie Goudet**

* This chapter has been approved as a *Working Paper* by the referee. It is based on a UN World Food Programme study. For details, see: <<https://www.wfp.org/publications/food-security-and-diets-urban-asia-how-resilient-are-food-systems-times-covid-19>>.

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Abstract

The Asia-Pacific region is one of the worst affected by hunger and malnutrition and the situation worsened during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This crisis exposed existing weaknesses in global food systems, which threaten the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable in society – including the urban poor, who were disproportionately affected by the spread of the virus and by measures to contain its spread. This study assessed the impacts of COVID-19 on urban food systems in eight selected cities in the Asia-Pacific region, including Peshawar in Pakistan. A range of methods and data sources were used to characterise urban food systems and assess the impacts of COVID-19 (including primary, secondary, and geospatial data). It was found that the Pandemic increased levels of vulnerability and food insecurity in urban food systems via three main mechanisms: disruption to food supply chains, increased food prices and loss of income – with impacts on food availability and affordability. Available data suggest that nutritional vulnerability has increased for women and children in urban areas. Based on the findings from the eight cities, the study offers a series of programme and policy recommendations (such as measures to strengthen food supply chains and improve food access and social protection for the urban poor) and methodological recommendations (focused on priorities for data collection and analysis).

Introduction

Before the COVID-19 Pandemic, the world was already not on track to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030, as stipulated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). In 2019, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated that 687 million people globally were undernourished (FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO 2021). Over half of these people (350 million) were in the Asia-Pacific region; where an estimated 74.5 million children under five were stunted, 31.5 million were wasted, and 14.5 million were overweight in 2019. Furthermore, 945 million (22% of the population) experienced moderate or severe food insecurity in the same year. A key factor driving these nutritional challenges was the cost of a healthy diet, which was not affordable for 1.9 billion people in the region.

The situation has worsened considerably during the COVID-19 pandemic. Compared with 2019, an additional 57 million people were affected by hunger in Asia in 2020 (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO 2021). The total number of undernourished people in the region increased to 418 million (more than half the global total of 768 million). The prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in Asia increased from 22.7% in 2019 to 25.8% in 2020.

The Pandemic exposed existing weaknesses in global food systems, which threaten the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable in society. In urban areas, poor people have been disproportionately affected by the spread of the virus and by measures to contain its spread (FAO 2020). The risk of transmission is particularly high for people living in overcrowded and unsafe conditions in informal urban settlements or slums. The urban poor tend to rely on informal or casual labour, with limited assets or savings, so they are highly susceptible to the financial impacts of lockdowns. They also buy food in small quantities, depending on small shops and wet markets, many of which were forced to close during the Pandemic. Urban poor households typically spend most of their income on food, so any major disruption in food accessibility and affordability will inevitably have dire effects on food security. Women and children in urban poor households are likely to be the most vulnerable to health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.

The need to transform the global food systems has never been more urgent. The world needs food systems that are more efficient, resilient, inclusive, and sustainable, so that they provide affordable and nutritious diets for all, and decent livelihoods for the people who work within them (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO 2021).

This study was commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP) and implemented by Dikoda Ltd. to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on urban food systems in eight selected cities in the Asia-Pacific (WFP 2022). Its aim was to characterise levels of vulnerability and resilience in urban food systems. This evidence will be used to inform WFP's activities and programming to protect vulnerable urban populations from escalating levels of food insecurity and malnutrition.

Methodology

The research study was conducted between January and April 2021. All data collection and stakeholder engagement activities were conducted online due to global travel restrictions associated with the Pandemic. Full details can be found in the study report (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO 2021).

Selection of Cities in Partnership with WFP

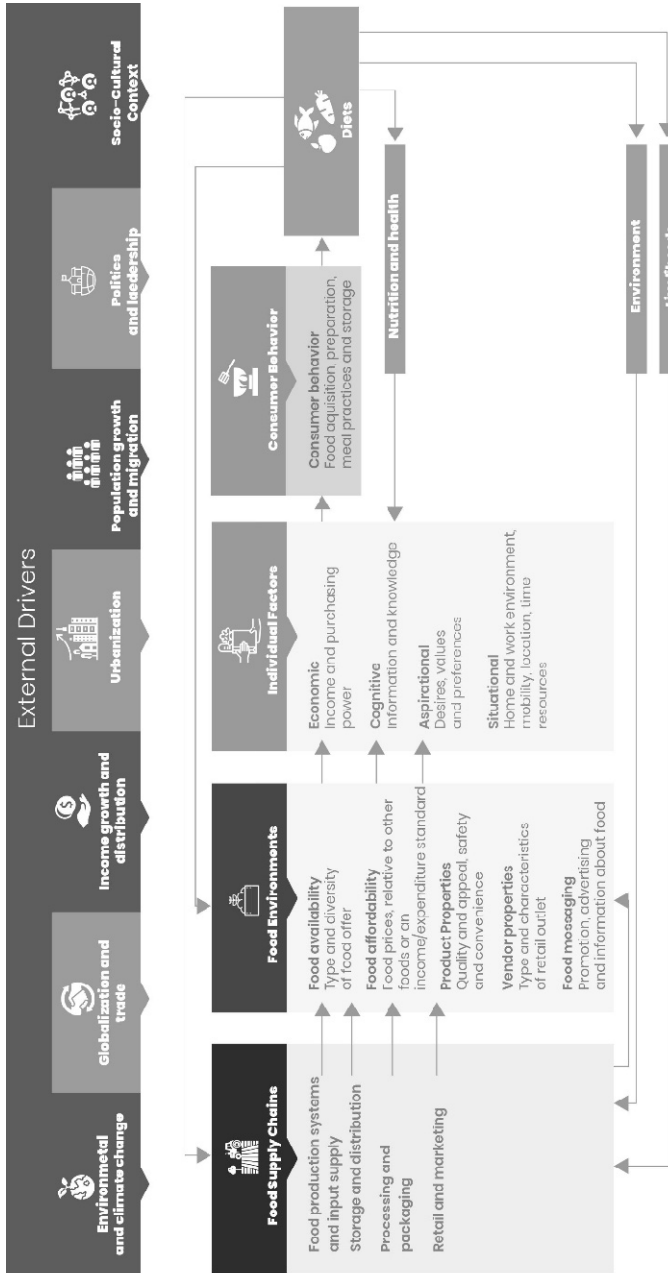
Cities were selected in collaboration with the WFP Regional Bureau, Bangkok and WFP Country Offices in the Asia-Pacific. Inclusion criteria were primarily based on where WFP Country Offices are located, to facilitate rapid data collection and networking with relevant stakeholders. The final list of cities included in this study was:

1. Chittagong, Bangladesh
2. Cox's Bazar Refugee Camps and Host Communities, Bangladesh
3. Dhaka, Bangladesh
4. Jakarta, Indonesia
5. Kabul, Afghanistan
6. Peshawar, Pakistan
7. Phnom Penh, Cambodia
8. Quezon City, Philippines

Conceptual Framework

The Food Systems Dashboard Framework shown in Figure 1 was used to guide data collection and analysis (GAIN and Johns Hopkins University 2020). This framework depicts food systems in terms of external drivers (macro-level factors), four interrelated components of food systems (food supply chains, food environments, individual factors, and consumer behaviour) and outcomes of food systems (including diet, nutrition, and health). The Food Systems Dashboard was developed as a tool for comparing country food systems and the online database is populated with country-level data for selected indicators. The same framework was adapted to study urban food systems at the city level.

Figure 1: Food Systems Dashboard Framework



Adapted from: HLP-E (2017). Nutrition and food systems. A report by the high level panel of experts on food security and nutrition of the committee on world food security, Rome, Italy

Data Collection and Analysis Methods

A range of methods and data sources were used to characterise urban food systems and assess the impacts of COVID-19.

Primary Quantitative Data: Surveys with food system actors in the private sector, local government, UN agencies and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) (2,528 respondents in total across all eight cities; 742 in Peshawar). Survey instruments were designed to investigate the impacts of COVID-19, strengths and vulnerabilities in city food systems, and response priorities in each city. They were translated into local languages (Urdu in Pakistan) and administered by national call centres using an online data entry system.

Primary Qualitative Data: Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with representatives from local government, UN agencies, NGOs, Food Security and Nutrition Cluster Coordinators, and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) involved in supporting the food system during the pandemic (30 interviews in total across all eight cities). In Peshawar, these included representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), and Nutrition Cluster Coordinator.

Secondary Data Analysis: Analysis was conducted of reports and online databases for selected indicators of vulnerability relating to components and outcomes of food systems (aligned to the Food Systems Dashboard). Pre-COVID data were used as a baseline to highlight vulnerability in the food system that existed before the crisis. Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) data were manipulated to produce city-level indicators, using urban district data and appropriate survey weighting techniques performed in Stata 16.1. When city-level data were not available for key indicators of interest, district, regional or national data was used.

Geospatial Data: Analysis was done of peer reviewed urban datasets to provide context to the assessment on food security. Open-source data products such as the Global Human Settlements Layer (GHSL) were used to provide location-based information relating to population trends and dynamics and in relation to land-use changes, presence of infrastructure, natural hazards, and other external drivers that may influence food security and vulnerability.

Development of Typology

Resilience is the ability of a system to adapt and recover after a shock has occurred. This complex and dynamic process depends on the severity and intensity of the shock and the vulnerability of the system. A typology of resilience in urban food systems was developed to show how different parts of food systems may exhibit different levels of resilience (or capacities for resilience). Based upon the Food Systems Dashboard Framework, one key indicator was selected for each of the following dimensions: external drivers, food supply chains, food environments, individual factors, consumer behaviour and diets (outcomes). For each indicator, the study developed cut-offs for three different types of resilience capacity: absorptive, adaptive, and transformative. These capacities may also be interpreted as low, medium, and high levels of resilience, respectively. This new typology offers a simplified classification of resilience in urban food systems, which can be used to compare cities and identify priorities and opportunities to strengthen resilience.

Results

The study findings from across the Asia-Pacific region suggest that COVID-19 has increased levels of vulnerability and food insecurity in urban food systems via three main mechanisms:

1. Disruption to food supply chains – impact on food availability.
2. Increased food prices – impact on food affordability.
3. Loss of income – impact on food affordability.

The comprehensive study report is available online, including a regional overview and eight city briefs, which provide a visual representation of the available data and highlight areas of vulnerability and resilience in city food systems (WFP 2022). This chapter focuses on findings from the city of Peshawar in Pakistan, with some regional findings included for context and comparisons. The first section presents some external drivers of the urban food system in Peshawar, which may have influenced its resilience during the Pandemic. The following sections present evidence relating to impacts on food availability, food affordability and nutritional vulnerability. Finally, the study presents typology of resilience in the urban food system in Peshawar.

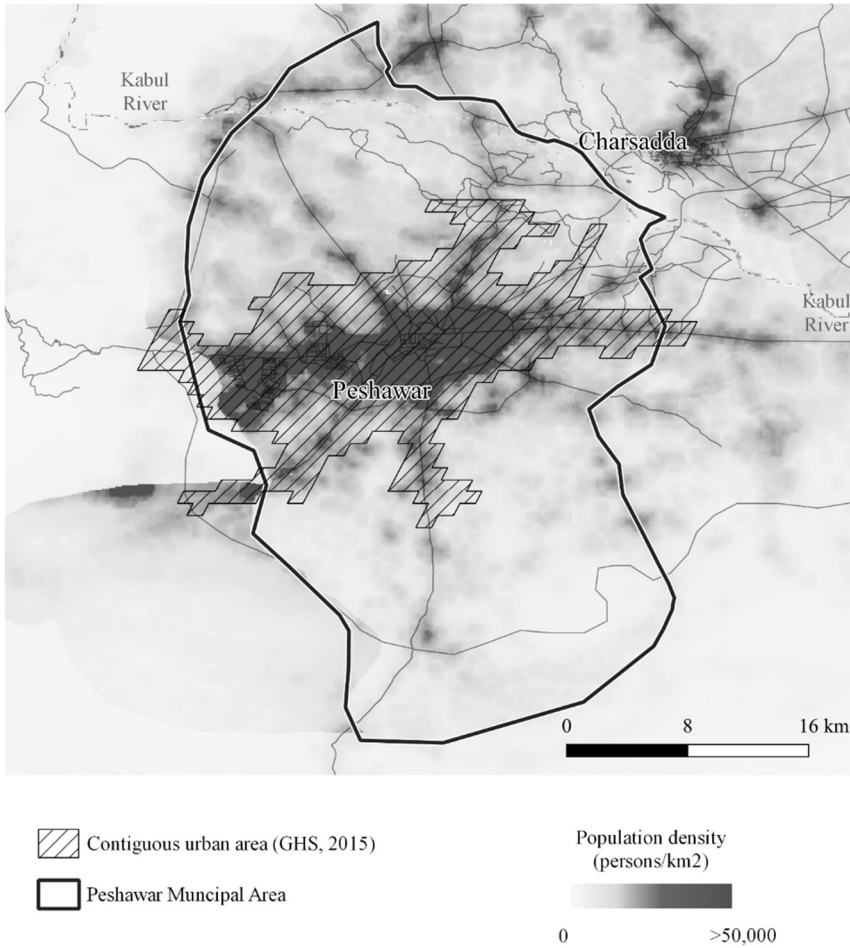
External Drivers

External drivers of food systems include climate change, globalisation and trade, population growth and population density, urbanisation, migration, political factors, social and economic inequalities, and other macro-level factors. Such factors influenced how and why the Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) originated and spread around the world, how people and governments responded, and its impact on food systems. In-depth analysis and exploration of external drivers was beyond the scope of this study. The maps shown in Figures 2 and 3 illustrate some key external drivers that shape the food system in Peshawar. These include the use of land and indications of where population density and growth are most intense, highlighting the relationship cities have with food production, and suggesting areas of higher vulnerability during crises that affect the food system.

Peshawar is the sixth largest city in Pakistan and capital of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (former North West Frontier Province). The city has grown broadly east-west along the Peshawar Valley, and several high-density suburbs have grown up including Hayatabad to the west of the city. Around 20% of the population of the urban agglomeration is living outside the formal, Peshawar Municipal Corporation area (Figure 2). The neighbouring city of Charsadda lies around 15 km away across the Kabul River, where a further 100,000+ persons live.

Historically, cities and city growth relied on a surplus from nearby food sources to feed their citizens. Many of the cities in this study and the Asia-Pacific region continue to enjoy a symbiotic relationship with the rural hinterlands that surround them (WFP 2022). Inevitably, as urbanisation proceeds and cities grow, there is likely to be a loss of cultivated land near cities. Nowadays, 36% of the land with a 50 km radius of Peshawar is cultivated for food production (40.3 km² cultivated land per 100,000 persons) (Figure 3). The city relies on food supplies imported from more productive agricultural areas of the country, especially for wheat (the staple grain) and fresh fruits and vegetables. Most of the other cities included in the study have even lower proximity to cultivated land, except for Phnom Penh, which is surrounded by fertile and productive land (193.5 km² per 100,000 persons) and this contributes to the overall resilience of its food system (Ibid.).

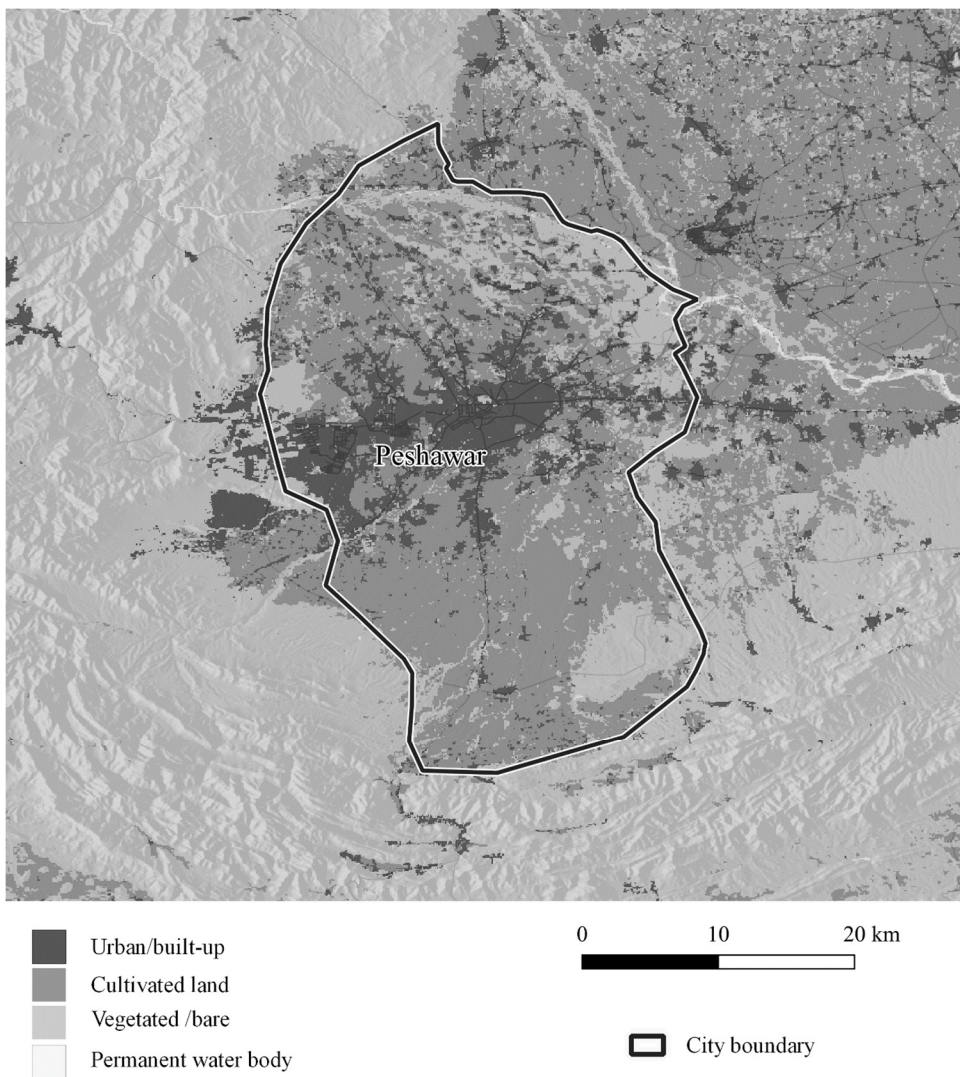
Figure 2: Urbanisation Trends in & around Peshawar¹



Source: Authors' own.

¹ Visualisation by Dikoda Ltd. using data from Florczyk, A. et al., (2019), and population density data from WorldPop (n.d.).

Figure 3: Landcover Map showing Proximity of Urban Areas to Cultivated Land²



Source: Authors' own.

² Analysis by Dikoda Ltd. with landcover classification data extracted from Buchhorn et al. (2020).

Impact on Food Availability

Since the COVID-19 Pandemic, food supply chains around the world have been disrupted by transport and movement restrictions imposed by governments. Urban food systems have been disproportionately affected by these restrictions because they rely on food brought into the city from rural areas, where most food production occurs. Urban areas typically have longer and more complex supply chains than rural areas, which makes them more susceptible to disruptions during shocks. In poor urban and peri-urban areas, weak infrastructure and recurrent exposure to external shocks means that food supply chains are likely to be less resilient compared to wealthier urban areas.

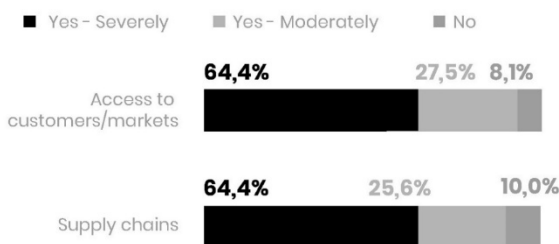
The surveys conducted in February and March 2021 provided insights into the extent and nature of disruption to food supply chains and the impact on businesses in the food sector (WFP 2022). In Peshawar, the private sector survey was completed by 160 businesses across the food sector, including food production (n=29), manufacturing and processing (n=24), storage and suppliers (n=29), retailers and caterers (n=60) and other food-related businesses (n=18). The respondents were mostly owners of small businesses (classified as SMEs); the majority (88%) had fewer than 10 employees. Two-thirds (66%) of respondents had suppliers primarily located outside the city of Peshawar. Most business owners reported that supply chains were severely (64%) or moderately (26%) disrupted during the Pandemic, and access to customers and markets was also severely (64%) or moderately (28%) disrupted (Figure 4). Most business owners reported lower income during the Pandemic (79%), and some had lost over half their income (26%). At the time of the survey, the majority of respondents had not received financial support from the government (78%), and they had adapted in other ways such as selling business assets (26%), investing personal money (21%), and taking business loans (19%) (Figure 5). Some of these adaptations may contribute to longer term resilience for those business that survive the Pandemic.

A range of government and private sector interventions helped to protect supply chains and keep food moving from rural areas into major cities during the Pandemic.

The Government of Pakistan (GoP) responded by relaxing transport restrictions to keep food supplies moving around the country. In April 2020, UN agencies reported no major food supply or availability concerns in most parts of the country (FAO and WFP 2020). In Peshawar, key informants recalled that food supplies were disrupted during the early weeks of

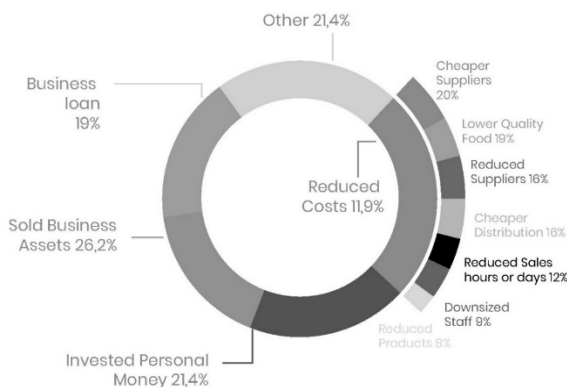
the Pandemic and then stabilised. Most of the food markets remained open and well supplied. However, the survey findings suggest that small businesses continued to experience supply chain disruptions that were perhaps not felt at city or national level.

Figure 4: Extent of Disruption of COVID-19 on Markets & Supply Chains



Source: Authors' own.

Figure 5: Private Sector & Lower Income: Costing Methods (Breakdown of Reduced Costs)



Source: Authors' own.

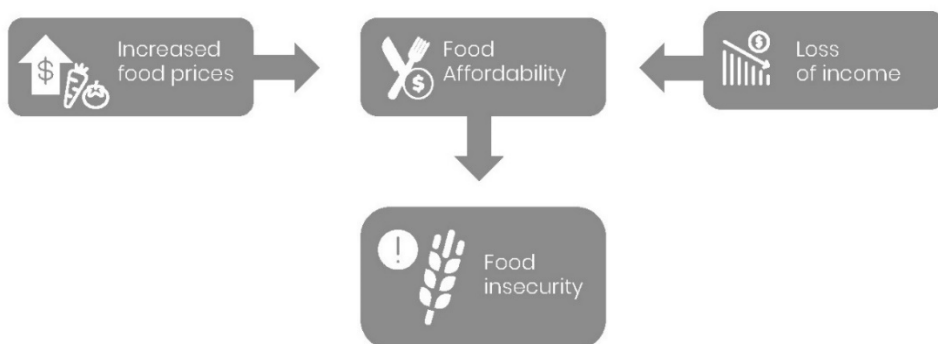
The GoP and other food system stakeholders recognised the need to protect food supply chains from future shocks and emergencies. One stakeholder in Peshawar referred to ‘supply chain smoothening’ to improve the resilience of the food system. However, improved storage facilities are needed to reduce post-harvest losses from local produce (during the short growing season) and preserve food transported from the province of Punjab. While investments were made in grain storage facilities and seed silos, to support wheat supply chains, more financing is needed in affordable cold storage solutions.

The study found that other cities in the region had implemented measures to reduce the dependence of urban food systems on imported goods, including urban agriculture programmes, support for local food networks, and development of online marketplaces to connect local food producers with consumers (WFP 2022). With clear strategies and investments in such approaches, cities can work towards shortening and simplifying food supply chains to make urban food systems more sustainable and resilient.

Impact on Food Affordability

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the combination of increased food prices and loss of income meant that food became unaffordable for many people in cities who were not previously considered vulnerable to food insecurity (Figure 6):

Figure 6: Dual Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Affordability & Food Insecurity

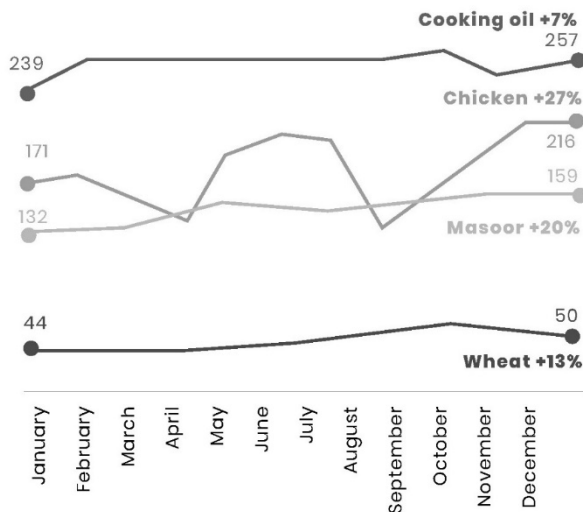


Source: Authors' own.

Food prices increased during the Pandemic in all eight cities under study in the Asia-Pacific region, with considerable variations between cities and between food groups. Food commodity prices are influenced by a multitude of macro-level factors (external drivers of the food system), including currency fluctuations, energy prices, inflation, government subsidies, food production shortfalls, seasonal variations, and natural disasters, to name but a few. It is beyond the scope of this study to assess how all these factors came into play during 2020-21.

In Peshawar, the average food price increase from January 2020 to December 2020 was 17% (calculated from WFP VAM data using four key commodities). The greatest price increase among the selected commodities was reported for chicken at 27% (Figure 7):

Figure 7: Change in Food Prices in Peshawar (January–December 2020)



Source: Authors' own.

A report by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics found that 55% of the working age population in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were either affected by job losses or reduced income in 2020 (PBS 2020). The financial implication at household level was 67% reduced household income in urban areas (compared to 63% in rural areas). Similarly, in urban slums in Bangladesh, the reduction in average household income was 75% (PPRC-BIGD 2020). In contrast, Phnom Penh in Cambodia demonstrated greater resilience and the average loss of household income there was less dramatic at 40% (Future Forum and Angkor Research and Consulting 2020).

In all eight cities, daily wage earners and informal sector workers were among the worst affected by loss of income (WFP 2022). Many of these people were not registered for social protection and had no financial buffer, making them highly susceptible to debt and food insecurity. A new category of urban poor emerged - households that were not previously considered vulnerable were suddenly experiencing food insecurity. A UN stakeholder in Peshawar reported that increased numbers of men and women (including some well-dressed people) were begging on the streets because they could not afford to buy food.

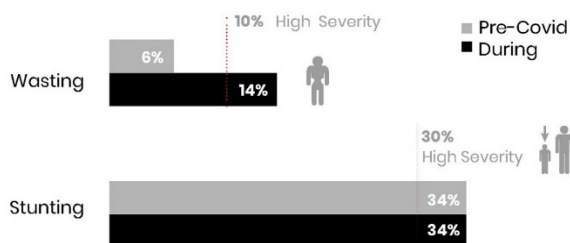
Governments have adapted, supplemented, and scaled up their existing social protection programmes to support people who became vulnerable in cities. As the Pandemic unfolded, it was evident that many existing social protection programmes were not fit for purpose to provide an adequate response, due to inaccurate targeting and lack of access for workers in the informal economy (UNDP 2020). Targeting support in urban settings requires consideration of the specific characteristics of urban populations. Urban poor households tend to be more mobile than rural poor households, often moving around in search of work or accommodation. This makes them more difficult to track, and interventions more resource intensive to administer. Governments in the Asia-Pacific region have adapted and expanded social protection programmes to provide additional support to the urban poor during the COVID-19 Pandemic, for example, by increasing the value of cash transfers, increasing coverage, waiving conditionalities and improving accessibility.

The GoP launched the Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme in April 2020. This reinforced the existing Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) with more inclusive eligibility criteria to account for increasing vulnerability in urban areas. Between April and October 2020, more than 15 million of the most vulnerable families with unsustainable livelihoods were provided with financial assistance of PKR 12,000 (equivalent to USD 86) to buy rations to alleviate hunger. A web-portal and SMS service were launched so that individuals could check their eligibility and register for the benefits using their national identity number. Ehsaas is an umbrella programme that includes social safety measures, education and human capital formation, thus, removing structural barriers in alleviating poverty. Importantly, Ehsaas is aligned with the United Nation's (UN) Agenda 2030.

Impact on Nutritional Vulnerability

Food security, diet and nutrition data collected before and during the COVID-19 Pandemic suggests that nutritional vulnerability increased in Peshawar. The prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity increased from 18% in 2018 (National Nutrition Survey 2018) to 37% in 2020. The proportion of wasted children increased from 6% in 2018 (DHS 2017-18) to 14% in 2020 (FAO and WFP 2020). Stunting has remained high at 34% since 2018 (Figure 8). Diet quality among children is historically low in Peshawar - only 8% of children aged 6-23 months received the Minimum Acceptable Diet in 2018 (DHS 2017-18). Data were not available to show the impact of COVID-19 on the diets of women or children.

Figure 8: Wasted & Stunted Children in Peshawar (Pre- & Post- COVID-19 Pandemic)



Source: Authors' own.

The Coping Strategies Index (CSI) and Livelihoods Coping Strategies Index (LCSI) are indicators of household food security. These can be used for rapid assessment and monitoring during emergencies when collecting data on food consumption. They assess the extent to which households use harmful coping strategies when they do not have enough food or enough money to buy food. Harmful coping strategies may include reducing the frequency of meals or purchasing food on credit. For example, in Kabul, the proportion of households using emergency coping strategies increased from 20% in May 2020 to 51% in January 2021 (data provided by WFP Afghanistan). Any seasonal effects are likely to have been exacerbated by the Pandemic. Unfortunately, these indicators were not used during the Pandemic in Peshawar. However, key informants reported that some families used coping strategies, such as reducing diet diversity and consuming more staple foods to meet energy needs.

Across all cities, food system stakeholders from the public sector and NGOs provided insights into how consumer behaviour has changed in urban areas (WFP 2022). They observed that consumer behaviour adaptations to the Pandemic were dependent on the extent to which household income was affected and opportunities to access alternatives. Wealthier households adopted coping strategies that may improve longer term resilience, while poorer households adopted more harmful and unsustainable coping strategies. Wealthier urban households whose incomes were minimally or not affected:

- ◇ Avoided wet markets due to concerns about safety and risk of infection.
- ◇ Shopped in supermarkets because they could afford higher prices.
- ◇ Switched to online shopping and/or home delivery.
- ◇ Dietary diversity not affected (other than times when certain foods were not available).

Poor urban households who lost some/all their income:

- ◇ Returned to rural areas (family networks and lower cost of living).
- ◇ Reduced non-food spending, sold assets, borrowed money.
- ◇ Shared food with neighbours.
- ◇ Reduced food basket – focused on staple foods (less protein, fruits, and vegetables).
- ◇ Reduced meal frequency.
- ◇ Prioritised children over adults.
- ◇ Begged for food.

Resilience of Urban Food System

Table 1 shows the selected indicator for each dimension of the food system, and the values obtained in the study for Peshawar. This study did not identify an appropriate indicator for consumer behaviour (hence, this dimension is not included in Table 1). For diet outcomes, Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) was selected as the most appropriate indicator, as women's diet diversity are likely to be more affected during a crisis, but no data were available for this indicator in Peshawar. The assessment of resilience of the urban food system was, therefore, based on four indicators. The Food Systems Dashboard highlights the need for more high-quality data and key indicators, which would strengthen understanding of the relationship between food systems and diets (Fanzo et al., 2020).

Table 1: Typology of Resilience - Key Indicators

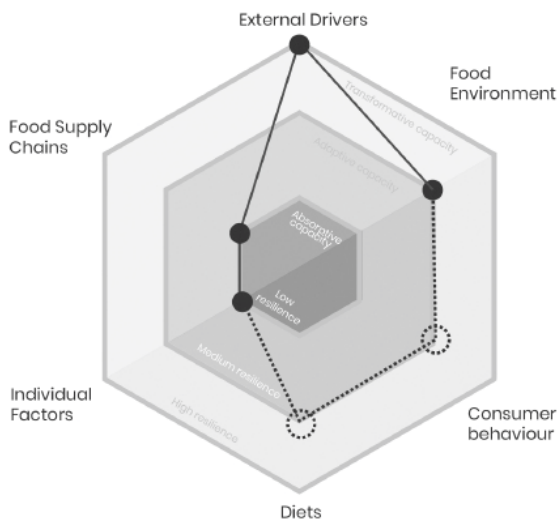
Dimensions of Food Systems	External Drivers	Food Supply Chains	Food Environments	Individual Factors	Diets
Selected Indicators	Cultivated land within 50 km of city (km ² per 100,000 persons)	Proportion of food sector businesses with most suppliers located within the city (%)	Average change in food prices (during Pandemic) based on four selected food items (%)	Reduction in average household income (%)	Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women of Reproductive Age (MDD-W) (%)
Values for Peshawar	40.3	34%	17%	67%	No data
Resilience Capacity	Transformative (high)	Absorptive (low)	Adaptive (medium)	Absorptive (low)	No data

Source: Authors' own.

The urban food system in Peshawar demonstrated mixed levels of resilience during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Its dependence on suppliers located outside the city (as reported in the survey of SMEs in the food sector) and the dramatic loss of income in urban areas may have contributed to increased food insecurity among the urban poor.

The spider plot (Figure 9) highlights positive opportunities for transformation in the city’s food system, such as interventions to shorten and simplify food supply chains and improving social protection for the urban poor. Some of these measures have already begun to be implemented in Peshawar, as outlined in this chapter. This novel typology may be used for the ongoing development and monitoring of food system resilience in the city.

Figure 9: Spider Plot Typology for Peshawar



Source: Authors’ own.

* Hollow circles indicate lack of data.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter provided an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on the urban food system in Peshawar and found that food supply chains were disrupted, with detrimental effects on small businesses in the food sector, which serve the urban poor. While the cost of a healthy and nutritious diet was already out of reach for many people, the combination of increased food prices and loss of income meant that food became unaffordable for many people in cities. Increased levels of food insecurity were reported in the city of Peshawar compared to before the Pandemic. Regional data suggests that diet quality and diet diversity have declined in urban areas during the Pandemic. This is likely to be the case in Peshawar, but better data is needed to identify the most vulnerable groups and target interventions effectively. The study identified and showcased a range of interventions and responses that may help to mitigate the impacts of the Pandemic and protect the urban poor.

Based on the findings from Peshawar and the other seven cities included in this overall study (WFP 2022), it is recommended that the following approaches should be considered to strengthen the resilience of urban food systems:

Programme and Policy Recommendations

- ◇ Provide financial support through grants and technical assistance to SMEs in the food sector to protect the integrity of food supply chains and facilitate transformative adaptations to current and future shocks. Access of the informal sector to such interventions needs to be considered as it plays a significant role in the food supply chain of the urban poor.
- ◇ Support dynamic urban food supply chains, for example, by connecting small urban vendors with rural suppliers and supporting the development of communication platforms to reach urban poor households and improve access to affordable and healthy foods.
- ◇ Initiate social protection and safety net programmes that are adaptive and responsive to shocks and support those worst affected, including the urban poor.
- ◇ Start urban agriculture programmes to enable city residents and communities to grow their own food and generate additional income.

Methodological Recommendations

- ◇ Standardised indicators of resilience and vulnerability are needed to facilitate comparisons between cities. More research is needed to provide guidance on standardised indicators relevant to individual factors and consumer behaviour.
- ◇ Further development and application of the typology of urban food systems resilience is needed which may be used as an operational tool to identify priorities and opportunities to strengthen resilience.
- ◇ Innovative approaches towards defining urban areas and collecting city-specific data, such as combining local surveys with spatial, remotely sensed data, are required that can bring unique insights.

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Labour Migration and Systemic Resilience: A Sending State's Perspective from Pakistan*

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Abstract

This commentary uses the case of Pakistan to highlight the important role of sending countries in the regulation of labour migration and protection of migrant workers abroad. The COVID-19 Pandemic has not only raised important questions about the labour immigration policies of receiving countries but also about how sending countries need to invest in strengthening their labour emigration and migrant protection policies to be able to respond more effectively to major external shocks.

Introduction

COVID-19 saw migrants and their families around the world, most of whom are from the Global South, badly affected by restricted mobility and associated lost income, job insecurity, and massive drops in global remittances (World Bank 2020; and Kikkawa et al., 2020). Concerns also emerged in many receiving states of the Global North about the resilience of the provision of essential services during the Pandemic, especially in sectors heavily dependent on migrant labour such as food and agriculture, social care, and health services (see, e.g., Anderson et al., 2020; Palumbo and Corrado 2020).

Emerging debates about how to strengthen systemic resilience in essential sectors that are heavily dependent on migrant labour have, by and large, focused much more on Northern receiving states than on sending countries in the Global South. But COVID-19 has exposed many gaps in the labour emigration systems and policies of sending countries that often do not ensure adequate protection for their migrants working abroad. This was evidenced when thousands of migrants were stranded after lockdowns in various receiving countries around the world, with no one willing to take responsibility to take them back to their home countries (Hashmi 2020).

Pakistan is one such country, whose labour migrants were stranded globally, mostly in the Gulf States when COVID-19 lockdowns occurred. Not only did the lockdowns and other COVID-19 measures bring some of the sectors they were employed in to a standstill in receiving states, but they also challenged the ability of their home country to assist and help protect her citizens working abroad.

This essay uses the case of Pakistan to highlight the important role of sending countries in the regulation of labour migration and protection of migrant workers abroad. The COVID-19 Pandemic has not only raised important questions about the labour immigration policies of receiving countries but also about how sending countries need to invest in strengthening their labour emigration and migrant protection policies to be able to respond more effectively to major external shocks.

COVID-19 and Pakistani Labour Migrants in the Gulf

There are approximately 11 million Pakistani labour migrants globally, over 90% of whom are employed in low-skilled or medium-skilled jobs in the Gulf States (BEOE 2019). Once Pakistan closed its borders as a response to the Pandemic, these migrants were trapped in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. Pakistan eventually initiated a repatriation effort to bring the stranded workers back in late April 2020 (Dawn 2020).

However, upon return, a large number of them tested positive for COVID-19 (Aljazeera 2020). Relations between Pakistan and the UAE, a major host of Pakistani labour migrants in the Gulf, were also adversely affected by the Pakistan government arguing that many of the returning migrants had been infected with COVID-19 because of unsanitary living conditions in the host country (Greenfield and Cornwell 2020).

In addition to the extremely slow repatriation of Pakistani migrants, whom neither the Gulf States nor Pakistan financially supported during the Pandemic crisis, many returning workers had been forcibly laid off and were left with no other means of support (Iqbal 2020). The Government of Pakistan (GoP), otherwise obliged under its emigration laws to protect its overseas migrant labour force and provide them with economic opportunities upon return, did not even provide those returning with adequate quarantine facilities, let alone compensation for lost income.¹

¹ The Emigration Ordinance 1979 and its accompanying rules, make up the framework that governs the codes of conduct for overseas labour recruitment in Pakistan. The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOP&HRD) is the custodian of the Ordinance. Its mandate is to seek employment opportunities abroad for citizens and ensure the welfare of workers and their families (within Pakistan as well as abroad).

For many families of Pakistani migrant workers, remittances are the only source of income. Remittances to Pakistan dropped by 5% in March 2020 and were estimated to drop even further, in addition to a severe decline in migrant outflows following the Pandemic (Iqbal and Javed 2020). Furthermore, thousands of irregular Pakistani migrant workers² with the same plight did not have access to government assistance due to their irregular status (Khan 2020).

The vulnerability of migrants was further exacerbated, when the Gulf States used COVID-19 as an additional catalyst to pursue their much-touted 'Workforce Nationalisation Policies' to reduce their dependence on an overseas workforce in many sectors, including in healthcare, and various 'low-skilled' sectors (Alsahi 2020). The UAE has also threatened migrant-sending countries with new restrictions and quotas on the recruitment of their nationals (Ibid.).

As a result, Pakistan's migrant workforce, both in the country and overseas, is currently awaiting either a re-opening of the global economy or an economic lifeline from the government. Neither seems to be in the offing as of now (i.e., as of November 2021).

Strengthening Sending Countries' Labour Migration Policies and Protections

The COVID-19 Pandemic has made clear yet again how receiving countries have much more power and control over labour migration and the treatment of migrants than sending countries. Pakistan was not the only migrant-sending country whose labour was adversely affected by the Pandemic. Similar cases of a decline in lost income/employment and remittances were experienced by others in South Asia including, for example, Nepal, India, and Bangladesh (ReliefWeb 2020).

What does this say about the need to strengthen sending countries' labour migration and protection policies?

Firstly, most labour migration from Pakistan is 'low-skilled', meaning workers are more vulnerable due to their low wages, while at the same time, Pakistan's economy is heavily dependent on the remittances earned by these migrants. COVID-19, therefore, highlighted the urgent need for labour emigration and protection policies in migrant-sending states like

² Many migrant workers secure employment through private channels or via unauthorised employment agents. They do not benefit from state protection measures allotted to those who proceed via government-regulated channels.

Pakistan, to be better prepared to protect their most vulnerable (but high remittance earning) migrants in response to major external shocks.

Secondly, most labour migration programmes in Pakistan and other South Asian sending countries, are of a temporary nature, i.e., they always include return to origin. As a result, there has been too little focus on developing a coherent and integrated policy for such migration on behalf of both sending and receiving countries, that looks at providing migrants with adequate rights and services. Migrant workers play a key role in the provision of essential services in many receiving countries and their rights such as housing, health, employment benefits, fair wage practices, visa regulations etc., need to also be better integrated into labour migration policies in both origin and destination countries.³

Some sending countries have put in place formal policies for labour emigration such as Nigeria, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. But many sending countries still do not include legal and economic protections in their bilateral migration agreements with receiving countries. And even if they do, few do little to honour them, as the slow and reluctant reaction of Pakistan and other sending countries to repatriate their stranded migrants has shown.

This lack of attention by sending states to ensuring that their labour emigration regimes weather global shock and setbacks, creates an adverse impact on systemic resilience in the supply of labour migrants to essential sectors in receiving countries which are heavily dependent on overseas labour. What needs to be underscored, is that while receiving states have access to greater resources to bail out their own industries which suffer due to labour shortages, sending countries like Pakistan have developed no such measures to fall back on. The dependence on remittances creates further pressure on sending countries to ensure that labour emigration continues, or at least is not severely and permanently disrupted, even during major external shocks. This puts intense pressure on the migrants themselves, many of whom are unable to navigate the negative impacts of such shocks, including loss of employment and/or income, and their ripple effect on migrant households.

As a result, sending countries have an important responsibility to help ensure that even while global migration systems may be compromised, national policies and systems that promote

³ The Gulf States, a major receiving region for labour migrants from the South, have also consistently avoided developing any effective protection policies for incoming labour migrants. This is juxtaposed against the fact that this region also happens to be where labour migrants are the most vulnerable and rights abuses are well documented.

labour emigration, are able to bounce back effectively after the crisis is over. At this point, it is unsure how many of Pakistan's low-skilled migrants will be able to return to working overseas.

COVID-19, and the resulting policy concern with ensuring resilience of the provision of essential services during the current Pandemic and similar future shocks, has the potential to change the course of the discussion about the governance of global labour migration, especially the role of migrant-sending countries. The impacts of external shocks on migrants, and the role migrants play in supporting systemic resilience of societies during major shocks, is influenced not only by receiving countries' policies but also by how sending countries manage and respond to external shocks. COVID-19 has, thus, created a window of opportunity for Pakistan and other sending countries, to strengthen their labour emigration and migrant protection policies, including their ability to deal more effectively with external shocks. It is to be seen if and how they rise to this opportunity in the future.

Postscript

As of November 2021, the number of Pakistani's registered as overseas labour showed a decline compared to pre-COVID-19 levels. In 2019, almost 600,000 Pakistanis worked in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). By the end of 2021, that number dropped to just over 200,000 workers (BEOE 2021). The Prime Minister's COVID-19 Relief Fund established soon after the Pandemic in 2020, is geared towards donations from the Pakistani diaspora overseas. However, it is not clear how and if at all, this and other measures such as the Ehsaas basic income scheme benefitted overseas Pakistani workers who lost their jobs due to the Pandemic. In the meantime, the government introduced several measures such as the Roshan Digital Account and the Sohni Dharti remittance programme to encourage overseas Pakistanis to send more money home. However, these measures still do not address the issues that many low-skilled and unskilled workers face in the GCC and elsewhere in terms of workers' rights, lost compensation, or the ability to withstand the economic shock caused by COVID-19. Nor have any measures been taken in bilateral agreements between labour receiving countries and Pakistan as to how future migrant workers can be protected during the ongoing Pandemic in terms of health and employment insurance.

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Service-led Growth and Rise of Digitalisation: South Asia Perspective*

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Abstract

The emerging economic crisis around the globe due to the COVID-19 Pandemic has introduced the world to digitalisation. Among South Asian countries, the digital economy has found great potential. Following a literature review and stakeholder consultations, the findings of this study reveal that the services sector and digitalisation have tilted towards a positive trajectory, especially during the Pandemic resulting in enhanced growth in South Asia. However, there is a need for regulations and policies in countries like Pakistan, which would aid in addressing the true potential of digitalisation for inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Introduction

Digital platforms have been growing since the 1990s. These platforms have become a fundamental medium for political, sociocultural, and economic interactions (Kenney and Zysman 2016). However, in 2000, the Dot.com Bubble¹ burst which destroyed investments worth USD 6.2 trillion. During the bubble, many companies such as Microsoft and Cisco were badly affected but despite the huge losses, the value and research into digital technologies did not decline.

Digital technology provides access to individuals and households, bringing notable convenience and greater choices which produce changes in buying and consumption patterns. Digital platforms help Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) organise their business online and provide them worldwide outreach. Companies that have access to digital platforms have rebranded themselves from old or conventional firms and have adopted new forms of employment, for instance 'gig' work, local on-demand work, through informal entrepreneurial activity and Cloud-based work (ADB 2021).

Western economies have especially promoted digitalisation mainly because of the evolution and increasing usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), for instance devices, electronic tools, storage systems, and audio-visuals that create, save or process data.

¹ The 'Dot-com Bubble', also referred to as the 'Internet Bubble', is the period between 1995 and 2000 when investors invested money in Internet-based start-ups hoping that these companies would soon turn a profit.

Digitalisation serves as the 'inclusion of data and the internet is utilised in the production processes and products, new methods of consumption of household and government, formation of fixed-capital, cross-border flows, and finance' (IMF 2018, p. 27). Even though the adaptability of digitalisation tools fluctuates between countries, these shifts have shown huge growth of digital data and e-business related opportunities (Albert et al., 2019; Martinez and Albert 2019). In 2019, among the eight largest companies, seven were considered digital platform companies. They included Apple, Facebook, Microsoft, Alibaba, Alphabet, Amazon, and Tencent. Based on statistical data, Business-to-Consumer (B2C) platforms are pivoting forward for revenue generation, which touched USD 3.8 trillion in 2019 equal to 4.4% of GDP worldwide. E-commerce accounts for about half of these revenues - more than USD1.9 trillion worldwide - out of which USD1.1 trillion was generated by Asian countries. Geographically, Asia reported about 48% or USD 1.8 trillion of the total revenue of sales which is equal to 6% of its region-wise GDP (ADB 2021).

Asia surpassed the digital growth of revenue in comparison to other countries for the year 2018-19, showing growth of about 16% in business revenue among developing countries of the region (Ibid.). Countries like the Philippines, Bangladesh, Vietnam, and Thailand each have 500 million mobile connections. Singapore has the largest e-commerce position among Asian countries. In 2020, e-commerce sales had increased in Singapore and Indonesia by 30-50%. These countries showed the fastest growth trend as compared to advanced economies (Dabla-Norris 2021).

In South Asia, the E-commerce Readiness Index highlighted Pakistan's weak preparedness in assisting B2C trade with the help of online channels, as compared to other countries. From Asia, Pakistan ranked 114 out of 152 countries in 2019 (UNCTAD 2020). Although Pakistan's position improved as it jumped six points (from 120 out of 144 to 116 out of 152) between 2017 and 2020, it still lags behind several countries in the region. By comparison, countries like Indonesia and India are way ahead. The performance of both countries is significantly better in terms of percentage of population utilising the Internet, having e-bank accounts and handling secure internet servers (UNESCAP and SDPI 2021).

For growth of its nascent digital economy, it is important that Pakistan put in place the primary building blocks. A facilitating environment is required to generate a productive ecosystem for progress, supported by business-friendly policies and regulations to foster and enhance innovation. As has been experienced by other countries in the Asia-Pacific in the near

past, there is no dynamic way to foster economic development other than holistic digitisation of the economy. With the slowdown of GDP growth caused by an increasing population, the jobs, tax revenues and productivity earnings created by the ecosystem of digitalisation will be crucial for the economic growth of Pakistan. This chapter briefly examines the services sector in the value creation of South Asia; investigates the effects of digital platforms on South Asia's small firms and barriers in hampering their use; and the impact of the transition from manufacturing to services. In the end, it identifies the required reforms in trade, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and regulatory policies to benefit from 'servicification' and digital platforms.

Methodology

A detailed systematic literature review was carried out in order to access the role of digital platforms in South Asia. Stakeholder consultation was also conducted at the 24th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) with experts from the Ministry of Information and Technology, the World Bank Group, academia, and the private sector. The experts shared useful and detailed information about the digitalisation process in South Asia and explained how the latter was helping to transform the services sector and improve the growth of South Asian countries, especially during the COVID Pandemic.

Discussion

The use of digital technologies has catalysed and shifted production processes with the advent of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Digitalisation and digital 'servicification' became motivating tools for growth and implementation to combat the crisis (Rapaccini et al., 2020). Digital platforms make it easier to match buyers with sellers by lowering search costs (Goldfarb and Tucker 2019). Also, during COVID-19, digitalisation helped firms to do work online and prevented extensive human interaction.

The contribution of the services sector is pivotal but usually unrecognised. The ORBIS² dataset (2020) indicated that among South Asian firms, only 6% engaged in bundling,³ while 36% in manufacturing, and 58% to the services sector. The dataset highlighted that the South Asian

² Bureau van Dijk Orbis dataset.

³ Bundling is a marketing strategy where companies sell several products or services together as a single combined unit. The bundled products and services are usually related, but they can also consist of dissimilar items which appeal to one group of customers.

bundle firms, i.e., firms that produce goods and services, attained less profit while solely service providing firms earned the highest profits. It is interesting to note that bundling firms are 13.6% less productive than pure manufacturing firms (Mercer-Blackman 2021). South Asian firm owners who are in the manufacturing sector, have an advantage over the services providing firms in terms of size, income, labour productivity, growth of net income, and innovation-share of intangible assets. Also, business services contribute to the manufacturing sector, yielding more profits.

In India, specialised firms exist in business services that are high-skilled and have effective links with hi-tech manufacturing. Creating linkages with the help of international level production suggest that business services that consist of inputs within manufacturing also have spillover effects on the other sectors not only in South Asia, rather worldwide. The indirect association with manufacturing, with the help of client relationships or auxiliary activities, is well built for high skilled business firms, such as those in high technology, e.g., computers and telecommunications. In India, and to a certain extent in Bangladesh and Pakistan, the services sector has shown well-built forward linkages. Services can enhance productivity with the help of two factors - servicification of manufacturing and adopting digital platforms.

Adoption of Digital Platforms

The adoption of digital platforms enhances the performance of firms by expanding their access to markets leading to economies of scale and learning-by-doing, hence, increasing their productivity. Statistics from the World Bank South Asian Labour Force surveys and United States Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) show that workers who are involved in service jobs are increasingly found in all sectors of the economy (World Bank 2021). Statistics also show that all South Asian economies, excluding Pakistan, have observed an enhancement in labour skills throughout the previous decade, with India and Bangladesh, the largest improving countries (Ibid.). The share of high-skilled workers has also increased in these countries. Hence, new service-based policies are required for development of the services sector in Pakistan.

Informal firms tend to sell in very limited markets and have scarce credit, hence, they adopt an approach that is labour-intensive and inclusive with conventional technologies and small to medium-sized management practices. The literature is divided on why informal firms remain 'informal'. One is that it is a choice taken by the firm as they do not have much to gain in

terms of formalising their businesses. They, often, face limited access or options for financing, lack of availability of subsidies, high tax rates and corruption causes a significant negative impact on the formalisation of informal firms (Zylfijaj et al., 2020). Another view is that the cost to enter the formal sector is too high for the firms to achieve growth. Therefore, digital platforms or e-commerce can shift incentives to the formal sector, resulting in forced mobility from the informal structure, which has both positive as well as negative effects. The positive effects of digital platforms result in reduced capital inputs, matching and verification costs, as well as facilitating market accessibility (Zhang et al., 2021). On the other hand, e-commerce platforms can help gain market power but also polarise the industrial structures of countries (Iacovone et al., 2015). Small firms can become big players in the market. Even if digital platforms decrease the barriers of logistics, some transactional barriers may still exist (Couture et al., 2021). For example, when these firms approach a digital platform, they may lose their customers who are poor or people from the rural sector who may not trust digital transactions.

Findings of World Bank's Case Studies: Chaldal and Daraz⁴

The survey studies of firms like 'Chaldal' and 'Daraz' have shown that the direct impact of these platforms on smaller firms is that they easily found ways to approach more customers, which resulted in expansion of sales.

'Chaldal' is a Bangladesh online grocery service, which provides one hour deliveries of around 6,000 products. It has over 350 suppliers, including traders, farmers, small manufacturers, etc. The company plays an important role in identifying and selecting suppliers. Analysis has shown that firms that joined Chaldal were approached by more customers and their sales grew after joining the online portal. Firms that sell on Chaldal have also adopted new business practices (Bussolo 2021).

'Daraz' is another example of an e-commerce platform based in Pakistan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. The company consists of around 35 million customers and 100,000 vendors. It offers multiple benefits to even very small or new businesses. The platform targets are to make selling on the site accessible to everyone with a smartphone and offers a

⁴ These case studies are taken from the presentation of Maurizio Bussolo, presented by Siddharth Sharma, at the Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) organised by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan. The presentation was based on the World Bank findings on the Chaldal case study.

fast three-step online procedure to set-up an online store. No office, start-up capital, or employees are required on this platform (Ibid.).

Entrepreneurs selling on Chaldal and Daraz have above-average levels of education and are also comparatively young. The former is older and bigger, and it has more established firms. It is more specialised, whereas, Daraz is open to small entrepreneurs. The quantitative case studies of both firms show that small sellers are getting the same benefit from increased market access as larger sellers.

E-commerce provides market access to products in a greater range which helps reduce transaction costs. It also increases the incentives for sellers to systemise and manage the remarkable transformation to business practices and technologies. Thus, it provides support in the registration of businesses which helps tax authorities, and thus, takes part in accelerating the growth of the economy.

Export-Oriented Services

Pakistan is the second-highest exporter of IT services in South Asia lagging behind India, with more than USD 1 billion exports. According to the Pakistan Software Houses Association (PASHA), around 53.8% of revenue in 2019 was obtained from the export market and the rest from the domestic market (Saez et al., 2020).⁵ Service exports of Information Technology/Information Technology Enabled Services (IT/ITeS) have attained firm growth in current years showing a Compound Average Growth Rate (CAGR) of 10.8% since 2010, increasing from USD 433 million to above USD 1 billion (Gonzalo et al., 2020).

The services sector all over the world, especially in Pakistan, indicates a variation on the export side. An initiative taken by the Ministry of Information and Technology (MoIT) under the Government of Pakistan (GoP), and financial resources allocated for it, aimed to incentivise exporters by rewarding them for their participation in economic growth as services exporters, be it on a large or a small scale. The GoP increased the number of digital projects for FY2021-22, following greater investment to this sector in FY 2019-20 (MoIT 2021).

⁵ Calculated by Saez (2020) from the industry size estimates by PASHA: <<https://www.pasha.org.pk/knowledge-center/industrystats/>>. If the unofficial estimated exports mentioned later in the chapter are considered, revenue from the export market stands at around 71%.

The share of export services has seen a huge transformation. Also, the number of knowledge-intensive services has increased. In Pakistan, the IT and IT facilitating services average exports of around USD 100,000 a year. This exposure assists in terms of learning and adapting new techniques and reaching out to new clients. Smaller firms can participate in international markets because the cost of entering is lower for services as compared to the manufacturing sector.

The only problem observed by firms is in terms of payment flows. It is very crucial because it is difficult to send money out of Pakistan and a barrier to bring money in. The GoP should formalise policies that assist in the transaction process so that foreign exchange can be made easier; improve Ease-of-Doing Business for international players; consider a liberalisation policy for FDI/trade; and foster the advancement of communication and information for strengthening export-oriented services.

Ecosystem of the IT Industry and Services Sector in Pakistan

The ITeS remittances gathered from exports, consisting of computer services and call centre services, increased to USD 1.230 billion at a growth rate of 23.71% in the fiscal year 2019-20 as compared to USD 994.848 million in the same period (Radio Pakistan 2020). Even though there are current worldwide economic challenges, the stability of the IT sector of Pakistan seems significant.

From Pakistan's IT perspective, two points need to be focused on, and those are 'Pure IT' which includes IT and ICT technologies that are used domestically, and the other is 'IT Facilitating Services'. For example, an IT graduate transformed into a freelancer gives different services abroad. In addition, s/he can begin to form groups informally on various tasks, which lead to group creation, consisting of a programmer, web developer and designer, content creator, etc., hence, taking the form of a firm providing services. They not only provide services to the domestic consumer but at the foreign level as well. There is a need to focus on individuals working in offices to enhance their skills, and innovative technologies also need to be scaled up, along with curriculum and faculty trainings (MoIT 2021). The government should play its role in this regard by initiating medium to long-term programmes, and linkages should be built with Pakistan's Higher Education Commission (HEC) to introduce Associate Degree Programmes and improve the curriculum according to the latest demands. Job creation, high

skilled IT jobs, manufacturing exports, and IT platforms are the essential factors that need to be focused on, which will increase the ability of the country to improve its service exports.

The GoP has established targets to improve the IT sector and IT facilitating services that are exported. In 2021, the government was in the final stages of planning policies such as *Data Protection Act*, securing cyberspace for Pakistani citizens, *Cloud First Policy*, ensuring increased cloud storage facilities to people relevant to the IT sector (PTA 2021).

Recommendations

Given the brief overview, this study makes the following vital recommendations:

- ◇ There is a need for new and specialised policies and regulations, including capacity building of regulators, policymakers, and legislators, and with efficient intra-governmental coordination to ensure a better understanding of the digital economy and subsequent sectoral growth and development.
- ◇ There is a need to improve the working of agencies such as Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency (SMEDA), IGNITE Fund, and others working with the private sector and involving national and international experts in the design of future training programmes, especially ones focusing on the digital economy.
- ◇ Potential of human resources must be adequately utilised by creating spaces where fresh graduates are trained on digital skills.
- ◇ The relevant government departments such as the MoIT, HEC, and others should play an important role in devising medium to long-term programmes for improving the digital skills of fresh graduates.
- ◇ An Associate Degree Programme can be devised through Public-Private Partnership in line with international best practices, which will increase the ability of a country like Pakistan to increase digital exports.
- ◇ With the generation of jobs, directly linked business and professional services tend to be skill-intensive; it is feasible to make services-led growth more inclusive by organising workers for less skill-intensive jobs generated indirectly in the services economy, particularly through opportunities for on-the-job re-skilling and greater access to digital technologies, for example, establishment of ‘service centres’ in key urban areas where workers can go online and receive support in starting a business or supplying goods (World Bank 2021).

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Roadmap for Sustainable, Inclusive Trade and Investment: Case from Pakistan^{*}

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Abstract

The prioritisation of sustainable trade and investment in policy decision-making were vital to overcoming the economic shocks caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Using a qualitative approach and review of available literature, this chapter explores how inclusive trade and investment policies can help Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) integrate into global value chains, maximise economic benefits by reducing poverty, expanding trade, and empowering women and youth in an emerging economy like Pakistan. In order to build a roadmap for effective trade and investment recovery, proper implementation of devolution of economic power at all federating levels, sustainability considerations, expansion of the export base, and establishment of trade relations are essential.

Introduction

COVID-19, which initially started as a health catastrophe gradually transformed into a global economic crisis. It led to disruption on the supply and demand side resulting in an economic crisis of unprecedented magnitude. Consequently, the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was predicted to be affected between 2.3% and 4.8% (ADB 2020). Millions of people, especially in developing and least developing countries, lost their jobs and many were pushed further down into abject poverty. As per World Bank estimates, a total of 163 million people fell into poverty by the year 2021 (Sánchez-Páramo et al., 2021). It had also been predicted that the Pandemic outbreak might have caused global Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to decrease by 5% –15% (UNDP 2020).

Trade policy aligned with industrial, monetary, and fiscal policy responses in the post-Pandemic era was not only vital for supporting a sustainable economic recovery but also helped countries in preparing for possible future pandemics by providing solutions. In response to the health crises, Evenett et al., (2021) documented the use of trade policy instruments on medical goods and food products on weekly basis and found that the diverse reaction by different countries to export restrictions and import facilitation highlighted the role of trade agreements in influencing trade policy.

Global value chain structures and dynamics were also influenced by trade policy and regulations (Azmeah 2019) and disruptions in global value chains were a big challenge for Pakistan. In the United States (US), Europe, and Asia, government policy began to aggressively push re-shoring and automation themes in response to the willingness of firms to relocate their value chains amidst the global Pandemic (Kodachi 2020). In this regard, Pakistan also needs to position itself towards an export-led recovery.

Investment is a crucial component of inclusive growth. In today's world economy, FDI plays an essential role in providing sources of modern knowledge to encourage the transfer of technology. It also encourages the generation of business activities that lead to rising employment opportunities. But, unfortunately, the contribution of FDI to technological capability accumulation in developing countries has not been as important as in developed countries.

Zamani and Tayebi (2022) pointed to FDI, along with the international trade, as the main channels of technology transfer between countries either in a region or at the international level and concluded the achievement of benefits from spillover effects on economic growth, as a major factor towards sustainable development. The government plays a key role in formulating and enforcing policy regulations on international trade and investment (Horner and Alford 2019). So, the Government of Pakistan (GoP) should carry out potential measures to boost economic development. This chapter aims to:

- ◇ Consider how multilateral institutions, governments, civil society, and the private sector can work together to achieve common Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- ◇ Debate how inclusive trade and investment policies could help Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Pakistan to integrate into global value chains, maximise economic benefits by reducing poverty, and expand trade; and,
- ◇ Review the key role of gender, youth, and e-commerce in promoting inclusive recovery in developing countries.

Methodology

In order to explore the sound impacts of sustainable trade and investment on inclusive economic growth amid COVID-19, a qualitative research study was carried out and the following methodology was employed:

Literature Review

A significant strand of literature was reviewed to assess the current performance of Pakistan in international trade, its export competitiveness, and the reforms embarked on during the Pandemic. Along with that, an extensive review was carried out to determine the quality of FDI by highlighting policy implementation gaps in the country.

Stakeholder Consultations

To understand the challenges, obstructing the way towards sustainable trade and investment, frequently used practice of gathering data/information under the qualitative research approach - Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) – were undertaken. The purpose was to develop in-depth understanding from a purposely selected group of individuals (Nazir et al., 2018). Therefore, this study took an approach of formal consultation in the form of webinar series, with trade experts from the Ministry of Commerce, Board of Investment (BoI), International Trade Centre (ITC), Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), World Trade Organization (WTO), and the private sector.¹

Findings and Discussion

From the perspective of an exporter, the past national level trade performance figures acted as marketing material. But Pakistan being a textile exporter, exported approximately USD 14.53 billion worth of textile material/ products, whereas, Vietnam, India, and Bangladesh exported approximately USD 39.06, 32.95 and 41.30 billion, respectively according to 2019 data (Nawab 2019). Slow growth in the textile sector impacted overall export growth. Pakistan's trade openness is remarkably low in comparison to countries having the same GDP but having

¹ A consultation with all the stakeholders was conducted in Islamabad at the Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) in 2021.

much higher trade to GDP ratios, for instance, Vietnam, the Philippines, Netherlands etc. (Reyes 2022). Lesser trade opportunity means lesser capacity for innovation, production, and investment in the people of the country. Another obstacle to inclusive industrial growth was the unequal participation of women in the labour force in Pakistan. The lack of female participation resulted in a significant potential loss of productivity, thus, hampering the economy (Tanaka and Muzones 2016). Now, the question to answer remains - 'How can Pakistan empower small firms led by women and youth, so that they become more resilient in the national and global economy?'

As the Pandemic affected the production and employment sector, 92% of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) were affected globally; 72% firms reported a reduction in revenue; 52% firms exported less than normal; 7% stopped exporting; and 11% exported more than normal including medical-related exports (OECD 2020). The cause of major setbacks to MSMEs was their inflexible supply chains and access to limited liquidity.

The ITC, through FCDO programmes, provides technical support to mainstream trade, especially to MSMEs in 128 developing and less developing countries, as well as contributes to efforts in achieving the SDGs in the Global South. During the Pandemic, the global GDP fell to 4% in 2020 (Maliszewska et al., 2020) and women-led SMEs reported losses of over 50% being smaller and informal (Bari et al., 2020). COVID-19 disrupted the work of female entrepreneurs in the informal sector, such as the services sector, hence, making them more vulnerable to the Pandemic (Parveen et al., 2020). ITC research showed that 1 in 5 SMEs was on the edge of closure as the Pandemic halted global trade, resulting in a fall of more than 20% in the year 2020. The crisis led many people to lose jobs and pushed 150 million people towards extreme poverty and to live below the poverty line, that is, living on less than USD 1.90 a day (World Bank 2020). This also caused a 100% increase in global public debt (Papava and Charaia 2021).

Pakistan is not a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) but under its trade programme, it has been working with Pakistan in the area of trade facilitation. Pakistan's progressive approach by using advanced, simplified, and harmonised rules, and ease of border trade, were considered key factors in expanding trade. OECD also appreciated Pakistan's position on taxation and suggested the country should opt for the OECD 'Trade, Tax Deal' along with the current 236 members. This would help the country earn USD 150 million in tax revenue annually.

The WTO provides aid to countries in dispute settlement and offers a mechanism for trade policy. Instead of services regulations, 67 countries, responsible for 90% of global services trade, signed a deal with WTO (Morris 2021) that agreed to cut the red tape on licensing and focused on highly qualified service providers. According to research, such negotiation would benefit small businesses by saving USD 150 billion in trade costs annually (OECD and WTO 2021). WTO also assisted in investment in significant programmes, that aimed to reduce the uncertainty of investment in developing countries as a deal was made with Pakistan in 2017 in this regard. The aim was to help the developing or less developing countries to prosper in the trade sector while finding solutions to cope with fossil fuels and plastic pollution. WTO also provided safer policies and advanced technologies for the capacity building of MSMEs. It has been working on four main key areas including:

- ◇ Risk awareness on the linkage between trade and agenda.
- ◇ Facilitating members on the trade agenda.
- ◇ Generating data on impacts of trade on women involved in trading; and
- ◇ Training of government officials, women traders, and entrepreneurs.

From an investment perspective, in 2020, sector-wise inflow of FDI in Pakistan was 12.2%, 10.7%, 29.8%, and 24.3% in the oil and gas, financial business, power, and communication sector, respectively (Islam 2021). One FGD with the experts highlighted that sector-wise share of FDI was low, meaning investors were benefitting from Pakistan's geographical location but not investing in the country.

The importance of inclusive investment policies to enhance women-led businesses and the role of BoI for friendly and sustainable policymaking is undeniable. A 3% increase in the inflow of investment and some important measures taken by the government including reduction in the time and cost of doing business and the creation of industrial and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) helped in correcting the Balance of Payment (BoP) crisis,² which occurs when a nation is unable to pay for essential imports or service its external debt payments.

The recognition of over 90 Pakistani-made products under the Geographical Indications (Registration and Protection) Act, 2020 from Pakistani *basmati* rice to sandals from Charsadda, emeralds from Swat and *ajrak* print from Sindh was a step in the right direction

² This information was extracted through a consultation with trade experts.

to deter third parties from infringing GI marks not just domestically, but internationally. As a result, Pakistan's exports reached USD 25.3 billion in 2019 and achieved the USD 13 billion mark from July 2020 till December 2021 (PBS 2021). The government focused on strengthening the tariff rationalisation structure to help boost the industrial base and competitiveness. Efforts to exercise tariff rationalisation led to an increase in the tariff lines³ during 2019-20 and 2020-21. There were also efforts undertaken to ensure the growth of large-scale manufacturing using modern technology and techniques. The government laid the foundation of the 'Transit and Trade Agreement' with Uzbekistan as it is a gateway to reach out to Central Asian countries. Once this agreement is operational, it would provide traders with secure borders, trade routes, and efficient handling of cargo and shipment (Bhutta 2022).

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Pakistan saw an increase in investment inflows post-Pandemic as part of its economic recovery and integration with the global value chains. FGDs conducted with expert stakeholders indicated that the increase in FDI may be attributed to the rejuvenation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Additionally, favourable, and consistent regulations and policies, better coordination between relevant government departments, and better awareness and inclusion of the private sector could ensure sustainability and contribute to this FDI pattern. Another aspect worth mentioning is the upsurge of freelancing in Pakistan. The trend of youth involvement in freelancing activities was also seen in economically backward areas. The government ought to assess and encourage the freelancing community through proactive measures leading not only to the formalisation of this sector, but also equivalent incentivisation as being done for other economic sectors.⁴

In order to understand the problems faced by MSMEs, including those in the freelancing market, involvement of local government bodies is essential. Besides this, a move from traditional to digital ways of working is another key area for enhancing economic development in Pakistan. MSMEs are a major source of growth, providing employment opportunities, eradicating poverty, and correcting income inequalities. Focus on improving trade relations

³ Tariff lines described the product in a list of tariff rates. The Pakistan Custom Tariff (PCT) codes are assigned to each sub-divided product.

⁴ This article is based on research conducted till December 2021. The authors appreciate the 'National E-Tijarat Portal' launched by the Government of Pakistan in early 2022.

with other regional countries is also vital based on an inter-sectoral trade policy agenda which includes making environmental, social, and economic policies more cohesive.

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Gender-Responsive Intersectional Approaches in the Context of COVID-19*

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Abstract

Intersectional gender analysis shows that due to gender differences, women and men experience humanitarian crises differently. In development and humanitarian contexts, the use of this approach is increasing to enable equal access to all for protection from extreme poverty, shocks, and social exclusion. Nevertheless, the global Pandemic – COVID-19 – has created an urgent need to inform the design and implementation of humanitarian response from a gender-responsive intersectional perspective if programmes are to support the positive outcomes for inclusivity. This case study examines United Nations World Food Programme’s humanitarian and development response in Pakistan that employs the intersectional approach as a core gender and human rights’ lens to enable the most vulnerable groups (women, persons with disabilities, transgenders, and others) to protect themselves from the worst effects of COVID-19. It illustrates the value added of intersectionality during times of crises within the domain of education, social protection, nutrition, and other interventions. It is based on a qualitative gender review and analysis of humanitarian response, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with beneficiaries. Finally, it proposes workable solutions to issues of social exclusion, especially during the Pandemic making use of first-hand field-based data and analysis.

Introduction

Pakistan’s Human Development Index score for 2019 was 0.557. The country’s ranking in the Global Gender Gap Index 2021 declined, joining the bottom four countries, sliding from 151 in 2020 to 153 out of 156 countries in 2021. Significant disparities between women and men exist in terms of income, access to justice, land ownership and inheritance rights. However, in Pakistan, gender identity often intersects with identities like race, religion, creed, disability, and others. Nevertheless, each individual’s experience will vary. For example, a minority man may experience discrimination differently than a minority woman because he may have experienced less discrimination based on his gender compared to a woman who may have experienced other types of discrimination as well due to her sex.

With regard to overall food insecurity, 16.4% of the population in Pakistan is moderately or severely food insecure and of those, 1.8% are severely food insecure. While the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) data disaggregated by gender is not yet available, it still shows high geographical disparities in food insecurity. Households headed by women are particularly disadvantaged due to their lack of productive assets (e.g., livestock and agricultural land) (FAO 2019 and 2020). However, there are no reliable numbers about Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), who face extreme marginalisation in terms of access to social services. Women with disabilities experience disproportionate marginalisation as they face double discrimination at the intersection of their gender and disability. However, reliable data is urgently needed to accurately understand the correlation between hunger and disability.

The gender impact of COVID-19 in Pakistan is also still emerging. Initial intersectional gender analysis shows that men are more vulnerable to the virus itself, while women, including the disabled, are affected much more from the indirect impact of the Pandemic due to their social positioning in society. For instance, women perform a vast majority of unpaid care work and it significantly increased during the Pandemic. This unpaid domestic care work often involves taking care of sick family members, and in the case of school closures, looking after children.

However, in times of crisis when resources are strained and institutional capacity is limited, the most vulnerable (women, girls, PWDs, elderly, children) face disproportionate impacts by being excluded, with far-reaching consequences of increased poverty that are only further amplified in context of fragility, conflict, and emergencies (UN Women 2010). In crises, hard-fought gains for women's rights are also under threat as observed during COVID-19. According to Human Rights Watch (2021) sources, domestic violence increased 200% in Pakistan during the Pandemic/lockdown. The current situation also indicates a threat of increased poverty and loss of livelihood of a majority poor population. Since 'the poverty rate declined by 40 percent over the last two decades to 24.3 percent in 2015, the IMF projects a sharp reversal, with up to 40 percent of Pakistanis living below the poverty line in COVID-19's viral wake' (UNDP 2020, p. 5).

By using the concept of 'intersectionality' (Crenshaw 1989), born out of the Black feminist movement in the United States, especially applied in the times of crises/Pandemic, this research offers new insights for gender-responsive development grounded in empirical scientific knowledge. It evaluates United Nations World Food Programme's humanitarian and

development response in Pakistan that employs the intersectional approach as a core gender and human right's lens to enable the most vulnerable groups to protect themselves from the worst effects of COVID-19. It illustrates the value added of intersectionality in times of crises. The findings are relevant in a wide range of contexts.

This chapter is structured as follows: it first discusses research scope and methodology; next, a literature review is provided regarding intersectional approaches, with a special focus on their use in different contexts and research fields. The chapter then goes on to explain the WFP's response, giving details of the programmes considered for analysis, especially those that have applied intersectional approaches to improve inclusion of vulnerable groups. Before concluding, analysis is provided explaining major findings of the study.

Methodology

This research is an effort to make scholarly contribution towards various research fields such as gender, inclusion, intersectionality, and humanitarian response in COVID-19 based on WFP's field-based experiences of implementing humanitarian and development response. It examines the use of intersectional approaches and how effective these have been for better inclusion of various social groups, especially in crises. Particular attention has been given to examine how vulnerable groups such as women, transgenders, PWDs and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), are affected by the application of intersectional approaches across various programmes under the WFP from beneficiary perspectives.

The study follows qualitative approach and desk review of project documents from a gender perspective. Four Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with beneficiaries, and ten Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with project staff, women, PWDs and transgender beneficiaries were conducted. A qualitative approach based on participatory method was used to collect the perspectives of respondents. It enabled guided conversations, where participants spoke at length and elaborated upon their interpretations and experiences of receiving assistance (Fielding 1993). Interviewees were asked to talk about their engagement in the programmes, effects of interventions on their lives, challenges and changes observed by them, if any. This study is of considerable importance in the sense that it was conducted during a Pandemic period analysing programmes responding to humanitarian crises, when the population affected by the COVID-19 was struggling with loss of lives and livelihood. This study gives specific consideration to ethical issues. It recognises confidentiality as important for all respondents

and special considerations were made for cases of PWDs and transgenders for whom confidentiality could be more critical. All respondents were contacted through reliable personal and professional contacts, as well as following COVID-19 SOPs. Moreover, respondents' names were kept confidential and specific quotations used in analyses below are not identifiable.

Literature Review

Over the past two decades, the concept of intersectionality and intersectional approaches have become prominent in development discourse that can help to uncover dynamics of vulnerability and resilience. Intersectionality was born out of the Black feminist movement in the US and has emerged in feminist theory as an approach that focuses on multiple historically oppressed populations. It was coined by American critical race scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, and indigenous scholars examining the complex factors and processes that shape human lives (Crenshaw 1989).

The concept has been applied in many contexts and in various fields providing rich experiences. *Intersectional approaches recognise that people will have different identities, needs, priorities and capacities which are not static, and will shift and change over time – affecting their ability to prepare for, cope with and respond to natural hazards and climate variability*' (Chaplin et al., 2019, p.1). It has been argued that *Intersectional approaches offer a way to understand and respond to the ways different factors, such as gender, age, disability and ethnicity, intersect to shape individual identities, thereby enhancing awareness of people's needs, interests, capacities and experiences*' (Crenshaw 1989, p.155; Samman and Stuart 2017, p.1; May 2015). This approach recognises that a specific target population is itself a combination of many differences.

Gender and climate change scholars have found that there is no single approach or defined set of methods for seeking intersectional understanding of vulnerability and resilience relating to climate change and natural hazards. But they emphasise that *'better collection and sharing of disaggregated data and analyses relating to the circumstances of vulnerable, marginalised and at-risk people will also be a necessary input to guide resilience policy and programming*' (Chaplin et al., 2019, p. 1). Some use intersectionality within programmes for child protection. Through a focus on the impact that discrimination has on children's rights, importance is underlined by giving systematic and comprehensive attention to child vulnerability to intersectional discrimination within anti-trafficking programming (Ravnbol 2009).

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted in 1995 called upon governments to intensify efforts to ensure equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women and girls who face multiple barriers to their empowerment and advancement. Crooms and Falcon (2011) forward a holistic approach to conceptualise and address multiple forms of discrimination in the context of Violence against Women (VAW). Since violence results from a complex interplay of individual, family, community, and social factors, they apply a holism by considering the multiple aspects of personhood and the way discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, nationality, citizenship, sexual orientation, and other factors creates an inequality that renders some women particularly vulnerable to Gender-Based Violence (GBV). It does so by identifying where forms of discrimination intersect with VAW, and in many cases, are the various forms of stratification that contextualise the cultural beliefs that allow abuse to occur.

Disability inclusion advocates an approach based on the human rights model of addressing discrimination faced by PWDs. Some highlight that an African-American wheelchair user who is also a lesbian, transgender and Muslim will have a different lived experience to one who is a white, heterosexual woman who uses a wheelchair. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights prohibits distinctions based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status. Disability rights scholars argue that the human rights model of disability improves the social model of disability. Three different models of disability can be attributed to different concepts of equality. The medical model corresponds with formal equality, while the social model with substantive equality and the human rights model can be linked with transformative equality (Degener 2011; Gauthier 2020).

Though the concept of intersectionality was devised to provide a more nuanced way of capturing the multifaceted experiences of oppression, it was widely thought to be an effective tool to address discrimination against an individual's multiple identities. Yet a careful examination of the work of UN human rights treaty bodies reveals that this is not always the case (Pok 2016). Those who use intersectionality in the context of Pakistan reveal that there are limitations to how far use of such practices and strategies can challenge existing social structural barriers (Sawas et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the concept is still relevant and used in many contexts and fields. *More recently, race-sexuality scholars have expanded the intersectionality literature with substantive and conceptual improvements. Together, these scholars*

are building an alternative liberation discourse that can serve as the foundation for the articulation of more comprehensive and effective theories of equality' (Hutchinson 2001, p. 317).

UN-WFP Focus Areas of Interventions and Shift towards Intersectionality

For the last four decades, WFP, in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan (GoP) and various donors providing funding support, has been assisting people affected by natural and human-induced disasters. In 2020, WFP assisted two million beneficiaries under relief and recovery. Around 273,000 people were assisted alone through its livelihood support programme. To improve economic opportunities for the poor, WFP provided conditional cash stipends, particularly to women, PWDs and a limited number of transgender community members. Under the programme, women attended skill-based trainings, including carpet weaving, food preservation, poultry management and kitchen gardening and cash assistance served to meet their opportunity cost.

The rising stunting crisis in Pakistan remains another area of WFP intervention. To reduce the high levels of chronic malnutrition, WFP and the GoP launched an ambitious nation-wide 'Ehsaas Nashonuma' programme in August 2020. This programme targets pregnant and breastfeeding women and children enrolled in the government's social safety net and uses the public primary healthcare system to provide a comprehensive package of four interventions through facilitation centres that include: locally produced specialised nutritious food; conditional cash transfer top-ups; awareness sessions on feeding and hygiene practices; and routine child monitoring and immunisation. With a target figure of 195,080 beneficiaries across Pakistan, the 'Ehsaas Nashonuma' programme is currently operational across the country and is expected to scale up further.

The launch of an education support programme, targeting adolescent girls especially during COVID-19 in the tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, marked another milestone in gender-transformative programming. To incentivise the enrolment and continued attendance of girls in schools, WFP provided cash transfers to female students studying in secondary classes in the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs). Through another intervention, despite lockdown and challenges in the field, WFP remained engaged in innovative work on community infrastructure development in various tribal districts and rural areas of Pakistan.

In 2020, WFP Pakistan made a strategic shift from status-based (displaced) to vulnerability-based assistance, while applying intersectional approaches. This shift supports WFP's people-centred approach that engages and benefits from the views, preferences and priorities of affected populations while promoting diversity, inclusion, and gender equality. It is believed that social groups are neither homogenous nor static, and intersectional approaches recognise this complexity by taking historical, social, cultural, and political contexts into account. It is also in line with corporate standards that focus more on the most vulnerable. However, this research particularly examines WFP's programmes, which apply intersectional approaches resulting in inclusion of marginalised groups such as women/girls, transgenders, PWDs, and IDPs. In doing so, it examines approaches and processes followed to better understand the application of intersectionality in the times of crises.

Findings

This section elaborates upon the major findings relevant to the use of intersectional approaches in humanitarian and development programmes of vulnerability reduction and resilience-building. It assesses the effects of intersectionality approaches and processes adapted for enhancing the focus on and inclusion of persons with diverse identities such as women/girls, PWDs, IDPs and transgenders in particular. It also provides beneficiaries' perspectives about various interventions. Findings and responses are mixed and far from conclusive, raising the need for further research. Given below are those programmes for which intersectionality approaches were widely applied. The analysis reveals how different groups were targeted, programmes modified, and changes made in eligibility criteria to address potential exclusions within those groups.

Targeting Women and Girls

Intersectionality is also rooted in understanding how social structures oppress women, based on their identity such as gender. *'At the same, women often have limited power in household and community decision-making, as well as limited access to and control over resources relative to men, which tends to influence access to food, both for them and for members of their household'* (BRIDGE 2014 cited in WFP 2016, p. 4).

In 2020, WFP made concerted efforts to mainstream gender in all relevant interventions as well as taking targeted actions to respond to gender gaps in Pakistan, especially in education

and nutrition. Its targeting approach of intersectionality to assess vulnerabilities based on gender identity that supports women's empowerment as a means to achieving gender equality helped in reaching out to more women as a vulnerable group. WFP actively embedded gender equity measures to promote the role of women in the design, implementation, and management of activities. Overall, out of the two million beneficiaries assisted by WFP in 2020, 55% were women and girls. Through its livelihood support programme/interventions, around 273,000 people benefitted, out of which 42% were women.

Realising that women are particularly disadvantaged due to their lack of productive assets, e.g., livestock and agricultural land, WFP initiated skill-based programme for women such as carpet weaving, food preservation, poultry management and kitchen gardening. Effective mobilisation further helped in achieving gender sensitivity within projects. One of the major gains observed was an increase in women as direct recipients of cash assistance.

In terms of targeted actions to respond to gender gaps in Pakistan, the Education Support Programme (ESP) was implemented in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the realisation that education is a major factor for eliminating gender inequality. In Pakistan's NMDs that border Afghanistan, only 5% of girls have completed their secondary education. To incentivise the enrolment and continued attendance of girls in schools, a monthly cash stipend of PKR 1,000 was provided to girls. A total of 16,233 female students were assisted through the programme, including a small number of Afghan refugee girls. The cash transfers were made conditional on school attendance, but during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the transfers have been unconditional (WFP 2020). This suggests that while responding to crisis situations, sometimes it becomes crucial to make changes in the fundamental design of programmes. There are anecdotal reports from teachers in the region that girls re-joined schools after becoming aware of WFP's ESP and parents shared that cash stipends were being used to meet the educational needs of girls.

A security guard residing in the NMDs during the FGD with parents said that *'I find it difficult to meet the educational expenses of my daughter who is an eighth grade school student. She received a stipend of PKR 2,000 and I used that amount to purchase her school uniform and notebooks.'* He appreciated the programme and further stated that the stipend assisted in the continuation of his daughter's education.

An eighth grader at a girls' middle school run by the government also shared her story, *'My father is a drug addict and does not earn any money. My mother often borrows money to feed us because my brothers are too young to work. But I still have a passion for education. The PKR 2,000 grant will help me fulfil my educational needs and bring about change for me and my family.'*

'Ehsaas Nashonuma' is another women-focused initiative taken as targeted action to reduce high levels of malnutrition in women and children in Pakistan. The programme is a nationwide initiative linked to the country's largest social safety net, the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), to reach the most vulnerable women and children in the country. Women enrolled in the 'programme have expressed satisfactions over the benefits they have received. A mother of six from the coastal area of Sindh who has had two miscarriages said, *'One of the neighbours told me that pregnant women are eligible to receive money from the programme, especially during the Pandemic. But after visiting the centre, I learnt that it is not all about money. For the first time, I have understood why my children and I are so thin. We as a community do not regard low weight as an indicator of severity, unless accompanied by another condition.'*

With a target figure of 195,080 beneficiaries across Pakistan, the 'Ehsaas Nashonuma' programme is currently in its pilot stage with more than 32,092 pregnant and lactating women and children enrolled. Facilitation Centres, established under the programme, provide a conducive and gender-friendly environment, while establishing breast feeding corners, waiting areas, quick registration/cash disbursement; arranging gender awareness sessions; and providing advocacy materials on GBV. Furthermore, the programme encourages parents to register their children in the GoP's NADRA database to avail benefits. It empowers women through regular transfers in their names to get their cash. Through social mobilisation, fathers are encouraged to contribute towards the household and children's care responsibilities. The programme has great potential to link Facilitation Centres and beneficiaries across Pakistan with other available referral services to respond to GBV and child abuse issues.

The Stunting Prevention Programme linked to health services integrated into Conditional Cash Transfer Programme services is one step forward to bridge the huge income equity gap and support the poorest of the poor women through cash transfer. The programme is implemented through intersectional approaches with a feminist focus. The enrolled female children are provided with a stipend of PKR 2,500 as compared to boys receiving PKR 2000

to encourage their participation in the programme who are traditionally marginalised in most parts of the country.

Disability Inclusion

Persons with disabilities often face an increased risk of exclusion. However, disability is just one part of a person's identity, there might be other interwoven attributes. For instance, minority women with disabilities might experience discrimination for one or many aspects of their identity preventing their full and effective participation and engagement in humanitarian programmes (Gauthier 2020). The intersections of different social categories, such as gender, or status can create overlapping discrimination or disadvantage. But the concept of intersectionality also *'acknowledges the role of power, stigma, discrimination, and exclusion, noting that even those who are oppressed may have some power. It emphasises the constant renegotiation of power relations and how individuals and groups can experience both power and oppression simultaneously'* (Chaplin et al., 2019, p. 1). As one of the WFP women beneficiaries (a lady living with a husband with disabilities and four children) said in a KII that, *'The voices of women and people living with disabilities are often missed in assessments at the community level. Being fully engaged in the assessment process by WFP allowed me to share the barriers that I and my family are facing and the support we require.'*

Findings reveal that through the intersectional approach, discrimination can be addressed within humanitarian response in order to ensure the full participation of PWDs from the beginning of the interventions. Moreover, it was observed that systematic collection of data on disability of beneficiaries allowed deeper granularity in understanding the assessed population and enabled WFP to address their needs. In 2021, WFP assisted around one million people, of which 99,000 (10%) were PWDs. Interestingly, 49% women with disabilities benefitted, and there were also reports of cash transfers to PWDs. However, personal data disaggregated by disability is rarely collected by most government institutions. To address this fundamental issue of exclusion, Washington Group Questions (WGQs)¹ were used for the targeting of PWDs.

¹ They were developed by the Washington Group, established by the UN Statistical Commission in 2001 with input of over 130 countries and organisations of PWDs. They are used in over 80 countries from a range of linguistic, sociocultural, and economic backgrounds, and have been validated in humanitarian settings since 2018. The WGQs is the recommended tool for disaggregating data by disability. The WGQ consists of six questions

It needs to be mentioned that *'having a disability does not always mean that the person or their household is in a more vulnerable situation'* as shared by a WFP staff member. If disability was identified by the WGQ, it was further tested to assess whether there was a link between the presence of disability (at the household level) and food (in)security, economic vulnerability and/or other outcome indicators. The new beneficiary targeting approach not only ensured inclusion of households headed by PWDs, but also prioritised families living with PWDs, women with disabilities including severely ill, while going beyond disability and acknowledging complex, multifaceted and interwoven identities of various social groups. Those not holding a Special National Identity Card (SNIC) of disability from the government due to many barriers, were also included for assistance. According to estimated figures, there are over 30 million PWDs in Pakistan, but only 1.2% have been able to get SNIC (Suresh et al., 2014).

Empowering Transgender Community

WFP extended the first ever support to the transgender community - a highly Food Insecure Population under the COVID-19 Response. This was interesting as the group has not been considered by other social safety net programmes. The socially excluded group of *khawaja sara* (transgender people) in Pakistan is considered outcast. The majority of transgenders work in the informal sectors of the economy; beg on streets, dance/perform at private parties/weddings, or are engaged in commercial sex work to survive; ultimately putting their lives at risk. The livelihoods of the transgender people have been disproportionately affected by the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

WFP provided unconditional cash transfer assistance (PKR 7,500) for six months during the Pandemic to 30 extremely vulnerable transgender community members. Though the number of beneficiaries is low, it still set up a new example for mainstreaming of a particular social group. The community members were identified with the help of a local organisation/NGO after extensive targeting and vulnerability assessments. As such, no social safety net programmes included them. The Guru (Master) Haseen shared her views as follows: *'This is the first time we have received support (unconditional cash) with dignity. I cannot express my joy and happiness for this support. I am old and homeless, and my immune system is weak as I have*

with four answer categories. The six questions, or domains, relate to basic functions: seeing, hearing, walking/mobility, cognition, communication, and self-care. Any person answering 'a lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do at all' to at least one domain/question is considered to be positively identified by the WGQ for disability.

suffered from a kidney failure. I beg in bazars / markets, apply tons of makeup on my face to please people in the streets. I often feel humiliated, threatened, abused, and broken.’ She further added that: *‘People give us money as charity in exchange for our pride. This support is crucial in these difficult times. The Pandemic has added to our miseries, but with this money, I am also able to support someone else in my community who has not had any work for many months.’*

However, to consider this particular group for support, several changes were made in the WFP’s eligibility criteria. A critical requirement was for the beneficiaries to be residents of the targeted areas, verified by addresses mentioned in the Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs). This requirement makes them ineligible for cash assistance since their current residence in the district of operation, most often is different from their permanent one, which is their parental home. The organisation changed this targeting criterion, as well as made specific arrangements while engaging local communities and administration to make the transgender people eligible for cash assistance.

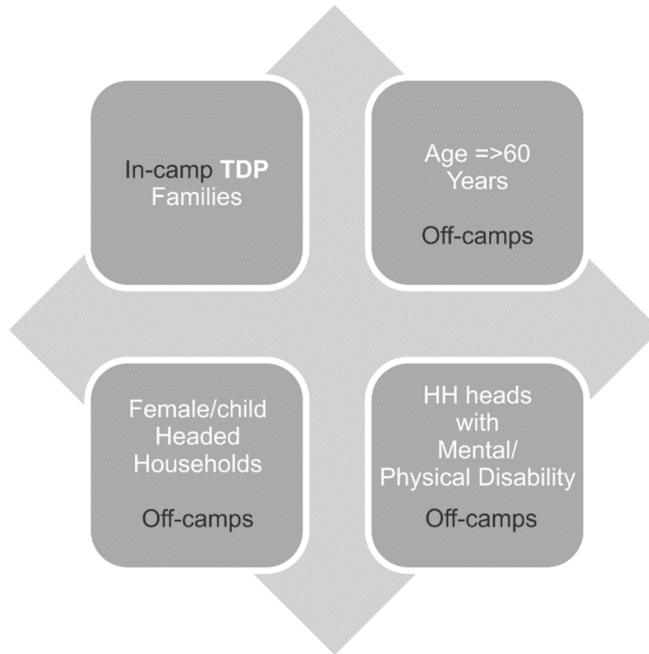
One of the representatives of the local implementing partner organisation highlighted in a FGD the challenges in targeting this particular group. He said, *‘Due to the high security threat to the transgender community, we made specific arrangements, especially taking local resident communities in confidence by allocating a different time slot for visiting and receiving cash assistance from the distribution points and engaging local government functionaries to ensure ownership of the government.’* He further added, *‘I would say that the change in targeting criteria and support from the local government and administration contributed towards the successful implementation of the first phase of the assistance with dignity, pride and without any threat to this particular group.’*

Internally Displaced Persons

Pakistan still remains home to more than one million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from the tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa previously known as the Frontier Province (UNOCHA 2014). This region has faced numerous military operations against non-state armed actors. Since 2008, WFP in collaboration with the government and internal development partners, has been supporting IDPs by providing food assistance. To assess vulnerability among IDPs, a Comprehensive Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment (WFP 2019) covering all districts in NMDs and tribal sub-divisions was initiated. The survey tools employed covered all major food security related indicators on agriculture, livelihood, income, expenditure, food consumption, coping strategies, water, and sanitation, etc. The findings revealed that not all ‘displaced’ individuals categorised as ‘IDPs’ can be considered as the

poorest of the poor. Amongst them, some were highly vulnerable groups when assessed based on gender, disability, and other intersectional identities for inclusion in assistance. The WFP, in consensus with the concerned government, moved away from status-based to intersectional (vulnerability-based assistance) approach based on sex, age, and disability, gender.

Figure 1: Eligibility Criteria for Receiving Assistance



Source: WFP 2020.

Based on CFSLA findings, a new targeting approach was devised that focused on IDPs and categorised them into two ‘off-camp IDPs’ and ‘in-camp IDPs.’ It considers all IDPs still residing in camps and heavily relying on outside assistance. However, in case of off-camp IDPs, it includes food insecure families with special focus on female/child headed households, also elderly (60+ age group) male head of families and families living with PWDs and/or chronic illness. Based on these criteria, around 16,800 IDP families were assessed, which have been aided by WFP for the last several years. Out of 16,800 households assessed, overall, 9,525 HHs (5429 families living in camps and 4096 families off-camps) met the eligibility criteria based on food insecurity, gender, age, and disability following intersectional approaches (Table 1). This targeting approach may particularly be helpful when resources are constrained.

Table 1: Vulnerability Assessment

Total TDP Families	16800	100 %
Meeting Inclusion Criteria	5429	32%
Meeting Second Set of Criteria	4096	24%
Total HHs meeting the Criteria	9525	57%
Not meeting the Criteria	5629	34%
Did not Show Up	1646	10%

Source: WFP 2020.

Limitations

It may be noted that **inclusion errors** (non-eligible households receiving assistance) and **exclusion errors** (eligible households not receiving assistance) may still occur in the **design** and **implementation** phases of various programmes. Nevertheless, effective monitoring, innovative ways to engage local communities, especially relevant groups, strong social mobilisation, and monitoring and coordination with local administration may help in mitigating such risks.

The analysis also raised a question about whose interests and needs were most often overlooked. For better inclusivity, intersectionality approaches need to be integrated from the onset of an intervention. Modifying community targeting or registration tool can further support in collection of segregated data and the identification of the poorest of poor. However, discourse on transgenders highlighted the importance of context specific changes in the processes of delivering assistance without any threat. For instance, Pakistan has made some landmark decisions to protect the fundamental rights of the transgender community. A recently passed transgender law states that *'every transgender person, being the citizen of Pakistan, who has attained the age of eighteen years, shall have the right to let himself or herself be registered according to self-perceived gender identity.'* Despite these progressive measures, during KIIs and FGDs, it was noted that many transgender community members did not register themselves as 'trans' when it came to opting for a gender identity at the time of getting CNIC because of the fear of losing inheritance rights as cited by many trans persons. Difficulties in getting CNICs were also mentioned by the PWDs. Therefore, humanitarian programmes need to consider these modalities, which can still exclude the most marginalised, if followed very strictly.

Conclusion

This research reveals that intersectional approaches have helped the WFP understand the differentiated nature of vulnerability and resilience and apply them across its programmes. They also draw attention to the social root causes of vulnerability, creating a more nuanced picture of how an individual or group of individuals is being excluded from or overlooked in interventions based on sex, age, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, life experiences and value systems.

Integrating intersectionality approaches can support in targeting the most marginalised sections of society in humanitarian response. However, tailoring of responses and processes, followed for addressing specific challenges faced by various social groups to receive assistance, are crucial. As noted here that assessing vulnerabilities based on intersectionality increased the number of women beneficiaries, change in eligibility criteria supported transgender inclusion, targeted actions reduced gender gap in education, and integration of an assessment tool helped in better targeting of PWDs. In addition, findings also highlight that not all marginalised groups face similar vulnerabilities - some might be more vulnerable than others as noted in case of IDPs. Intersectionality approaches can be helpful in reaching out the poorest of the poor. Nevertheless, the collection of data that can be disaggregated by sex, age and disability is crucial for effective targeting and avoiding lack of visibility.

Though intersectionality is becoming an established concept, more field-based in-depth research on its approaches and practical guidance to target vulnerable groups is required, in particular qualitative and contextual research, to fully understand how inequalities intersect and affect people in different humanitarian contexts.

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- ◇ Three-Wheelers Don't Fly:
Design Issues for the Architecture of Local
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Three-Wheelers Don't Fly: Design Issues for the Architecture of Local Government Systems in Pakistan*

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Abstract

Over the last decades, local government in Pakistan has seen numerous and significant changes. As the Constitution failed to provide guidance on minimum characteristics of local government systems to be established by the provinces, many of these changes were driven less by empirical evidence on the strengths and weaknesses of existing systems but rather on political considerations. This chapter outlines the key elements of a normative framework for effective and inclusive local government systems, such as a focus on inter-municipal and local-provincial cooperation, an agreement on the minimum functional space to be devolved to local governments, a minimum percentage of the provincial allocable amount to be used for fiscal transfers, and formula-based distribution for local governments in the country.

Introduction

A quick analysis of local government systems around the globe, including within the Asia-Pacific region, shows that there is a high degree of diversity in basic design elements of such systems, including (i) placement of the legal framework in the hierarchy of legislative instruments (constitution/laws/government regulations); (ii) the number, size and types of local government units established; (iii) fiscal arrangements (own-source revenue and fiscal grants); (iv) scope and depth of assigning governmental functions to local governments; (v) electoral systems used, or (vi) institutional and procedural arrangements for legal oversight, enforcement of compliance, and the monitoring of local government performances in service delivery by the central government (OECD and UCLG 2019). Differences in the design of local government systems reflect the unique and particular political and administrative trajectory of each country, and the policy choices made by the decision-makers. Such differences, therefore, are not necessarily cause for concern.

Even so, the global knowledge on decentralisation reforms and on how to build effective and efficient local government systems, knowledge accumulated over the last four decades clearly indicates that certain design issues are decisive prerequisites for any local government system to produce results. Building blocks of decentralisation reforms, such as clear indication of the modalities being used, proper assignment of functions and responsibilities, arrangements for fiscal decentralisation commensurate with the functional load of local governments, proper

capacity development strategies and delivery systems (Ferrazzi and Rohdewohld 2017, p. 23) need to be tackled and dealt with in a systematic and holistic manner. Such reforms otherwise will result in 'partial decentralization' (World Bank 2019) with unsatisfactory results and with the risk of discrediting the whole concept. At the same time, getting the normative manifestations of local government systems right needs to be combined with a sequenced and systematic implementation strategy which can transform a legal construct into real-life operations of local institutions delivering services to their communities (Smoke 2015a; Smoke 2015b; Smoke 2015c; LDI 2013).

For Pakistan, the need for defining essential elements of the design of local government systems is most pertinent as the Constitution in its Article 140A does not give clear guidance to the provinces, which in the federal setting of the country has the jurisdiction for local government affairs. Article 140A stipulates that provinces '*shall, by law, establish a local government system and devolve political, administrative and financial responsibility and authority to the elected representatives of the local governments.*' As further details of such devolution are not spelled out in Article 140A (or in any other article of the Constitution of Pakistan),¹ the local government systems established by the provinces after 2010 differed substantially in most of the dimensions mentioned earlier, including in the election mode (such as direct vs. indirect, party-based vs. non-partisan, and first-past-the-post vs. proportional representation), and the menu of functions assigned to the local level (Islam 2015; PILDAT 2019; Shafqat 2014). Furthermore, the understanding of what constitutes 'devolution' is not elucidated, allowing the provinces a wide space for interpretation. While formally, the provinces did fulfil the constitutional requirements, the actual design and implementation of the local government systems hardly gave rise to local autonomy and discretion in decision-making, which is a hallmark of 'devolution' as one of the three modalities of decentralisation.²

Such lack of constitutional guidance is aggravated by a lack of consensus between the political parties on minimum conditions and key design issues for local governments, which would take matters regarding the local government at least, to some extent out of the contested areas of party politics. Policymakers are compelled to make drastic and radical changes to local government systems whenever there is a change of political majority in a province. Such

¹ The only other article of the Constitution dealing with local governments, Article 32, stipulates that the State shall 'encourage local government institutions composed of elected representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation will be given to peasants, workers and women.'

² For a comparison of the different modalities of decentralisation (deconcentration, delegation, and devolution), see Ferrazzi and Rohdewohld 2017, pp. 13-17.

compulsion for drastic changes were also observed in the local governance system introduced during military rule in 2000-01 (NBR 2002). Although the system was innovative and modern at the time, it was immediately abandoned after the return of civilian rule – merely because it came from a non-elected regime and, therefore, could not be accepted as appropriate. Similar system changes linked with changing political majorities at the provincial level could be seen in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2012-13, 2013/2019),³ or in Punjab (2013/2019, 2019/2021).⁴ It does not take great imagination to anticipate yet another wave of change, following the upcoming 2023 General Elections which are likely to result in different political majorities at the federal and provincial levels. Throwing out the ‘baby with the bathwater’, these system changes prevent any lasting institutional learning and the accumulation of knowledge and expertise from and between relevant actors and stakeholders, often destroying any progress or achievements made in enhancing the functionality and performance of local governments.

In a vast, diverse, and federally organised state such as Pakistan, having differences between local government systems should be regarded as normal. The governance systems of Balochistan (large territory, relatively small population widely dispersed throughout the territory of the province) and of Punjab (population of more than 110 million people, rapid urbanisation, strong manufacturing, and service sectors) are bound to differ. The argument here is that such differences should take place within shared and common minimum conditions and design elements, to ensure that despite diversity the mandate of Article 140A is properly translated in the provincial legislation.

Suggested Minimum Conditions and Design Elements

Content and character of such minimum conditions and design elements obviously need to be part of a political debate and subject to normative frameworks and conceptual/ideological

³ A short-lived and never implemented Local Government Act (LGA) 2012 - formulated by a coalition government consisting of the Awami National Party (ANP) and Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) - was replaced with the LGA 2013 endorsed by a new coalition government led by the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI). This Act was significantly modified by a major amendment in 2019, strangely enough by the same political majority which had promulgated the LGA 2013.

⁴ Punjab saw a major modification of the local government system when the LGA-Punjab 2013 was replaced with two pieces of legislation, the 2019 Punjab Local Government Act and the 2019 Punjab Village Panchayats and Neighbourhood Councils Act (see Janjua and Rohdewohld (2019)) for a detailed assessment. This legislation, however, was never fully implemented. In March 2021, its Section 3 was declared *ultra vires* by a major ruling of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. The Provincial Government endorsed a new legislation (Punjab Local Governance Ordinance 2021) by the end of 2021. This ordinance is yet to be confirmed by the Provincial Assembly.

preferences. Taking guidance from the various building blocks of decentralisation reforms referred to earlier, such common and shared design elements should include the following:

1. A statement on the purpose and objective of local governments.
2. A preference for devolution as the applied modality of decentralisation (as against deconcentration and delegation).
3. An agreement on certain key principles to be reflected and accommodated in the provincial legislation, such as:
 - (i) creating a unified administration at the local level;
 - (ii) enhancing inter-municipal cooperation;
 - (iii) fostering local-provincial cooperation;
 - (iv) shared criteria for assigning sector functions to local governments;
 - (v) a commitment to match expenditure assignments with revenue assignments including fiscal transfers;
 - (vi) non-interference of Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) and Members of National Assembly (MNAs) in local government processes.
4. An agreement on the minimum functional space to be devolved to local governments (e.g., municipal services, spatial planning/land use planning, functions in primary health and primary education, local economic development, agriculture and livestock, disaster management etc.), by introducing a distinction between obligatory and discretionary functions.
5. An agreement on the minimum percentage of provincial allocable amount to be used for fiscal transfers and formula-based distribution to local governments.
6. A commitment to the inviolability of the electoral cycle.
7. An agreement on a minimum representation of women, minorities, and marginalised groups (with definitions) based on direct election.

These elements of a system design will be explained and justified in more detail in the next section.

Statement on the Purpose and Objective of Local Governments

The Local Government Acts, 2013 of the four provinces were rather silent while defining the *raison d'être* of local governments:

- ◇ The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa legislation refers only to the relevant constitutional articles, i.e., Articles 32 and 140A.
- ◇ The LGA-Punjab 2013 links the establishment of local governments to the *'promotion of good governance'* and the *'effective delivery of services and transparent decision-making through institutionalized participation of the people at local level.'* While still rather general and placed only in the 'Preamble' of the Act, the formulation gives at least a sense of what policymakers intend to achieve with the establishment of local governments.⁵
- ◇ The LGA-Sindh, 2013 uses the same formulation as Punjab in its 'Preamble.'
- ◇ The 'Preamble' of the LGA-Balochistan, 2010 refers to Articles 32 and 140A of the Constitution, framing the latter with the addition *'so as to facilitate expeditious disposal of its business to meet the convenience and requirements of the public.'* In other words, the existence of local governments is linked to 'convenience' and 'public requirements.'

A statement on the purpose and objective of local government provides a yardstick for assessing the details of local government legislations: do the stipulations support or hinder the achievement of the intended purpose?

For instance, the 2008 Legislation of Cambodia on the administration of provinces, municipalities and districts clearly links these local bodies to the achievement of 'democratic development', characterised by public representation, local autonomy, consultation and participation, responsiveness and accountability, promotion of quality of life of the local residents, promotion of equity, transparency and integrity, and measures to fight corruption and abuse of power.⁶ The Constitution of South Africa defines the objectives of municipalities as *'(a) to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities; (b) to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner; (c) to promote social and economic development; (d) to promote a safe and healthy environment; and (e) to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government.'*⁷

⁵ The preamble of the new PLGO 2019 uses the same formulation.

⁶ See Articles 2,11, and 12 of the 2008 Law on the Administrative Management of the Capital, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts and Khans of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

⁷ Article 152.1 of the 1997 Constitution of South Africa (as amended from time to time).

Stating similar policy objectives in the Constitution and/or in the provincial legislations should provide guidance to policymakers at the provincial and local level in detailing, e.g., the assignment of functions to local governments or the processes for formulating development plans and local budgets. This is also important because provincial legislation post the 18th Constitutional Amendment often delegated the task of formulating detailed and specific legislation relating to local governments (such as their Rules of Business) to the provincial administration without giving sufficient guidance of what law-makers want to see in such lesser legislation. A 'statement of intent' would limit the discretion of the provincial bureaucracy in drafting such regulations and ensure that they stay within the purpose and objectives of the main legislation.

Devolution as Preferred Modality of Decentralisation

The academic literature on decentralisation and local governments makes a clear distinction between three modalities of decentralisation: deconcentration, delegation, and devolution. Each of these modalities comes with specific requirements and implications (Ferrazzi and Rohdewohld 2017, p. 17). Article 140A uses the term 'devolution' but does not provide a binding definition. As a consequence, the conceptual understanding in the provincial legislations differs substantially, and is often misleading and not always consistent (Box 1 on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).

Box 1: Understanding of 'Devolution' in the LGA-KP 2013

Section 2.e of the 2013 KP LGA defines devolution as '*conferment by Government of its administrative and financial authority for the operation, management and control of specified offices of Government to the local governments.*' This definition is misleading in several aspects:

- ◇ Being an Act passed by the Provincial Assembly, it is the elected legislature, not the executive, which confers power and functions to the local level. Devolution is not an act of generosity by the Government, but a decision of the province as polity.
- ◇ Devolution by definition includes the transfer of political authority to take decisions on those functions or subject matters assigned to the local governments; it cannot be limited to '*administrative and financial authority.*'
- ◇ The definition links devolution to 'specified offices', not functions or areas of jurisdiction. Detailing the functions was left to the provincial administration and was stipulated in the Rules of Business for local governments. Normally, decentralisation reforms modify the assignment of functions and jurisdictions between political and administrative tiers within the state structure – how these functions are handled by dedicated institutions (or 'offices') is part of the autonomy and discretion which characterises devolution.

All the different modalities have advantages and disadvantages. Being strongly associated with the political dimensions of decentralisation, i.e., the existence of a body of elected representatives ('council') and the competition of political parties or electoral groups, devolution should clearly be stated and defined as the preferred modality of decentralisation to avoid misunderstanding, but also to close escape routes for provincial policymakers reluctant to transfer powers and responsibilities to the local tiers.

Key Principles

Globally, it is a standard practice in law-making to leave detailed and granular stipulations to lower-level legal instruments and to focus the main body of legislation (such as an act passed by the parliament) on principles, objectives, and other major issues, which need to be taken into account when drafting implementing regulations (such as Government Regulations, Rules, or even Administrative Orders). In the hierarchy of legal instruments (Constitution => Act => Rules and Government Regulations => Administrative Orders), the lower-level legal instruments must stay within the limits set by the higher legislation. For the arrangement of local government systems by provincial legislation, constitutional guidance on some key principles would be useful. Six issues are of paramount importance:

- (i) Local governments must have the **jurisdiction to determine their administrative set-up** (including jurisdiction for HR management) needed to discharge the assigned functions. In other countries, the term 'unified administration' has been used to describe the fact that such local administrative units function under the supervision of an elected official (such as a Mayor, or District/Tehsil Chairperson), who in turn is supervised and controlled by an elected council. The current arrangement in the provinces of Pakistan provides inadequate autonomy to local governments in managing their administrative arrangements. Most of the government staff working at local level comes under the control of provincial institutions (such as the Local Council Board in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or the Local Government Board in Punjab) which determine recruitment, placement, and career development. Local governments have no say in the decisions of these provincial bodies, and no involvement in selecting officials.
- (ii) Many functions and government services at the local level have characteristics (such as spill-over effects, and economies of scale) which indicate that service delivery by more than one local government unit will make sense economically and in terms of

service quality. Typical examples for this kind of **inter-municipal cooperation** include solid waste management, water supply, sewage water, public transport, but also aspects of education and health services. Similarly, spatial planning is a function where each local government unit needs to consider linkages with the neighbouring local governments, especially in cases of rapid urbanisation which characterises most of Pakistan. Many countries have created special purpose vehicles for such joint service delivery (VNG International 2010). The LGA-Punjab 2019 also had stipulations allowing the creation of 'joint authorities.' Putting forward the idea of inter-municipal cooperation in the Constitution or provincial legislation could encourage policymakers at the provincial level, along with the local leaders, to consider such options in the interest of better service delivery.

- (iii) Often, decentralisation is regarded as a zero-sum exercise where one level (national or provincial) loses powers and resources while another (local) gains accordingly. If such a mindset prevails, it is difficult to realise constructive and cooperative patterns of engagement between the local level and the provincial level, even if such cooperation would result in better service outcomes. While the concept of devolution advocates local autonomy and discretion in decision-making (e.g., in allocating budget resources), it also acknowledges that local governments are an integral part of a wider political body, and that national/provincial policy objectives and legislations have to be considered and taken into account when exercising local autonomy. The **principle of local-provincial cooperation** is meant to remind local leaders and provincial policymakers about the need for working together when required, and not to regard each other as rivals.
- (iv) Provincial legislation, since the passing of the 18th Constitutional Amendment, exhibited a wide variety when **assigning functions and responsibilities** to the local levels. Again, this reflects variations of context conditions and of preferences for policy choices, and therefore, would be a natural (and intended) effect of having a federal set-up. Still, it makes sense to guide provincial law-makers by clarifying a minimum set of local functions (see the next section), and to determine a set of criteria to be used when deciding on the assignment of additional functions (e.g., in the social sectors). Regarding the assignment of such functions, principles such as

subsidiarity, economies of scale, heterogeneity of demand have been put forward as guidance for assignment decisions.⁸

- (v) The 2019 World Observatory on Subnational Finance and Investment (OECD and UCLG 2019) provides relevant and comparative data on **sub-national finances**, and to what extent sub-national or local governments are involved in public expenditures on public services. Hardly any country has made a proper costing of functions which are being assigned to local governments. Consequently, often local governments find themselves burdened with a multitude of responsibilities without the adequate fiscal resources. Such unfunded mandates discredit the concept of decentralisation but are often the easy way out for central policymakers. Having a clear commitment in the Constitution that expenditure assignments to local governments must match with their revenue assignments (including fiscal transfers) would put pressure on provincial policymakers to avoid unfunded mandates.
- (vi) In Pakistan, and other countries in Asia and the Pacific (such as the Philippines, or India), members of state and provincial assemblies or of the national Parliament have dedicated budget resources, which they can spend on development activities in their respective constituencies leading to a situation, in which development activities in a given local government are being funded by their own local government budget, the provincial government funds, and from the respective MPAs, and MNAs. Since social norms tend to accentuate the hierarchy between these levels, MPAs and MNAs influence local decisions in a way which can be detrimental to an integrated and sustainable social and economic development of a local government, despite numerous efforts to harmonise and coordinate such development expenditures with the overall local development priorities of the local entity. It also blurs the lines of jurisdiction and accountability between the different tiers. Ideally, such options for MPAs and MNAs ought to be discontinued.

Minimum Functional Space of Local Governments

In 2013, the global association of regional and local governments, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), established a list of functions and service responsibilities, which typically are assigned at the local level. These included *services* (e.g., public transport, street

⁸ In the context of operationalising its new 2015 Constitution which created a federal state structure, Nepal has undergone an interesting exercise in unbundling government functions to the national, provincial, and local level. While still in need of further detailing, the exercise is one of the few in the regions where an attempt has been made to make informed and principled decisions on the assignment of functions. See Government of Nepal 2017.

lighting, cleaning of streets, and management of local markets), the *provision of infrastructure, building-related functions, urban planning* (including the application of land-use regulations), and *local economic development issues* (UCLG 2013).

In Pakistan, there seems to be an implicit consensus that 'municipal services' are a natural choice of local functions as these are mentioned in all the provincial legislations. Primary healthcare and primary education functions are also frequently assigned to local governments. Zoning, land-use planning, spatial planning and building control are crucial and indispensable local functions as they inform and shape social and economic development within the territory of each local government. Having a minimum list of local government functions mentioned in the Constitution, with the option of the provinces to expand, will help to achieve a minimum level of comparability between them.

Minimum Percentage of Provincial Allocable Amount

Keeping in mind the need to match expenditure assignments with revenues as mentioned earlier, countries like Indonesia, India, and the Philippines have determined (by law, by Constitution, or through bodies like a Finance Commission), the percentage of national revenue, which must be allocated to the local governments by means of fiscal transfers. In Indonesia, the general fiscal transfers amount to 26% of the national revenues. In the Philippines, the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) grants to all sub-national governments amount to 40% of the national revenues in the fiscal year, three years prior to the year of the transferring. In India, the Central Finance Commission has fixed the unconditional block grants to district block (*tehsil*) and *Gram Panchayats* funded through the states to 42% of the national revenue pool.

In Pakistan, the 2019 Punjab LGA included a proviso fixing of the provincial allocable amount to no less than 26% of the general revenue receipts of the province in the relevant financial year with an intended increase to 28%.⁹ Such clear stipulations give more certainty and predictability to fiscal transfers, especially when formula-based transfer systems are used to divide the financial pool amongst the local governments units.

⁹ See Sec. 189 of the 2019 PLGA. The recently approved PLGO 2021 maintains this proviso in its Section 121.

Inviolability of the Electoral Cycle

One of the saddest features of Pakistan's local government systems is the arbitrariness shown by provincial politicians in delaying and postponing local government elections. This lack of continuity is a major explanation for the continuing lack of capacity of local governments to provide public services, as elected councillors cannot accumulate expertise and comprehension and transfer such knowledge from one batch to the next. Processes and procedures within local government are disrupted again and again.

This arbitrariness shows a deep disrespect for a core element of a democratic polity, i.e., conducting elections in a regular and predictable manner. Elections are the main instruments for people to determine their representatives, to judge on the performance of sitting representatives, and to express their priorities for policy choices in the upcoming legislative period as reflected in the manifestos of the competing political parties. The 2017 Elections Act partly put a stop to this arbitrariness, as Sec. 219(4) clearly stipulates that the Election Commission '*... shall hold elections to the local governments within one hundred and twenty days of the expiry of the term of the local governments...*' Unfortunately, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) does not have the administrative and political means to enforce compliance with this stipulation when provincial governments block the process. Recent decisions by High Courts and by the Supreme Court of Pakistan have strengthened the ECP's stance, which gives hope that such opportunistic behaviour of provincial elites will not be tolerated any longer. Constitutional protection of this 120-days period would be another significant step. At the same time, it would be prudent to use common sense and to accept the political nature of elections at every tier of the political system. This means, elections should be based on party lists and lists of electoral groups with the option for independent candidates in individual constituencies.

Way Forward

As mentioned earlier, conceptual, and ideological preferences shape the views of political actors regarding minimum conditions and core design elements of local government systems in Pakistan. Unless the judicature determines these in more detail, it will be up to the political parties to forge a consensus and to translate such consensus into the legal framework, i.e., the Constitution and the provincial legislation. Such an inter-party dialogue should include experts and resource persons from the academia (universities and policy think tanks),

representatives of local governments and their associations, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

The starting point of such a dialogue should be the quest for obtaining better and more representative empirical evidence about successes and failures of the different systems and their design elements - something which has been thoroughly missing in the policymaking processes of local government affairs in the last few years. Within the federal set-up of Pakistan, there are institutions such as the Council of Common Interest or the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Cooperation which could be used as platforms for dialogue across provinces and between provinces and the federal level. Having a more elaborate Article 140A defining minimum conditions and essential design elements, will be a major step in enhancing convergence of local government systems of the provinces. However, unless the political parties share such a consensus and commit to implement it in the provinces, such minimum conditions and design elements will remain in the lofty heights of political rhetoric and will not be reflected in the daily experiences of the Pakistani citizens with their own local governments.

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It's Apathy which Killed Them: Remembering India's *Kisans**

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Abstract

The Government of India (GoI) passed three Farm Laws [Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill; Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill; and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill] in the Parliament in September 2020. Together, these laws proposed to relax restrictions on purchase and sale of farm produce, on stocking under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, and outlined a framework on contract farming. Farmers called the legislation the 'death knell of small farming in India'. They protested but when the government did not budge, led by the farmers' unions, with the Punjab unions at the forefront, a convoy of tractor trolleys and trucks - thousands of them, extending for several miles - made its way into the capital city of New Delhi on 26 November 2020 and set up their camps at the borders seeking the repeal of the three laws. They stayed in these camps for 13 long months before the laws were rolled back. This essay is a tribute to over 700 farmers who died during this historic Farmers' Movement.

Introduction

Only days before the Farmers' Movement completed one year at the borders of New Delhi, on 19 November 2021, the Prime Minister of India declared repeal of the three contentious Farm Laws which the Parliament of India enacted in September 2020, at the height of the Pandemic when the country was put under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, and harsh restrictions on mobility. The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, said in his televised address to the nation that he was sorry that he was not able to convince a 'section of the farmers' that the laws were in their favour. Following this announcement, on 29 November 2021, on the first day of the winter session of Parliament, the three laws were repealed. It was a historic victory for the farmers, whose struggle was called a 'Beacon of hope for the world in the dark times' (*Na-ummedi ke daur me ummeed ki kiran*). Noam Chomsky, in a solidarity message, said to the farmers, 'You are doing the right thing, with courage and integrity, for the benefit of your own families, for the farmers of India, the people of India, and for the entire world' (The Wire 2021).

The farmer leaders called the repeal a significant defeat of the unfettered neo-liberal agenda which was being pushed in the agriculture sector in many parts of the world leading to a fundamental change in ownership of land and in how farming was organised. The protesting farmers knew this and repeatedly declared that, *'It's a fight for our existence and we are not going to give up.'* They repeated it from the protest stage at the borders time and again, *'We will fight over and over again, and, generation upon generation, but we will not let our lands go.'*

However, this victory came at a heavy price. Over 700 women and men died during the year-long, peaceful sit-in at the capital's borders (Human Cost of Farmers Protest 2020). The protestors' lives were shortened by neglect and harsh living conditions, made harsher due to state apathy. Men and women died of stress, dehydration, by suicides and in some instances, were ran over by speeding vehicles. The farmers were living away from close family, and support systems and reserves were fewer. Prolonged exposure to heavy rains, scorching heat waves and severe cold had a fatal impact on their bodies. The potential markers of neglect on the dead bodies remain undocumented, but they are etched on the minds of the families who laid to rest their loved ones.

There were others at the *morchas* (organised march or rally) whose health deteriorated, who said they delayed their cataract surgeries, dental treatments, or getting dentures – *'We've been at the morchas and the children have been busy looking after the farms, cattle and families'*, the seniors would often say calmly when asked about their health and well-being.

There was no expectation that the government would pursue the cases of these deaths with compassion and care, nor officially acknowledge the costs paid by the farmers in this struggle nor offer reparations to the families. The State remained indifferent - *'We have no knowledge of any deaths'*, was the official response, even as questions were asked about deaths in the Parliament (Shekhar 2021). Over 700 dead in a movement, which was peaceful to the core is not an insignificant loss. It speaks volumes about the violence this peoples' movement was met with.

The farmers camped on the roads in the open under the most inhospitable climate conditions, they cooked and cleaned in the open, taking care of water and sanitation needs at the camps. Simultaneously, they endured the State's war of attrition, the belligerent attempts to wear them down to the point of collapse. The State used the familiar playlist of labelling them separatists,

communists, Naxalites, and several attempts were made to communalise the peaceful and secular movement, discrediting the leadership and, and treacherously plotting harm.

The average age of those who lost their lives was 57 years. Most of them were small and marginal farmers and landless labourers, who cultivated no more than an average of three acres of land. They belonged to the lowest rung in the farming community, and many had left behind destitute families, many of whom had heavy farm debts to repay (Gupta 2021a).

What brought Farmers to the Borders of New Delhi?

India is an overwhelmingly agrarian country, with over half of the total workforce of 482 million people engaged in agriculture. Of the 263 million agricultural workers in the country, 45% are farmer cultivators and the rest much more vulnerable landless labourers. Of the farmer cultivators, 84% operate on a small-scale, owning less than two hectares of land each (Kumar et al., 2020). Over the last few decades, the cost of production rose steeply – seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, diesel, and other farm inputs – all shot up in price, raising the year-on-year cost of cultivation by 8–10%. But, the minimum support price of food grains was revised at about half that rate year-on-year, leading to a steady fall in farm incomes and pushing huge numbers of small farmers into a debt trap. Desperate farmers, with their backs to the wall, had been fighting for reforms in the agriculture sector demanding minimum assured prices and government procurement of farm produce, more state regulated markets or *mandis* and public investment. They were seeking effective government action to provide employment opportunities in rural India, institutional credit facilities and improvements in public health and education infrastructure in the rural areas. The farmers perceived that in passing the three Farm Laws, the government did the exact opposite – it had laid the ground for farmers' eviction from their lands.

The GoI introduced three farm legislations – the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020; the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020; and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020 – in the monsoon session of the Parliament in September 2020. These laws were introduced on 14 September and were passed in Lok Sabha on 17 September, and in Rajya Sabha on 20 September, received the President's assent on 24 September and notified in the Gazette on 27 September 2020.

The three new laws taken together meant fundamental transformation of the agriculture sector. The first, the 'Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act' limited State oversight over Produce Marketing Committees while allowing new corporate players to create new markets without paying any taxes or fees, purportedly to allow farmers to sell their produce to anyone as opposed to selling only in the government regulated markets at a minimum price fixed prior to the sowing season.

The second, the 'Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act' (the Contract Farming Act), provided a framework for contract agreements between farmers and contractors (called sponsors) for a specific quantity of a specific crop at a specific price. The Act provided no regulations and contained clauses that forbade any legal recourse for disputes. If a corporation violated a contract with a farmer, the new law prohibited the farmer from seeking redress in a regular court.

The third, the 'Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act', removed restrictions on stockpiling food grains that were put in place to discourage firms from artificially raising prices. The law allowed large corporations to stockpile food and engage in warehouse and supply management. These laws approved by both houses of Parliament in September 2020 taken together would end small farm farming by facilitating the entry of large corporations into the farming and food sectors.

Farmers in Punjab, the main agricultural state in India, and the most unionised one, were the first to recognise the threat to their existence through these laws. Punjab had over 32 large and small farmer unions active in different pockets of the state. Many of these unions were left wing, some were large with membership of over 150,000. These unions had a solid history of mobilising peasantry dating back to the early 19th Century. When the Farm Laws were passed in September 2020, these unions took the lead to form an all-India united front called the *Samyukt Kisan Morcha* (SKM).

Samyukt Kisan Morcha asked the government to take back the laws as they were against the interest of the farmers and were passed without any discussions with them. When the GOI refused to pay attention to their demands, led by the Farmers Unions, with the Punjab Unions at the forefront, a convoy of tractor trolleys and trucks – thousands of them, extending for several miles – made its way into the capital city of New Delhi on 26 November 2020. A very large number of women farmers were also part of the convoy. The farmers arrived in New

Delhi waving their union flags, equipped with food, stoves, utensils, blankets, and other essentials to last them for months – ‘*We are here to stay; we will leave only when the government repeals these draconian laws,*’ they said.

Stopped by police barricades from entering New Delhi, the farmers decided to camp right where they were stopped. Soon they set up mini townships at three different entry points to New Delhi, giving these townships names of well-known heroes of independence and land reform struggles under the British rule. Within days, they opened libraries and reading rooms, several health clinics, installed laundromats, hot water heaters, mini workshops for repair of tractors, phone battery charging stalls, and a large number of community kitchens. Fresh vegetables and tankers of milk came from the neighbouring state of Haryana every day and there was plenty of food for everyone to eat from the community kitchens. The March resonated with people in New Delhi and other cities as many had roots in the villages. People started donating books, doctors took leave from hospitals and came to the protest sites to set up clinics, pharmaceutical companies donated medicines, youth groups set up help desks, and local businesses organised truckloads of blankets, mattresses, and bottled water. Sikh temples set up additional community kitchens at the protest sites, and everyone who came to the protest site was fed.

Deep Agrarian Crisis

This Farmers’ Movement was the longest and most significant peasant mobilisation in post-colonial India and as it unfolded, it revealed the deep agrarian crisis, which had stayed buried under the myth of the success of the ‘Green Revolution’ – a farm technology package of the 1960s which supposedly made India self-sufficient in food. Punjab became the first place in India to adopt this package, which doubled, tripled, and quadrupled the yields of wheat and rice in the 1960s and 1970s. A government-backed system of assured prices – the Minimum Support Price (MSP) – incentivised and encouraged farmers to grow only these crops.

By the mid-1970s, the high costs of imported fertilizers, pesticides, and hybrid seeds began to grow on the body politic of Punjab. The gulf between rich and poor farmers grew, together with an ecological crisis in the form of a declining water table and large tracts of land turning problem soils. In addition, large-scale increase in terminal illnesses linked to the massive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides became palpable. The small and marginal farmers struggled to maintain their livelihoods. By the 1980s, the gains of the ‘Green Revolution’

petered out further, and by the early 1990s, Punjab was plunged into a series of serious crises. The small farmers who had, thus far, managed a precarious balance between high input costs and the price of their produce, came under heavy debt as food prices began to crash in the global food market. The tractors, tube wells, High Yielding Variety seeds and fertilizers all bought on credit – on the policy advice of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) as well as the agriculture universities – became millstones around farmers' necks and they plunged into deep debt. One study found some 89% of marginal and 91% of small farmers had huge debt issues (Singh et al., 2014). In India as a whole, from 2012-2013, households operating and managing farms of under one hectare, reported earning less than their monthly household expenditure, and 52% of all farm households had substantial debt. This, despite the fact that farm households do not sustain themselves on agriculture alone, rather receive about 32% of their income from working on other farms or in non-farm occupations (Narayan 2021).

Unable to repay the loans, a large number of farmers and agricultural labourers started killing themselves. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) statistics, between 2000 and 2015, over 300,000 farmers and labourers committed suicide linked to farm distress in India, and over 16,600 farmers and rural labourers took their own lives in Punjab (Singh and Kingra 2021). The suicide data stopped appearing after this period, but farm leaders cautioned that the figures had reached alarming proportions in later years.

It was in this context of deep agrarian crisis that the government passed the aforementioned three Farm Laws which acted as the proverbial straw that broke the back of the small and marginal farmers and they decided to come to New Delhi.

The Protest Stage

As the farmers settled in makeshift camps at the borders, they erected makeshift platforms – protest stage – at several different places in different borders and many other places in Punjab and Haryana where farmers sat in *dharnas* (sit-ins) including toll plazas, shopping malls, gas stations and other establishments associated with big corporate players. The protest stages were where the camping farmers gathered every day. They featured not only speeches by union leaders but also cultural performances – music, drama, poetry, and folk singing, most of the day and into the evenings, highlighting agrarian crisis, rural indebtedness, apathy of government officials, conditions of public schools and hospitals, women's lack of resources and the power of the corporates in their lives. Gradually, these platforms turned into a school,

a university of people resisting, providing the intellectual tools for understanding the diverse oppressions which the dispossessed endure as *Dalits*, marginal farmers and as women. Their political resistance grew from this understanding.

The protest sites started marking special days in order to build solidarity and community support. They marked Women Farmers Day, International Women's Day and celebrated the birth anniversary of Guru Ravidas, a late 15th Century untouchable, lower caste poet who is revered by Dalits. These special days were a keyway in which the farm unions sought to reach out to larger sections of society, honour women leaders and to bridge class and caste differences between the landowning *Jat* or upper caste communities and largely landless Dalit communities.

As the Farmers' Movement continued, a large number of artists, writers, sports figures and army veterans returned their government awards and titles, joining the protesting farmers and urging the government to repeal the laws. International messages of solidarity poured in not only from the Indian diaspora but from major unions of Canada, the United States (US), and the United Kingdom (UK), helping the farmers locate their protests as part of a protest against the larger, global corporate capitalist agenda.

Building Alliances

The farmers came to the country's capital to seek the roll back of the three Farm Laws but in the backdrop of this Movement were deep structural problems, which plagued the agrarian sector and how agriculture was located in India's growth trajectory. The three Farm Laws were overlain on an acute agrarian crisis, which had grown into a festering wound on the body politic of rural India. The COVID-19 Pandemic added to the crisis. The Movement responded to an existential crisis – the protesting farmers called it the struggle for their *hond* (identity), their existence – it played havoc in the everyday lives of the rural communities collectively and differentially along class, caste and gender axes. There were a million reasons to fight against it and as the Movement became protracted, multiple agrarian protests became palpable, unfolding simultaneously at the borders. The small, marginal, and landless farmers, farm labourers, women, youth and *Dalits* and their resolve, born out of daily experience of indignity, neglect and exploitation, bared the political economy of an agrarian emergency from complex, gendered locations. The heterogeneity of experience decentred prioritisation of one social group over others and pushed the Movement in the direction of a strategy that was

compelled to negotiate different interests, even those which were previously perceived as conflicting.

A clear articulation of the shared interests of different sections of the working people by the farmers, created conditions for building alliances with other sections of the urban and rural impoverished people whose employment and food security were threatened by the new laws. The protest staged over the one-year period, made it possible to untangle the links between the farmers' demands and the interests of the rural and urban landless and working poor. On the farmers' platforms, there was a realisation that the only effective resistance to the assaults on the rights of different marginalised sections was through building solidarity and exerting moral pressure.

The unions' platforms provided space to farmers ranging from the apple growers of Himachal Pradesh whose fate hung precariously on Adani Agri Fresh's price setting (Gupta 2021b) to the poor farmer-labourers of Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh (UP), whose standing crops were ruined by stray cattle let loose on them by the arbitrary policy of UP's Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act (Nagavarapu 2019), to the landless *Dalits* of Punjab whose rights over village commons were usurped by the powerful. All these groups came to the Movement to talk about their experience of being bled by corporate greed, of livelihoods destroyed, and lives made miserable through communal agendas of the regime. The stage also saw *Anganwadi* workers, contractual employees, para teachers, employees of Public Sector Units which were being privatised under the 'Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act' (MGNREGA)¹ and many more. These were working class people who were not pressure groups in themselves, not strongly unionised, and had little bargaining power.

Furthermore, the Farmers' Movement was successful in bringing the focus back on the agrarian crisis in the public imagining.² This contributed to new alliances and solidarities. In the overall environment of heightened political consciousness about the processes of differentiation and

¹ The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, adopted in 2005, was designed to reduce income and food insecurity in rural areas, guaranteeing at least 100 days of wage employment at the state minimum wage to all workers who seek work, <https://rural.nic.in/sites/default/files/nrega/Library/Books/1_MGNREGA_Act.pdf>.

² The farmer unions have been trying to draw attention to the farm crisis for the last many years through major mobilisations in states such as in Maharashtra in 2018 (see, Dhawale 2018); a march of Tamil Nadu farmers to Delhi twice with skulls and chains (see, The Hindustan Times 2017); and a long march of all India farmers to Delhi in November 2018 (see, Sainath 2018). The farmers protest in 2020 built on the ground prepared by previous protests.

dispossession in rural India, in a very significant development, the rural labour unions started mobilising rural labour and the landless farm workers in the states on their specific demands. In Punjab, seven rural labour unions came together in mid-2021 to form *Sanjha Pendu Majdoor Morcha* (United Rural Labour Front-URLF) around the specific demands of rural labour and landless farm workers. In August 2021, URLF gave a call for a three-day protest sit-in in Patiala, Punjab, to press for their demands. A joint demand charter of the front was presented at a mammoth meeting of the rural poor and landless, which had a very significant presence of women labourers. The charter of demands included repeal of the three Farm Laws and the new labour codes, which were also passed in the same session of the Parliament in September 2020. The URLF demanded that the debt waiver of farmers' scheme of the state must include non-institutional and small cooperative societies' loans which the landless and the rural labourers accessed but which had been kept outside the ambit of debt waiver schemes. They asked for land for the landless labourers for farming and for building houses.

Further, drawing attention to the fact that the agrarian crisis was not limited to farmers, but the burden was equally borne by the landless, the protestors asked for compensation and jobs for the families of landless farm labourers who committed suicide due to farm distress. The Front also demanded the MGNREGA work to be expanded to provide employment for a full year to all members of a family, MNREGA daily wage be increased, and the Public Distribution System strengthened to ensure food and nutritional security of the rural poor. They demanded one-third of the *panchayat* land on long-term lease for the *Dalits* following the 1961 Act to ensure security of livelihoods and dignity of the landless.³ They raised their voice against the caste oppression of *Dalits*, sexual oppression of *Dalit* women and for enhancing social security for the workers unable to work due to old age.

Interestingly, while the three Farm Laws catalysed thousands of farmers to leave their homes and join the *morcha* at the borders of New Delhi, the mode of Farmers' Movement as well as the broadening of the movement concerns created fertile space for the emergence of new class alliances of the oppressed in the countryside. This was an extremely significant contribution of the Movement.

³ According to the Punjab Village Commons Land (Regulation) Act of 1961, *panchayats* lease village common land to the highest bidder on the condition that a third is reserved for the scheduled castes and auctioned separately. Yet, for years now, *Jat-Sikh* landowners have been subverting the process by bidding for the reserved lands in the name of *Dalits* or through proxy candidates.

Women's Stirring Presence at the *Morcha*

Thousands of yellow and green dupattas were the omnipresent symbol of the women's stirring presence at the borders in New Delhi all through the Farmers' Movement. When the convoy of thousands of tractor trolleys entered New Delhi on 26 November 2020, women were part of these long convoys. The leadership of the Movement was predominantly elderly male, with decades of experience of mobilising farmers on local demands. A few of these Unions had women's wings, which were led by women but by and large women were not in leadership positions in the farm unions. However, they quickly acquired very significant position in the Movement. They worked quietly at the backend, collecting food and funds, talking to the press, managing the stage, and mobilising support among families in the villages and townships near the camp sites at New Delhi borders. In the build-up to the farmers' march to Delhi led by the unions in Punjab, women's role in mobilising support through the use of folk form *Jago* (wake up) – going around in the village late at night singing and giving the message of the Movement – was exemplary.

Interestingly, cooking food was not the responsibility of women at the protest sites. Once the protest camps were set up at the borders, women took over roles and responsibilities which kept on expanding as the Movement became long drawn out. It was not the first time that women from rural Punjab had participated in a protest movement - they had a long history of mobilisation going back three decades. Rural women had been part of Farmers' Movement to demand compensation for farmers who died by suicide while failing to cope with mounting farm debts and for crop failure due to faulty seeds provided through government outlets. They had been at the forefront against forcible land acquisition and in struggles for *Dalit* rights over village commons. Rural women in Punjab mobilised against rape and violence and the impunity it enjoyed in rural social order. Women had been a part of the farmer unions, and the left unions especially, had been influential in bringing them into the public domain.

On 18 January 2021, SKM dedicated a whole day to celebrate women farmers contribution to the Movement. This was the first 'Women Farmers' Day', many more were to follow in the next months. Women speakers talked about the three Farm Laws and how they affected women. They were also joined by many other working class women on these days. There were teachers, childcare workers, informal employment workers, nurses, *Anganwadi* workers and also women from farm suicide victim families. It was on these stages that women started talking not only about the farm crisis but also about patriarchy, and discrimination, not so

much using these words, but from their everyday lives – Why were the families not happy when a daughter was born; Why were sons preferred over daughters? Why was there domestic violence in families?

In view of women's strong presence, 'International Women's Day' was marked at the *morchas* on 8 March 2021. The song of *basanti* dupattas was in the air – '*Colour my chuniya basanti*', a modified version of '*Mera rang de basanti chola*' (Colour my clock yellow) - the well-known Ram Prasad Bismil song associated with Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev as they walked to the gallows, reverberated in the air.⁴ The new version was about women coming out of the confines of home to claim that their place was in the struggles. Women leaders and activists spoke about their exemplary of women in the ongoing farm struggle and the corporate attack on their livelihood, of exploitation by the big corporate farms where women labourers were not even paid the statutory minimum wage, and they challenged the official policy of facilitating market subjugation of farming communities and their forced relocation to cities as perennial casual labour.

Women talked about their forgotten role in previous movements. From Tebhaga⁵ to Telangana⁶ to Anti Betterment Levy struggles⁷ of the 1950s and 60s. They said that women always fought with men for the rights of the tillers but after the movements were over, they were asked to go back home to make *chapatis* (bread). The failure of the leadership of earlier movements to pay attention to what the women were saying to help transform gender social relations, was on women's watch. They threw back the challenge at the present leadership to recognise that the ongoing farm struggle would only be half as strong, half as vibrant if women had not joined.

In July 2021, the SKM held a *Kisan Parliament* in the heart of New Delhi as the Indian Parliament met for the Monsoon Session for two weeks. Two days of the farmers Parliament were dedicated to women farmers when they ran mock proceedings of the House. These two days saw a massive mobilisation of women from different states of India - from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra and Telangana in the South to the western state of Maharashtra and the

⁴ The modified song written by poet Sarbjot Singh can be heard here, Sharma (2021).

⁵ For a quick reference about the movement, see, Roy (2018).

⁶ For a brief summary, see, Mangat (2020).

⁷ For a brief introduction, see, Peoples' Democracy (2020).

central and Northern states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, UP and Haryana, women farmers held spirited sessions foregrounding their demands.

It was evident in the Farmers' Movement that women who were not even recognised as farmers in policy and society, created a space in the movement for articulating a gender perspective. Their formidable presence was also successful in breaking the convention that politics was a male arena of activity. The layer of masculinity attributed to the Movement dissolved with women's presence as they became visible everywhere.

Women came to the *morcha* bringing with them their varied experiences of being landless labourers; having lost husbands, fathers, or sons to deaths by suicides and their fights against sexual violence and the impunity it enjoys. From women labourers who were landless but dependent on land for their livelihoods, one learnt that if cotton crop failed due to bollworm disease, farmers suffered the loss of a crop but farm workers, mostly women, lost their season's employment. Landowning farmers received compensation for a failed crop, but who compensated the lost labour?

With women's participation, the Farmers' Movement's claims on the state expanded. Their experience of the agrarian crisis was far more intense, and their past sustained work and activism validated it and their present-day demands. With women's presence, the Movement was no longer about state protection through MSP, but they added the demand of gender justice, land to the landless, guaranteed minimum wages for farm jobs, equal wage for farm operations and much more.

Conclusion

The Farmers' Movement for the repeal of the pro-corporate farm laws became the largest and longest sustained non-violent movement in recent history. It captured the public imagination and brought crucial issues of democratic social change and the challenges of the development paradigm to the forefront of India's attention. The Movement paused after nearly 13 months at the borders when the three Farm Laws were repealed by the Parliament on 29 November 2021.

The achievements of this historic Movement were far greater than the mere repeal of laws. It became the torchbearer for democratic and justice movements in the country beyond farmers.

It was a large-scale mass mobilisation across class and language, and it united the farming communities in different parts of the country. It opened pathways for building new class alliances to collectively challenge the deal between the neoliberal state and the transnational capital. The farmers asked for reforms in the agriculture sector, which included state regulation to end farmers' exploitation by big corporations and multinational companies. They asked for small industries, employment closer to their villages, regulation of big business with ambitions to control the agricultural market and centralise power.

It is these significant issues facing India which the farmers raised and built their actions around and it is in the solidarities that emerged at the borders of New Delhi, in which rests the hope of the Movement's lasting impact. Today, farmers of this country stand tall, resolute both in their solidarity and their resistance. They fought the good fight to the best of their ability and have much success to claim. This was the largest movement in India's recent history which threw a formidable challenge to the power of the state. Farmers will be remembered for standing their ground, for having shown the moral fibre and seizing the mantle and the Farmers' Movement will be remembered as a moment of pride in the journey of this Republic.

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- ◇ Smokeless Tobacco Consumption: Evidence-based Case Study from Karachi, Pakistan
 - ◇ The Forgotten Pandemic of Gender-Based Violence in Pakistan and Nepal
 - ◇ COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery: Putting Youth of Pakistan at the Forefront

Smokeless Tobacco Consumption: Evidence-based Case Study from Karachi, Pakistan *

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Abstract

Smokeless tobacco (SLT) is a challenge for Pakistan because of its large-scale undocumented cottage industry producing pouches void of statutory warnings neglected even by the country's tobacco control legislation. Along with death-inducing ailments, its use can also transmit COVID-19. The present study was conducted before the COVID-19 Pandemic at a public sector university in Karachi, Pakistan, focusing on its non-teaching staff. A semi-structured questionnaire was used during interviews to assess the socio-demographic prevalence of SLT and awareness regarding its detrimental effects. The study focused on the chewed and moist form of SLT classified as 'Paan' and pouch. Pouch-based SLTs include popularly used forms in Pakistan such as 'Gutka', 'Mawa', 'Naswar', 'Areca Nut/Supari', 'Mainpuri', and 'Patti'. STATA 13 analysis of 296 responses revealed that daily usage was 40% higher in unmarried males with intermediate education and having other male family users. Most users consumed 'Betel Quid' or 'Paan'. A significant finding was that the duration of SLT daily usage was approximately 20.6 years. Average daily expenditure on 'Betel Quid' and pouch was PKR 72.9 (USD 0.42) and PKR 45.4 (USD 0.26), respectively. Despite having awareness about the dangers of SLT, its continued usage indicates irrational behaviour of consumers. Stringent application of the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) MPOWER approach and strict policy enforcement against its usage along with encouraging, supporting, and reinforcing quitting behaviour can help in reducing and eliminating this preventable cause of disease and death in Pakistan.

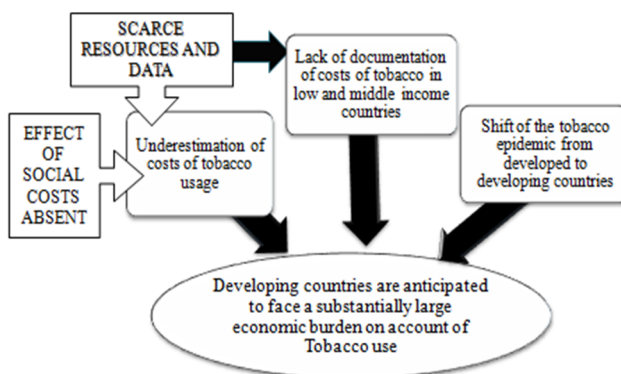
Introduction

Tobacco consumption has grown from smoked to smokeless further evolving into commodities like Vape and Velo (nicotine pouches). Smokeless tobacco (SLT) has been defined by the National Cancer Institute as: '*A type of tobacco that is not smoked or burned. It may be used as chewing tobacco or moist snuff or inhaled through the nose as dry snuff. SLT contains nicotine and many harmful, cancer-causing chemicals. Using it can lead to nicotine addiction and can cause cancers of the mouth, oesophagus, and pancreas. It may also cause heart disease, gum disease, and other health problems*' (NIH n.d.).

Globally, 49 varieties of SLT have been marketed focusing on enhanced taste and flavour with 90% consumers from Southeast Asia (WHO 2013) and 100 million belonging to India and Pakistan alone (Khan et al., 2014, p. 1). Data from The Tobacco Atlas (2022) suggests Pakistan ranks 27th in global SLT prevalence. SLT has often been consumed as a familial tradition and often propagated as a safe alternative to smoking as a ‘harm-reduction strategy’ (Öztuna et al., 2014). This is rather ironic since evidence from the literature and its NCI definition implies that SLT is a source of death-inducing diseases such as oral cancers (Qureshi et al., 2021), head and neck cancers (Zhou et al., 2013), and cardiovascular pathologies (Gupta et al., 2018). Deaths by SLT have risen by one-third over a period of seven years and for the year 2017, 90,792 deaths were reported on account of SLT-induced cancers of the oral region, whereas 258,006 lives were lost on account of SLT-induced cardiovascular diseases worldwide (Siddiqi et al., 2020). SLT is also a source of transmitting the Novel Coronavirus because of spitting the mucosal accumulate (an outcome of SLT consumption), frequent hand to mouth contact, and collaborative consumption via sharing of packets (Gaunkar et al., 2020). Ahmedabad, one of the largest cities of Gujarat, India, has efficiently dealt with the SLT Pandemic by banning its use and prohibiting spitting in public places that manifested dual benefits in terms of preventing the transmission of COVID-19 and a healthy nation (WHO 2020).

The tobacco epidemic is anticipated to affect the developing countries to a great extent in the form of economic burden incurred by workforce losses, deprivation of household income and upsurge in healthcare costs. Figure 1 shows using economics from the Tobacco Toolkit (Sung et al., 2011). This dilemma is also associated with the scarcity of data that has been vividly identified for countries like Pakistan by Gilani and Leon (2013). This paucity, along with widescale cottage-based SLT industry, particularly in low- and middle-income countries leads to a lack of documentation, putting this industry beyond the tax net as well. Baig et al., (2012) reported that consumption of SLTs like ‘Betelnut’, ‘Gutka’, and other chewed forms of tobacco increase the risk of contracting oral cancers by 8.5 to 10 times in Pakistan, amplified by 200% in low socioeconomic groups (Khan et al., 2013).

Figure 1: Prospective Dilemma



Source: Sung et al., 2011.

Given the promulgation of a ban on SLT ‘Gutka’ by the Government of Sindh under the ‘Sindh Prohibition on Manufacture, Promotion and Sale of Gutka and Mainpuri Bill, 2017’ (Ghori 2017), and considering the vulnerability of low socioeconomic cohort of Karachi (Khawaja et al., 2006); this study was specifically designed to focus on one of the largest public sector educational institutions in the province where walls stained with mucosal spit are frequently observed. This observation is in congruence with Chandra’s claim (2017) that SLT consumption is a predominant feature of employees of government institutes in Uttar Pradesh, India. The objectives of the case study were to:

- ◇ Monitor the prevalence, consumption, expenditure trends;
- ◇ Establish the determinants of SLT concerning demographic characteristics; and,
- ◇ Assess the prevalence and relative risk of cardiovascular diseases and dental problems.

Methodology and Estimation

The case study followed interview-based survey methodology illustrated in Figure 2. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire, consisting of five modules via convenient sampling. The targeted sample included the non-teaching (domestic) staff of lower

grades focusing on a chewed and moist form of SLTs including ‘Gutka’,¹ ‘Mawa’,² ‘Naswar’,³ (moist snuff/snus), ‘Areca nut/Supari’, ‘Mainpuri’,⁴ ‘Patti’, and ‘Paan/Betel Quid’.⁵ The module on SLT consumption focused on attributes extracted from Global Tobacco Surveillance Survey (GTSS), subset of the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) including lifetime consumption habit, current consumption habit, and its specifications, age of initiation, duration of consumption, reason of initiation and family consumption trend. Several participants were approached from September 2019 to March 2020 and empirics were obtained using the responses from 296 participants depending on their willingness to respond. The targeted sample size was 322 but could not be achieved because of the imposition of COVID-19 lockdown in the city of Karachi. The sample comprised 265 males and 31 females. Data entered on recording sheet was transferred onto Excel and analysed using Stata 13. As per the established questionnaires, participants were classified as current SLT users and non-users. The former encompassed two types of users: daily and occasional users. The latter category included former and ‘never’ users. Statistical scrutiny in terms of univariate analysis obtained percentages, mode, and modal frequency and one sample χ^2 . Cross-tabulations (χ^2 /Fischer) for categorical variables following the base paper of Azam et al., (2016), multiple response set, quantitative means statistically compared using either t-test/Mann-Whitney U-test and ANOVA/Kruskal Wallis yielded bivariate analysis. The prevalence of SLT was estimated using a formula from the Economics of Tobacco Toolkit (Sung et al., 2011):

$$\text{Prevalence of SLT} = \frac{\text{Number of SLT Users}}{\text{Total Person}} * 100$$

Inferential analysis using robust logistic regression helped to obtain predictors of SLT consumption by estimating the model (Azam et al., 2016):

³ Components: Tobacco, betel nut, catechu, flavourings and sweeteners. Dominant users are from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and the United Kingdom.

⁴ Components: Tobacco, areca nut and lime. Dominant users are from India and is also consumed in Pakistan.

⁵ Components: Tobacco, slaked lime, indigo, cardamom, oil, menthol and water. Dominant users are from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, United Arab Emirates, India, South Africa, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

⁶ Components: Finely cut betel nut and small pieces of tobacco leaves treated in slaked lime and flavouring agents (powdered cloves, cardamom, extract from flower of *Pandanus odoratissimus*, sandalwood powder and Catechu). Dominant users are from India and Pakistan.

⁷ Components: Tobacco, areca nut, betel leaf, slaked lime, spice, catechu, with or without tobacco. Dominant users are from the subcontinent, New Guinea, Southeast Asia, South America, Malaysia, Cambodia, Palau, Vietnam, and Federal States of Micronesia.

Current SLT Use Status

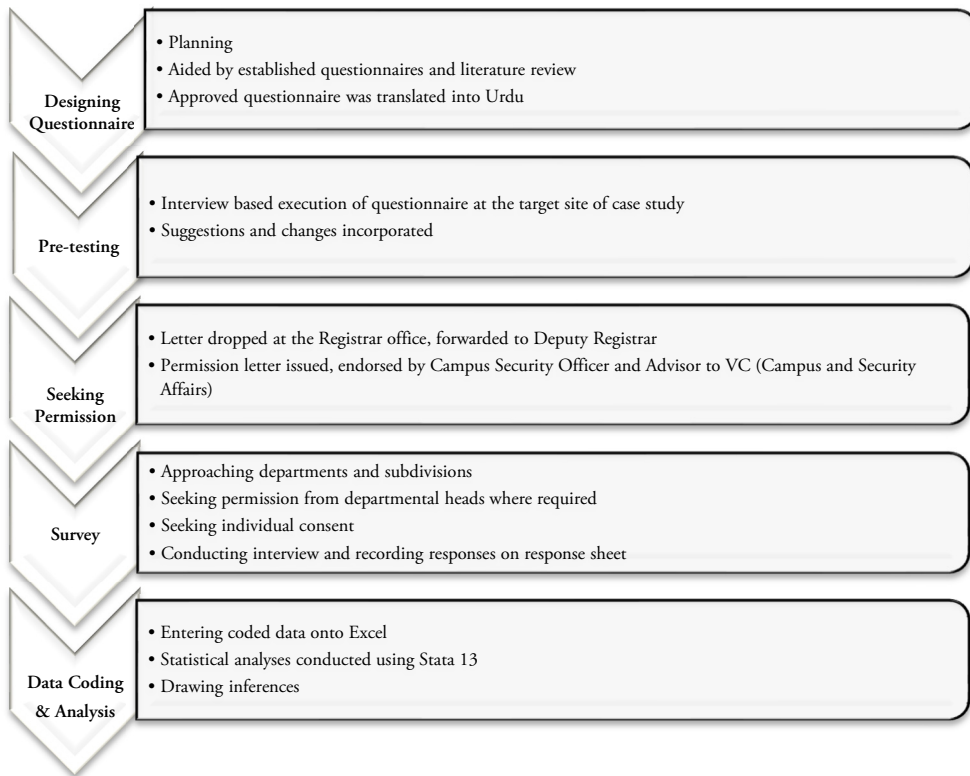
$$\begin{aligned}
 &= \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ Age Bracket} + \beta_2 \text{ Educational Level} + \beta_3 \text{ District} \\
 &+ \beta_4 \text{ Marital Status} + \beta_5 \text{ Ethnic Group} \\
 &+ \beta_6 \text{ Personal Income Bracket} + \beta_7 \text{ SLT Usage in Family} + \varepsilon
 \end{aligned}$$

Case study based relative risk (disease i) was calculated using the formulae proposed in the Economics of Tobacco Toolkit (Sung et al., 2011):

Relative Risk_i

$$= \frac{(\text{incident cases for disease i})_{\text{slt_users}} / (\text{Number of slt_users})}{(\text{incident cases for disease i})_{\text{never_slt_users}} / (\text{Number of never_slt_users})}$$

Figure 2: Research Study Process



Source: Authors' own.

Table 1: Gender-based Comparison of SLT Usage Status

Variables	Overall n (%)	Male n (%)	Female n (%)
<u>Current Smokeless Tobacco User</u>	187 (63.2)	175 (66.0)	12 (38.7)
Daily User*	104 (55.6)	104 (59.4)	0
Occasional User*	83 (44.4)	71 (40.6)	12 (100)
Occasional User, <i>formerly daily</i> **	15 (18.1)	13 (18.3)	2 (16.7)
Occasional User, <i>never daily</i> **	68 (81.9)	58 (81.7)	10 (83.3)
<u>Current Non-User of SLT</u>	109 (36.8)	90 (33.9)	19 (61.3)
Former User*	39 (13.3)	34 (37.8)	5 (26.3)
Former Daily User**	16 (41.0)	16 (47.1)	0
Former Occasional User**	22 (56.4)	18 (52.9)	5 (100)
Never*	70 (23.6)	56 (62.2)	14 (73.7)

Key: * Stated percentages are for the number of current SLT users. **Stated percentages are for the number of occasional SLT users. * Stated percentages are for the number of current non-SLT users. **Stated percentages are for the number of Former SLT users.

Results and Discussion

Socio-Demographic Prevalence of Smokeless Tobacco

Table 1 elucidates that the prevalence of current SLT users in the complete sample was 63.2% consisting of 55.6% daily users. Current usage obtained from the case study was higher than 40% of current SLT users of Bangladesh in a cross-sectional study (Rahman et al., 2015) and Datta et al., (2019) findings that reported that 18.5% of Pakistanis were using SLT. In the present case study, male dominance in SLT consumption was confirmed as reported by NCI and CDCP (2014). The findings also revealed the presence of a large proportion of occasional users. Females were seldom users with a majority (73.7%) having never used SLT products.

The characteristics of daily users in terms of the type of SLT consumed as evident from Figure 3 suggested that sampled consumers were using SLT solo or in combination with other SLT. 'Betel Quid' alone was significantly the most prevalent form of SLT amongst daily users. 'Naswar' usage was highest in daily users when compared to less than daily users ($\chi^2=241.5$, $df=103$, $p< 0.01$). Findings from GATS (Naz et al., 2014) revealed that 'Betel Quid' usage

(1.5%) ranked next to 'Naswar' usage (5.1%) in Pakistan. 'Betel Quid' chewing was reported highest amongst male (58.7%) SLT users of Myanmar (Sreeramareddy et al., 2021). In contrast to the findings from the case study, 'Naswar' (moist snuff) was the most popular (48%) and 'Betel Quid' was the least popular (13%) form of SLT in another study (Lakdawala et al., 2020). The habit of 'Betel Quid' usage has been influenced by immigrants to Karachi though its consumption was reported to have reduced by 20,000 kg/day (Misbahuddin et al., 2015) on account of product substitution with the introduction of 'Gutka', 'Naswar', and other pouch-based SLTs. The popularity of 'Naswar' has been associated with its addictive nature, being cheaper and culturally acceptable (Ahmad et al., 2020).

Fisher's exact test based cross-tabulations revealed that SLT prevalence was comparable with respect to age bracket, district of residence, ethnicity, non-normally distributed⁶ household expenditures (Skewness-Kurtosis [Jarque-Bera Test] in Stata), personal and family income though it was most prevalent in the age group of 25-44 years and District East, whereas, education ($\chi^2 = 23.2$, $df=12$, $p < 0.05$) and marital status ($\chi^2 = 12.39$, $df=4$, $p < 0.05$) had association to the category of SLT users.

Most daily users had acquired maximum education till junior high school (34.6%), whereas percentage of less than daily and 'not at all' users was comparatively lesser equivalent to 18.1% and 20.2%, respectively. On the contrary, in comparison to 59.0% less than daily users and 42.2% 'not at all' users, fewer daily users (33.7%) acquired education above Masters. Findings from GATS-Pakistan (Naz et al., 2014) also suggested that SLT use was most prevalent in those with no formal education followed by minimal educational attainment till high school. Recent cross-sectional analysis (Ali et al., 2017) and a survey-based study (Lakdawala et al., 2020) on 'Naswar' users of Peshawar and SLT users at Altamash Institute of Dental Medicine, Karachi, respectively endorsed the present case study-based inference that benightedness has been a significant characteristic of SLT users.

The distribution of SLT user types was significant with respect to marital status ($\chi^2 = 12.39$, $df=4$, $p < 0.01$) such that for each category of SLT users, singles dominated. Some 95.1% of daily users, 81.9% less than daily users and 91.7% 'not at all' users were single. The results

⁶ The variable of household expenditure was a continuous variable. In order to decipher which statistical test (parametric/non-parametric) to use for its comparison with respect to SLT usage status, normality was checked using the Skewness-Kurtosis Jarque-Bera Test. The tests revealed that this continuous variable was non-normal (not following normal distribution). Hence Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to compare the household expenditures with respect to current SLT usage status.

were consistent with Demographic Health Survey (DHS) based findings from Myanmar that reported dominance of 'Betel Quid' chewing in 50% single males (Sreeramareddy et al., 2021), whereas the proportion of single Nepalese male SLT users as per DHS was lowest at 17.7% (Gupta et al., 2020).

The presence of a family SLT user was indicated by a significantly greater percentage of daily users (38.5%) as compared to 28.9% less than daily and 19.3% 'not at all' users ($\chi^2 = 9.58$, $df=2$, $p<0.05$) where male members dominated for all types of SLT users as reported by 52.3% daily users, 66.7% less than daily users and 86.4% 'not at all' users ($\chi^2 = 7.8$, unadjusted $p<0.05$). Thus, suggesting that family history plays an important role in current SLT usage, also consistent with the findings from Bangladesh (Rahman et al., 2015). Education of SLT users in the family did not have a significant association with the type of SLT users in the case study ($\chi^2 = 42.3$, $df=46$, $p>0.05$).

Most participants initiated SLT usage during 16 to 24 years of age independent of their current SLT usage type ($\chi^2 = 6.48$, $df=8$, $p>0.05$) encompassing the mean age reported for India '18 years' (WHO 2018) and Bangladesh '22.78 \pm 7.57' (Sreeramareddy et al., 2021). Starting at a younger age, like in the present study, increases nicotine tolerance (Ibid.) and is a boulder in the path of quitting (Joshi, Modi and Yadav 2010).

Analysis showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean duration of SLT use between the three usage categories ($F=6.61$, $df=128$, $p<0.05$). Daily users had used SLT for the longest duration (20.6 years) as compared to less than daily (13.9 years) and 'not at all' users (11.5 years). The stated differences in means were significantly larger for daily users when compared to less than daily ($t= -13.7$, $p<0.001$) and not at all current usage ($t= -17.02$, $p<0.001$) categories using Tukey post-hoc analysis. The present findings are above the lower bound of duration reported in a recent dental hospital-based cross-sectional survey (>7 years) (Lakdawala 2020). Findings from India revealed that 'Gul' users in three districts of Delhi had reported using this SLT for an average of 6.28 years (Mehra et al., 2020).

Friends and company were the most popular reason for SLT usage initiation with 53.8% daily users, 48.1% less than daily, and 50% 'not at all' users. This occurrence was comparable ($\chi^2 = 13.5$, $df=10$, $p>0.05$). In comparison to the findings of the present case study, family played a pivotal role in SLT initiation for a majority (25.4%) of the participants and friends were a significant contributor to only 7.1% of SLT users in a Bangladesh based study (Rahman et al.,

2015). Peer pressure has been reported to be the leading cause of SLT commencement in 76% of Indian students (Sreeramareddy et al., 2021) and amongst SLT users visiting Altamash dental hospital, Karachi where 46.52% had fallen prey to SLT consumption under the influence of company (Lakdawala et al., 2020).

Non-Demographic Trends and Economic Cost Associated with Smokeless Tobacco

The health status of daily users was generally good as reported by participants and evident from the seldom occurrence of diseases. A daily user suffered from a heart attack more than a year ago with healthcare expenditure of PKR 125,000 (USD 707.21).⁹ He used homemade 'Betel Quid' on a daily basis and in verbatim informed that he *'did not consider it as the cause of heart attack as homemade 'Betel Quid' does not have side effects and that it had become a part of the culture.'* Some other participants also shared in verbatim that disease does not have a link to SLT consumption as even those who do not consume SLT have experienced diseases like cancers and heart attack. Similar opinions were shared in Ali et al., (2017, p. 3) claiming that *'cancer is caused without any reason, and it is the will of God.'*

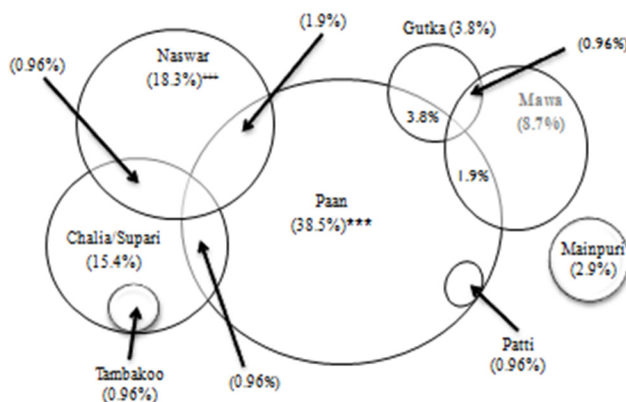
Two 'not at all' users of SLT used the private insurance panel facility provided by their employer for the treatment of heart attack. One of these was a daily 'Betel Quid' user in the past. Four daily SLT users and a single 'not at all' user suffered from angina pain and the average healthcare expenditure for daily users was PKR 3,262 (USD 18.46⁷) along with the use of private insurance panel facility provided by their employer. Amongst the daily user angina victims, one 'Gutka' user had a blockage in two heart valves, while 'Betel Quid' and 'Mawa' users continued facing heart problems and the remaining were 'Betel Quid' users. 'Not at all' users of SLT who suffered from angina pain had a history of daily 'Mawa' usage. Amongst less than daily users, a 'Betel Quid' user and a participant using 'Betel Quid/Areca Nut' reported suffering from angina pain more than a year ago with average healthcare expenditure of PKR 2,000 (USD 11.32⁸). Whereas, a 'not at all' user who suffered from angina pain and received treatment using private insurance panel facility provided by his employer was a past daily user of 'Betel Quid'. Symptoms like angina pain were suffered by daily users of 'Naswar' and 'Mainpuri' separately. Likewise, symptoms like angina were faced by two less

⁷ USD conversion rate as per December 2021 1 USD = 176 PKR.

⁸ USD conversion rate as per December 2021 1 USD = 176 PKR.

than daily users, and a past daily user of ‘Betel Quid’. Though the latter reported that at the time of the interview, he did not use any form of SLT at all.

Figure 3: Prevalence of SLTs by Type amongst Daily Users



Source: Authors' own.

It is important to note that cardiovascular disease was suffered by only one ‘not at all’ SLT user. Hence, the relative risk of heart attack and angina pain from the present case study was found to be 0.619 and 2.168, respectively as shown below:

$$\text{Relative Risk of Heart Attack} = \frac{2/226}{1/70} = 0.619$$

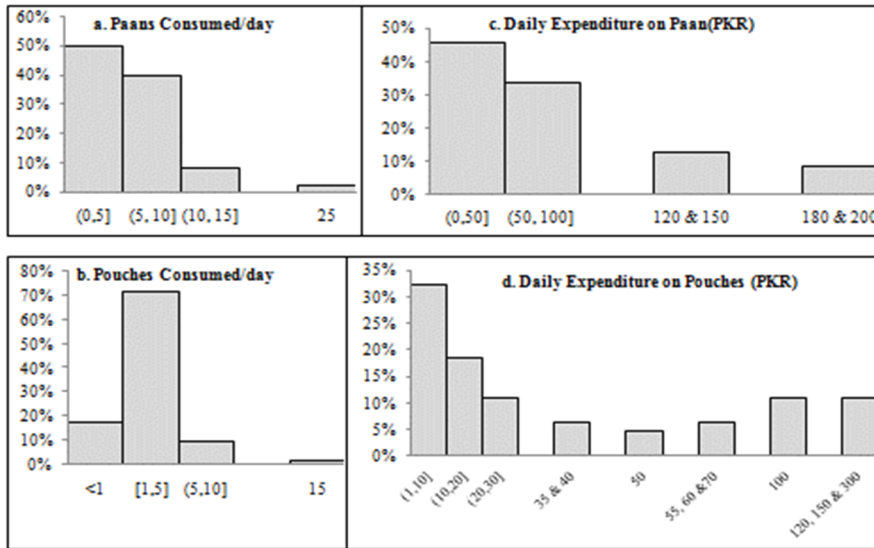
$$\text{Relative Risk of Angina} = \frac{8/226}{1/70} = 2.169$$

The high risk of angina depicts that participants consuming SLT are vulnerable to heart diseases. The latest finding, as reported in a meta-analysis, suggested that the relative risk of heart attack is 1.41 and 1.71 for ‘Naswar’ and other SLT users in Pakistan, respectively (Alexander 2013). Findings from Bangladesh suggest that the tendency to contract coronary diseases was highest in ‘Sadapata’ users followed by ‘Gul’ and ‘Zarda’ depending upon the duration of consumption of each SLT (Sreeramareddy et al., 2021).

Consumption and Expenditure Trends of Daily Smokeless Tobacco Users

Although majority of daily users (92.3%) in the present case study perceived SLT to be hazardous and were aware of specific diseases associated with SLT consumption, Figure 4a depicts that majority of ‘Betel Quid’ users were using ≤ 5 Paans/day. Average daily expenditure on purchase of ‘Betel Quid’ was PKR 72.9 (USD 0.42⁹) with 45.8% spending ≤ 50 /day (Figure 4c). Some 71.4% pouch-based SLT users were using five pouches/day (Figure 4b) such that the average daily expenditure was PKR 45.5 (USD 0.26¹⁰) with a preponderance of monetary spending between PKR 1-10 inclusive (Figure 4d):

Figure 4: Consumption and Expenditure of Daily Users for Paan and Pouch-based SLTs



Source: Authors’ own.

Naz et al., (2018) in a secondary analysis using data from GATS, reported that a maximum number of males were spending between PKR 1-100 (51.5%) followed by 16.1%, 6.6%, and 2.3% SLT users who were spending PKR 101-200, PKR 201-300 and PKR >300, respectively. Rahman et al., (2015) reported that the average expenditure for Bangladeshi SLT users, in general, was ‘94 Bangladeshi Takka (USD 1.34¹¹)’ that incurs a cost of 0.05% to 33% of the

⁹ USD conversion rate as per December 2021 1 USD = 176 PKR.

¹⁰ USD conversion rate as per December 2021 1 USD = 176 PKR.

¹¹ USD conversion rate as per December 2021 1 USD = 176 PKR.

weekly income. Variations concerning SLT types suggested that ‘Gul’ was the least expensive to purchase as compared to ‘Zarda’ and ‘Sadapata.’ ‘Gul’ users, who reported using it two to three times a day, spent a minimum of ‘1 Bangladeshi Takka (USD 0.01¹²)’ on a weekly basis. People using ‘Zarda’ four times a day spent a maximum of ‘1050 Bangladeshi Takka (USD 15¹³)’ in a week.

Predictive Analysis of Smokeless Tobacco Usage with respect to Demographics

Table 2 gives the outcome of robust logistic regression analysis for the occurrence of SLT consumption behaviour as a daily user concerning various categorical demographic variables:

Table 2: Robust Logistic Regression Analysis-Based Association of Demographic Variables with Current SLT Usage comparing Daily Users versus Non-Daily Users

Independent Variables	Odds Ratio (OR)	p-value	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
<u>Age Bracket (years)</u>				
25-44	0.87	0.91	0.078	9.65
45-64	0.64	0.80	0.06	7.36
65+	1 Ref ²			
<u>Family Consumers of SLT</u>				
Yes				
<u>Education</u>	2.01	0.024	1.1	3.68
Elementary (1-6)				
Junior High School (7-10)	3.32	0.21	0.51	21.56
High School (11-12)	6.85	0.026	1.26	37.11
Undergraduate (13-15)	3.86	0.14	0.66	22.75
Above graduation	9.04	0.038	1.13	72
Attended school for deaf and dumb	3.01	0.22	0.53	17.18
<u>Marital Status</u>	1 Ref			
Married	6.26	0.004	1.79	21.81
Single	Ref			
Divorced	32.2	0.005	2.81	371.7
<u>Residence (District)</u>				
South	3.51	0.16	0.621	19.82
East	0.86	0.77	0.319	2.34
Central	1.22	0.72	0.412	3.62
West	2.17	0.41	0.346	13.58

(Contd.)

¹² USD conversion rate as per December 2021 1 USD = 176 PKR.

¹³ USD conversion rate as per December 2021 1 USD = 176 PKR.

Malir	1.77	0.38	0.501	6.24
Korangi	1 Ref			
<u>Ethnic Group</u>				
Punjabi	0.36	0.10	0.102	1.23
Pashtun	0.13	0.01	0.03	0.62
Sindhi	0.21	0.04	0.049	0.92
Seraiki	1 Ref			
Mohajir	0.15	0.007	0.036	0.59
Baloch	0.22	0.12	0.034	1.47
Other	0.17	0.04	0.034	0.88
Urdu Speaking	0.22	0.008	0.077	0.67
<u>Family Income Bracket</u>				
<u>(Monthly-PKR³)</u>				
5000-10,000	1 Ref			
10,001-20,000	6.34	0.04	1.13	35.44
20,001-30,000	4.53	0.05	1.03	19.86
30,001-40,000	2.20	0.24	0.59	8.10
40,001-50,000	2.83	0.09	0.84	9.48
50,001-60,000	4.63	0.03	1.28	16.76
60,001-70,000	2.41	0.19	0.65	8.86
70,001-80,000	2.92	0.17	0.635	13.51
80,001-90,000	0.43	0.53	0.03	6.2
>90,001	2.98	0.15	0.68	13.11
<u>Constant</u>	0.034	0.03	0.0016	0.763

Note: ¹Consumption of SLT is taken up as a binary variable such that less than daily/occasional users are classified as non-daily users. ²Reference category for OR. ³Pak Rupees.

Age bracket is a priori confounder; hence the model begins with the age bracket and is followed by other variables. Bivariate analysis was the criterion of the sequence of inclusion of independent variables in the step-up or forward entry procedure to control the confounding effects (Gilani and Leon 2013; Azam et al., 2016). The final model that included all the variables having a Wald chi-square value of 48.4 and pseudo R² value of 0.14 (p<0.05) suggested that it fits significantly better as compared to an empty model. Although not significant, the elderly participants had the highest odds of using SLT parallel to findings of maximum odds of smoked tobacco usage by adults of age>50 years in Pakistan (Gilani and Leon 2013). Studies reported that the relative risk ratio of SLT usage was significantly highest amongst Indian elderly males of age >65 years (2.15) (Singh and Ladusingh 2014).

The occurrence of SLT habit in family significantly increased the chances of a respondent being an SLT user by 2.01 times (p<0.05) in line with findings on smoked tobacco of Gilani and Leon (2013) for Pakistan. The authors reported that fathers' tobacco use especially

increased the odds of using smoked tobacco by 2.3 times and so was the case in the present study where the majority of family users were males. Findings from the present study also revealed that individuals who acquired education till under graduation and junior high school had significantly increased chances of SLT consumption by 9.04 and 6.85, respectively under *ceteris paribus* condition. Studies have shown that lack of education is a predictor of SLT usage in Nepal (Gupta et al., 2020) and Nigeria (Onoh et al., 2021). Similarly, findings from India suggest that the absence of education significantly increased the relative risk of SLT usage by 2.10 (Singh and Ladusingh 2014).

Divorced and married participants in comparison to base outcome of single participants were significantly (32.2 and 6.26 times respectively) more vulnerable to SLT consumption ($p < 0.01$) as also noted from Nepal where the odds ratio of SLT consumption in divorced and married males were 24.2 and 4.84, respectively (Gupta et al., 2020). Ethnic affiliation had an inverse relation with the vulnerability to SLT consumption in the present study. The chances of using SLT decreased by 22% for Urdu speaking ($p < 0.01$) followed by a decrease of 15% for Mohajir ($p < 0.01$) and a 13% decrease for Pashtun affiliates ($p < 0.05$). Under *ceteris paribus* conditions, participants with low (PKR 10,001-20,000) and moderate family income (PKR 50,000-60,000) were 6.34 and 4.63 times more prone to using SLT ($p < 0.05$). Males belonging to poor and moderate households, categorised in terms of assets, in India had odds of using SLT at 1.91 ($p < 0.01$) and 1.64 ($p < 0.01$), respectively (Singh and Ladusingh 2014). Poorest and poor male residents of Myanmar, in terms of wealth index, had significantly high odds of 1.9 ($p < 0.01$) and 1.6 ($p < 0.05$), respectively of being prone to SLT consumption (Sreeramareddy et al., 2021). Inter-temporal analysis of SLT consumption with respect to the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) policy implication in Pakistan by Datta et al. (2019) revealed that relative risk ratio of ingesting SLT had increased from 0.62 to 0.77 from 2008 to 2016 associated with increased prevalence of this habit amongst poor and middle-income households indicating that FCTC policies were inadequately and poorly implemented.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the findings of the study and those reviewed via secondary literature on other developing countries like India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nigeria etc., it is clear that given the prevalence rate of smokeless tobacco consumption in Pakistan's most populous urban city – Karachi - this issue can no longer be ignored. While prevalence and cost of consumption

estimated was found to be towards the lower end, there could be several reasons for this: i) several users, identified from their physical use features, were hesitant to take part in the study; ii) usage status was misreported; iii) users, along with sufferers of diseases, could not be reached because of absentia; and, iv) threshold out-of-pocket healthcare expenditures could not be estimated as the majority relied on the private insurance panel facility provided by their employer, thus burdening institutional resources.

While the province of Sindh has promulgated the ‘Sindh Prohibition on Manufacture, Promotion and Sale of Gutka and Mainpuri Bill, 2017’, stronger execution is needed to address the easy and widespread availability of SLT despite the ban (Ghori 2017). Simultaneously, policies need to address the hindrances due to which users are unable to quit their SLT addiction. It is necessary to establish quitting facilitation centres offering behavioural modification techniques along with gauging tobacco dependency. Social media and telecommunication platforms can serve as a medium of communicating the message about SLT induced diseases. At the organisational level, considering the target site of the study, dissemination of awareness via flyers, conducting seminars via active engagement of successful quitters and direct/indirect victims of SLT usage can be fruitful.

Imposition of a complete ban is beneficial as it caters even to the workplace and socio-familial triggers to start and restart SLT usage, but alternative means of employment would need to be provided to those working in SLT industry (Khan et al., 2019). The government has been reluctant in executing consumer beneficial taxation policies based on faulty cost-benefit analysis of tax revenue as it fails to understand the harm inflicted by tobacco consumption assessed in terms of tobacco-attributable fraction and associated health and social costs. Tax policies should at least meet the health and economic cost incurred (Nayab et al., 2021). Government policies need to strictly implement the WHO FCTC clauses 11 and 13 - advertisement and promotion in the form of displays at points of sale should be prohibited. Primary healthcare can also play a contributing role by identifying SLT users, encouraging them to quit this life-threatening habit, and providing cost effective de-addiction treatment facilities by engaging the prospective quitters in longer life related distractions. In Pakistan, SLT packaging does not display any statutory warnings (Ahmad et al., 2020) and it is alarming to note that in the latest tobacco control legislation in the country, ‘Health warnings are NOT required on SLT products’ (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids 2020) which indicates lack of awareness at the national leadership level. Hence, it is necessary to have clear pictorial warnings on packaging. Spitting in public places should be condemned and strictly prohibited to prevent

it from being a cause of the spread of COVID-19 and other contagious viruses. Fines should be imposed on eating and spitting of SLT within governmental institutions like the site of the study.

Policymakers, within the health departments and ministries should study WHO's MPOWER Approach¹⁴ and take steps for its stringent implementation against SLT usage along with encouraging, supporting, and reinforcing quitting behaviour. The above steps could help in reducing and eradicating the preventable causes of the spread of disease and death through SLT products in Pakistan.

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¹⁴ The World Health Organization (WHO)'s FCTC has six principal strategies called 'MPOWER' which include smoke-free environments, cessation programs, warning labels, mass anti-tobacco media, tobacco advertising bans, and taxation' (Guydish 2016).

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The Forgotten Pandemic of Gender-Based Violence in Pakistan and Nepal*

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Abstract

This chapter discusses Gender-Based Violence (GBV) which is currently a shadow Pandemic in South Asia. It focuses on GBV against women in Pakistan and Nepal during the Pandemic and analyses how the government and civil society responded to it and what needs to be done to address the issue so that in times of crisis or pandemics, its prevalence does not increase. During lockdowns, women and girls were locked down with their abusers and economic and social issues led to drastic increase in violence. Pakistan and Nepal faced an increase in GBV due to non-implementation of laws and treaties that they have promulgated and signed. Qualitative secondary data analysis of newspaper articles, journals and United Nations (UN) reports was conducted, and first-hand data was assimilated during a session on GBV at Sustainable Development Policy Institute's Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference 2021.

Introduction

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a global issue that cuts across racial, religious, and regional lines everywhere. Though there are many international legislations, conventions, and agreements, unfortunately, there seems no end in sight of GBV of any nature, whether it is femicide, honour killings, sexual or domestic violence. GBV not only violates the human rights of a victim but also affects human capital and economic growth of societies. In recent times, the power of social media often leads to stimulus of public opinion and pressurises decision-makers to legislate. Hence, every country seems to have better laws to decrease cases of GBV. However, unfortunately, countries are failing to implement those laws, especially in developing countries like Pakistan and Nepal.

According to various Pakistan Human Rights Commission studies, 90% of women in the state have experienced domestic violence by husbands or families. Out of these, approximately 47% of married women have experienced sexual abuse. Only a fraction of these women reported the violence, whereas majority cases went unreported (UNODC 2020, p.7). 28% women between the ages of 15 and 49 years experienced physical violence, whereas 6% experienced sexual violence in their life. Moreover, the most common type of intimate partner abuse was emotional abuse followed by physical violence (Ibid., p.8). On the other hand, according to

the UNPFA, 48% of Nepali women experienced some sort of violence, out of which 15% confirmed to have been sexually abused (D'Orlando 2021).

Accuracy of data on GBV is a challenge in countries like Pakistan and Nepal as the stigma of reporting due to patriarchal norms and investigation tends to keep women from reporting violence or seeking help. However, UNPFA reported that the types of GBV prevalent in Nepal ranged from domestic violence, dowry related violence, child marriage, trafficking, female infanticide to honour killings (Ibid.).

The aim of this chapter is to focus on GBV against women in Pakistan and Nepal during the Pandemic and analyse how the government and civil society responded to it and what could be recommended to address the issue, so that in times of crisis or pandemics, its prevalence does not increase. The chapter is structured as follows: first GBV is defined, then types of violence are identified, followed by a discussion on GBV and COVID-19, GBV as a human rights issue, the power dynamics of GBV, case study of Nepal and Pakistan, and finally recommendations are provided. Qualitative secondary data analysis of newspaper articles, journals and UN reports was done, and first-hand data was assimilated from a panel on GBV organised during the Sustainable Development Policy Institute's annual conference in December 2021.

What is GBV?

There have been various definitions of GBV across research. A general definition used by international organisations such as UNHCR is that GBV is referred to any act of violence directed towards an individual based on their gender. In addition, UNHCR (2020) has identified the root causes of GBV as 'gender inequality, abuse of power and harmful norms' (p.5).

GBV is not only a human rights issue for an individual, but it can also be life threatening and a protection/human security issue as well. According to a UN Women Report (2020), one in three women experience sexual, physical, or emotional violence in their lifetime. This occurrence of VAW and girls usually increases during times of crisis and conflict, such as pandemics.

Types of GBV

Violence can never be quantified or categorised as an exact form. For the purpose of this research, it is important to identify the types that have been reported in numerous cases. Usually, when one thinks of violence, it is associated with physical harm, while non-physical forms are not discussed or focused upon. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, better known as the Istanbul Convention, identified the following types of violence during the 2011 Convention as follows:

Articles 31-41: *The following types of violence should be criminalised: psychological violence, stalking; physical violence; sexual violence, including rape and causing another person to engage in non-consensual acts of a sexual nature with a third person, forced marriage of an adult or child, including luring an adult or child to enter the territory of another state with the aim of forcing them into marriage, female genital mutilation; forced abortion and forced sterilisation, when lacking the informed consent of the women and her understanding of the procedure; sexual harassment, whether it be verbal, nonverbal, or physical.*

Article 41: *Intentional aiding or abetting the commission of gender-based violence should be considered an offence. The same applies to attempts to commit it.*

Article 42: *Unacceptable justifications for crimes, including crimes committed in the name of so-called 'honour'... Culture, custom, tradition, religion, or so-called 'honour' should not be regarded in criminal proceedings as justifications for acts of gender-based violence mentioned by the Convention (Council of Europe n.d.).*

These types of violence, along with domestic violence and sexual harassment, can be categorised under physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, and socioeconomic violence. Their combination can be present in abusive relationships. All the mentioned forms can also occur simultaneously in the private sphere including families and intimate partner and in the public sphere, committed by strangers, or by organisations, institutions, and states.

GBV during COVID-19

Violence during the Pandemic rose due to limited physical space constraints and difficult socioeconomic situations. According to a report by the Global Women's Institute (2017) on 'Refugees and Conflict', the affected population highlighted the following types of violence: intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual assault, traditional practices (including forced marriages, early marriages, force feeding of women female genital mutilation) and trafficking (pp. 4-5). Moreover, the report deduced that the root causes of GBV in conflict or non-conflict setting was due to the unequal power dynamics and patriarchal gender norms (Ibid., p. 5).

These root causes likely aggravated GBV during the Pandemic (or conflict settings) where an individual's efforts to go against societal norms led to increased violence. In addition, Heise (1998) reinforces that both societal norms as well as individual factors play an important role in the increase of GBV in conflict settings. The author states that the increase in criminality, lack of charges against perpetrators of violence, and lack of social support at the community level are the main drivers of GBV (Ibid., pp. 262-264). These factors continue to affect relationship dynamics where power is used to control the other partner and non-conformity from the spouse (or any other family member) may lead to risk of violence. Moreover, in addition to traditional and societal norms, individual factors such as education levels, poverty, etc., can also increase an individual's risk of inflicting and facing GBV. Heise (1998) further argued that these societal and individual factors collectively determine the overall risk of GBV.

Similarly, as in a conflict setting, the social and economic stress that was brought about by COVID-19 due to lockdowns aggravated gender inequality and social norms. During lockdowns, the number of girls and women between the ages of 15 and 49 who experienced sexual/physical violence by an intimate partner was approximately 243 million (UN Women 2020). Both developed and the developing countries reported an escalation in the cases of GBV: *'France reported an increase of 30% of domestic violence cases since the lockdown on March 17; Cyprus and Singapore reported an increase in helpline calls by 30% and 33%, respectively; in Argentina, emergency calls for domestic violence cases increased by 25% since the beginning of the lockdown; in Canada, Germany, Spain, the UK and the USA, government authorities, women's rights activists and civil society partners have indicated increasing reports of domestic violence during the crisis, and/or increased demand for emergency shelter'* (Ibid.).

It is also seen globally that women have unequal share of caregiving for children who during the Pandemic could not attend daycare, schools, or universities. This ended up in women having to compromise on income generating opportunities that arose during the Pandemic, such as online work or work-from-home opportunities. In addition, countries where inheritance laws discriminate against women and girls of a household, death of the male counterpart whether a spouse or father, would result in gendered impact on women and girls.

GBV as a Human Rights Issue

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (VAW) defines VAW as *'Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threat of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life.'*

Along with VAW, there are a lot of other conventions and agreements such as Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979, World Conference on Human Rights, 1993 (Vienna); International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), 1994 (Cairo); UN Fourth Conference of Women, 1995 (Beijing); Declaration of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Elimination of Violence against Women, Beijing Platform of Action, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), that unanimously require signatories to protect women and other socially excluded groups on the basis of their gender and provide sources and resources for their health and protection.

GBV is a violation of human rights. Every human being has the right to his/her physical, sexual, emotional integrity and health. The right to health can only be provided if the state ensures the right to life, survival, and development equality whatever the economic, social, or financial situation of their citizens.

Pakistan is signatory to the aforementioned international agreements and commitments. The Constitution of Pakistan also guarantees equality for all its citizens. Article 25 of the Constitution states, *'There will be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone'* while Article 28 stipulates, *'Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life.'*

In the 1990s, Nepal made various international commitments to support human rights, women's health, and development. Following the Nepal Treaty Act, 1991 (Article 9), international laws prevail over national laws if there is a conflict between the two. Also, national provisions are to be made to enact international laws at the national level (Hawkes et al., 2001, p. 17).

Power Dynamics of GBV

According to Foucault, knowledge is not detached, rather it is a critical part of the struggle over power, and the manner in which we produce knowledge is also how we lay claim over power (Mills 2003, p. 69). The two elements 'power/knowledge' are interdependent. Wherever there is an imbalance of power between individuals or institutions production of knowledge occurs (Ibid). Foucault would argue that since there is an imbalance between men and women, greater knowledge about women and hence emphasis on GBV narrative takes place. Whether this leads to actual change on ground is a point to be contested.

In the translation of Simone de Beauvoir's 'The Second Sex' the authors argue that economically, men and women form two separate categories, all the rest being equal, men usually have better jobs, higher wages, and occupy more places in industry, politics, and other important positions. In the past, history has been made by men. Though women may have started to share the world of men, this world is still made by men, unfortunately. Women are still effectively the *Other* in today's world (Borde and Malovany-Chevallier 2009, p. 10). The authors go on to state: *'Hence woman makes no claim for herself as subject because she lacks the concrete means, because she senses the necessary link connecting her to man without posing its reciprocity, and because she often derives satisfaction from her role as the Other'* (Ibid.). Linking this to GBV, since women are often subservient to men, when violence occurs against them, they often find it difficult to internalise and to report especially when it is by a partner or relative.

Applying Edward Said's framework of 'Otherization', if we look at oriental women, a standard Victorian prejudice is thought to be applied to them: they are doubly marginalised, firstly being women, secondly being from the Orient. The exotic, nude or partially clothed oriental female was often represented as an exotic and immodest being, the key to erotic pleasures (Shahanirad and Marandi 2015, p.24). Patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism, all combined to subjugate the oriental woman. As Spivak write in her seminal essay: *'Between patriarchy and*

imperialism, subject-constitution and object formation, the figure of the woman disappears, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the 'third-world woman' caught between tradition and modernization' (Spivak 1988, p. 102).

Case of Nepal

According to a report on 'Tracking Cases of Gender Based Violence in Nepal: Individual, Institutional, Legal and Policy Analyses' by UNPFA, GBV was divided into dowry-related violence, rape including gang rape, witchcraft accusation, trafficking, domestic violence perpetrated by husband and widow abuse (Hawkes et al., 2001, p. 12). Looking at the case of Nepal, it is a country which has gone through a great deal of political change over the past 30 years. Till 1991, it had a Hindu monarchy and then it became a constitutional monarchy (Ibid., p. 17). VAW is endemic and persistent in Nepal and individual women suffer both humiliation and abuse and also fear societal 'shame' if they make their suffering public knowledge. Societal norms (especially gender norms) act in a way as to perpetuate women's weakness. While there are many institutions such as police, legal aid, justice system and organisations present to provide support to women and girls (to help those who have suffered from violence and prevent violence), there are three key areas of action: dealing with women's level of knowledge regarding their rights and increasing their agency to act; fostering gender-transformative social norms that focus on men's roles and duties for ensuring girls and women live a life free of violence; fortification of mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and institutional accountability (Hawkes et al., 2001, p. 2).

In Nepal, during COVID-19, 1/3rd of women between the ages of 15 and 45 faced either sexual or physical abuse (Options 2020). Those with disabilities were more at risk. Due to the shame, stigma or abuse, even when the police are involved the family and victims more often than not prefer to drop the charges of abuse. It is witnessed that social norms often trap women into a cycle of silence. Though there are healthcare centres and psychosocial training professionals and medico-legal professionals available, lack of trained human resources and leadership skills impacts the performance of these services in Nepal (Ibid.).

Case of Pakistan

GBV is widely prevalent in Pakistan. During the Pandemic and in 2021, when families were confined to their homes, some were stuck with their abusers and lost their lives to violence. A few reported cases were those of 'Saima', 'Qurat-ul-Ain Baloch' and 'Noor Muqaddam'. Saima was reportedly badly injured along with her brother when her abusive father Raza Ali opened fire on his family killing his wife, Bushra Raza. Raza Ali was a police constable and had history of drug abuse and domestic violence. A report was filed against him, but he is on the run after almost a year [as of December 2021] (Express Tribune 2021). On the other hand, Qurat-ul-Ain Baloch, a mother of four, was brutally murdered by her husband after he tortured her for hours in the presence of their four children aged from two till nine. The husband was later arrested but the case did not move any further due to his influential background (Ayub 2021). In July 2021, hashtags of #justiceforQuratulain and #justiceforSaima were trending on social media when the Pakistani nation was again shaken by another killing – that of Noor Muqaddam. The victim's body was found decapitated in an affluent neighbourhood of the capital, Islamabad. The killing caused nationwide uproar and women and men protesting to seek justice for the victim, with the hashtag #JusticeforNoor trending on Twitter. Noor Muqaddam's case was the latest in a line of attacks against women in Pakistan, where GBV, especially femicide, continues to be rooted in patriarchal norms (Hafeez 2021). Unfortunately, cases of Saima and Qurat-ul-Ain did not receive the same attention from the law agencies as Noor Muqaddam's case did. In fact, no investigative agency worked together towards addressing violence against these women and to find justice for them.

On the other hand, the police and the law agencies even though acted swiftly in Noor Muqaddam's case have still failed to bring to justice the alleged perpetrator in Qurat-ul-Ain's case even after his confession (as of December 2021).

According to Rabbani et al. (2008, p. 416), various factors play a role in occurrence of GBV in Pakistan. Some of the factors include lack of women empowerment, limited representation of women in government, poverty, low education and lack of support and safeguards for GBV victims.

As a member of the UN, Pakistan has always showed urgency towards addressing GBV and minimising its occurrence. The state has passed laws that claim to protect women, but these

bills and legislations will not hold importance until there is a deep and transformative social change in the patriarchal norms defined within Pakistani society.

Recommendations

- ◇ GBV cannot be viewed in a vacuum, otherwise it will not disappear.
- ◇ Political will needs to be strengthened at all levels – local, provincial and national – to ensure that laws are enforced that lead to protection of those individuals of society that face GBV.
- ◇ Shelters and helplines should be given the required support and reinforcing them should be a top priority.
- ◇ Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) at police stations, Dar-ul-Amans, and UN approved healthcare centres should be devised. When SOPs are in place, it is more likely that these places may become more functional and effective when dealing with gender-related crime.
- ◇ Accurate data needs to be collected on rural women who remain marginalised.
- ◇ Economic opportunities need to be created for women.
- ◇ A Gender Data Portal should be initiated and more awareness raising campaigns undertaken to sensitise the public about GBV.
- ◇ The state should promote media campaigns, NGOs, and foundations that are helping women. In this way, outside the realm of the government, other institutions can also help.
- ◇ Though laws are there, it is implementation that is missing. Furthermore, law enforcement agencies should be trained so that they are gender sensitised.
- ◇ The media plays a central role in image creation and the toxicity of talk shows, dramas, and plays – where mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law are often seen fighting with each other, or women are often shown as meek and subservient, or very dominant – this narrative formation needs to be altered, and a more nuanced and positive image of women reflected. Women’s collective agency should be used in a positive manner to tackle these issues.
- ◇ Education plays a crucial role in social change. Educating the public about GBV is important and this can be done via social media, NGO campaigns in the urban and rural areas, talk shows and plays, theatre, etc.

- ◇ The government, civil society and NGOs need to acknowledge that change starts at the grass-root level and is essential for initiating dialogue about GBV anywhere in the world. This collective attitude is vital in bringing change. Such a strategy can include offering workshops to community members, raising awareness about sensitive issues such as domestic violence, reproductive health, and resources to address these issues.
- ◇ Citizens should be quick to report violence, not shame individuals who face it and help out and support those who are faced with violence.
- ◇ The police should ensure that when a victim reaches out to them, they are heard immediately and given prompt justice.

Conclusion

The first step in addressing GBV is to change people's attitudes and thoughts through social and behavioral public and civil society-led initiatives which will open spaces for dialogues and subtly alter the values and expectations of both genders resulting in positive actions towards elimination of GBV.

Society should go beyond trending hashtags on Twitter, that disappear within a day, and ensure that implementation of laws occurs so that the culprits of crimes of GBV are brought to justice swiftly. It should be emphasised that men should treat their spouses, mothers, daughters, sisters, colleagues, with respect and that resorting to violence is not an option and that the state will take severe action in any such case. No task is impossible, and political will and women's collective agency, if used effectively can be harnessed to ensure that GBV in South Asia, especially in countries like Pakistan and Nepal is curtailed.

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COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery: Putting Youth of Pakistan at the Forefront*

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Abstract

The COVID-19 Pandemic affected all parts of society and livelihoods around the globe, especially, the more vulnerable segments of the population such as young rural women and men. Nevertheless, when proactively engaged, they proved themselves as innovators in their own sectors to overcome the Pandemic's impacts. As governments and development partners take steps to address the economic and social effects of COVID-19, they should ensure that gains achieved in rural youth development in recent years through different government initiatives are not eroded. To build on the existing initiatives, this chapter discusses how further investments could enhance the livelihoods of young people in terms of inclusion in food systems, access to vocational education and training, social protection and security, and access to decent employment and financial relief. Young rural women and men should remain a priority during and after the Pandemic and be included in decision-making processes in order to prosper, reach their full potential, and ensure sustainable rural recovery.

Introduction

Pakistan is among the world's youngest countries. An estimated 64% of its population is younger than 30, and about one-third of its population is between the ages of 15 and 29 (Ahmad 2018). This makes it the largest youth population Pakistan has ever had. Nearly 65 million people in the country are between the ages of 10 and 24. Each year, 1.2 million more are added to this age demography (UNICEF 2020a). Yet, almost half of the country's young people are neither educated, employed, nor trained. As of 2021, youth unemployment rate was 8.5%, one of the highest in the region (UN 2021). This historically large youth demography of Pakistan faces the risk of becoming increasingly disenfranchised and unable to contribute sustainably to the country's socioeconomic growth if their potential remains critically underutilised.

The social impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic disrupted nearly all aspects of life and affected all age groups. For young people, however, and especially for vulnerable youth, the crisis posed serious risks to education, health (mental and physical), and employment. From March 2020, schools had closed and re-opened in various stages. According to a report by the World Bank, school closures in the largest province of Pakistan - Punjab - lasted about 10.5 months,

disrupting the education of nearly 14 million girls and boys in the province in long lasting ways, with 8% of adolescent girls and 21% of adolescent boys no longer enrolled in school (Ahmad and Bhatti 2022). The Imran Khan Youth Programme (*Kamyab Jawan*) was a positive initiative to capitalise on the potential of youth, but it required further scale-up and resources as proven by the Pandemic.

Unemployment and no access to online education can also lead to the deterioration of mental health of youth and their families in the short-term as they face constant pressure to carry the economic burden of their households, often single-handedly and supporting multiple generations within the household. In a COVID-19 impacted world, it has become more critical to address youth's multidimensional needs by creating sustainable livelihoods and growth opportunities.

To avoid worsening these generational inequalities and to involve young people in development and in building societal resilience, short-term emergency responses need to be aligned with investments to gain long-term economic, social, health, education, and environmental objectives, ensuring the well-being of Pakistan's youth. Simultaneously, it is also important to design inclusive programmes which encourage learning, development, and innovation to increase youth employability and entrepreneurial capacities. This, however, cannot be achieved without placing young people at the front and centre of policy and development discourse.

Challenges in Light of COVID-19

Pakistan's youth has been subjected to various types of economic, education and health-related vulnerabilities due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. These vulnerabilities are a result of circumstances young people have been exposed to such as poverty, displacement, homelessness, lack of mobility, disability, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and health risks.

Economic Impacts

COVID-19's economic impacts also showed that rural youth are more prone to economic shocks as they have fewer savings, limited access to jobs and businesses, and are mostly absorbed in the unregulated, informal sector. Many young people also worked as daily wagers due to which they temporarily lost their source of livelihoods during the COVID-19

lockdown. Those youth, who managed to sustain livelihoods, did so at the expense of exposing themselves to the coronavirus, thereby, increasing their susceptibility to getting infected leading health insecurity (Iqbal 2021).

To understand the implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) commissioned a qualitative assessment of poor women and youth as these two social groups were the most adversely impacted by macro-economic shocks. The study obtained relevant datasets of targeted beneficiary households to draw Focus Group Discussion (FGD) samples. Districts were selected based on indicators such as poverty ranking, geographic diversity, and National Poverty Graduation Programme (NPGP) coverage in the first stage. For the second stage, Union Councils (UCs) were selected from each selected district where maximum existing and potential National Poverty Graduation Programme (NPGP) and/or Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) beneficiary households were present.

In total, 45 FGDs were conducted in 8 sampled districts across Pakistan, including 24 youth (9 females and 15 males) and 21 adults (8 females and 13 males) FGDs, respectively. The average age of female participants was 24 and male participants were 25. 50% of the female participants had no formal education, whereas only around 65% of the youth males had attained formal education. Regardless of their education status, 90.3% of the young females and 92.9% of the young males were employed.

Following are the excerpts from an FGD conducted with male youth between the ages 18-29 in UC Kot Shai Singh, Jhang:

Participant 1: *Businesses and employment are badly impacted by COVID lockdown; factories and real estate economic activities have been severely curtailed...*

Participant 2: *... young people have lost their jobs and those on daily wages now have no other ways to earn.*

Participant 3: *Another cause of youth unemployment is that they lack the expertise needed by the market.*

The findings from these FGDs suggest that limited business enterprises, coupled with a disproportionate saturation of youth working in the real estate sector resulted in many youth layoffs. The findings were also reflective of the transient nature of the economic earnings of a

daily-wage worker, who is the most vulnerable to such economic shocks. The findings from UCs of other provinces also revealed the same instability of youth earnings.

A report published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) highlighted that many young people around the world, relocated to major cities in search of better opportunities and improved living conditions. However, they lacked the skills to compete in the urban job market (Manzi 2021). Moreover, a study by Mukhtar et al. (2018) showed how urban migration unlocked new employment opportunities for rural dwellers in a productive manner as the quality of their employment improved.

Education and Health Impacts

There was a strong overlap between the education and health impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on youth. In terms of its health impacts, COVID-19 had put mobility restrictions, limiting their access to reproductive health services. In urban areas, an increase in mental health issues was also observed due to the isolation of young people from the usual social interactions with their classmates in educational institutions and an overall change in lifestyle, especially during the year 2020. Youth's access to healthcare services from educational institutes was also limited because of the COVID-19 lockdown.

In Pakistan, even before the first wave of coronavirus outbreak, 22.8 million children were out of school (Malik 2020). The outbreak exacerbated the traditional rural-urban inequity in terms of access to education. While the switch to online, remote classes was possible for much of the urban middle and upper classes as private schools and households could afford and had skills to use digital infrastructure, young people in rural areas lost several months of classroom instruction during the lockdowns. This led to a significant loss of learning outcomes for a year, as rural schools, teachers, and students were not trained to use and could not financially afford to access computers and the Internet for switching to online classes as an alternative. Moreover, hundreds of students across Pakistan had protested the then ruling government's decision pertaining to universities holding online classes, as poor internet services remain a major problem, particularly in remote provinces like Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan. Global and local research also highlighted that due to lockdowns, coping mechanisms such as community-wide mobilisation, group study circles, non-formal education, and physical exercise had sharply declined.

Government Initiatives for Youth during Pandemic

In 2019-20, considerable advances were made for youth skills development in Pakistan with 0.6 million young people trained under skills development programmes. The number of technical institutions available countrywide increased to 3,634, with a total enrolment of youth standing at 203,041 in 2019-20 (MoPDSI 2021). However, the outbreak of COVID-19 in the country imposed a major challenge on the government to prepare immediate COVID-19 responsive action plans and strategies. In this scenario, the Government of Pakistan (GoP) took targeted measures to promote youth employment and decent work. Some of these included:

Kamyab Jawan Programme for COVID-19 Response

The programme activities of the *Kamyab Jawan* programme had a strong emphasis on saving the livelihoods of young people, especially in the vulnerable informal economy. This included the introduction of an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) internship programme, business development trainings and services, interest-free loans, national incubation centre to support start-ups, BISP, and launching of a national jobs' portal.

Most of the initiatives under this response, in the context of COVID-19, were shifted to virtual training and e-learning so that the employability of youth would not suffer. Moreover, the national start-up ecosystem was also expected to provide one million young people training in entrepreneurship and launch 10,000 start-ups by 2023 as well as create jobs and economic activities in an inclusive, scalable, and sustainable way (Ibid.).

Corona Tiger Force Initiative

Under this initiative, support was to be provided for the development and successful implementation of the government's 'Corona Tiger Force', with almost 739,000 youngsters initially registering themselves to join the volunteers' body for relief works during the lockdown (Ibid.).

Matric-TECH Pathways for integrating TVET into Formal Education

The government strategised to establish new labs and workshops in public sector schools and colleges to ensure the provision of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to youth by integrating TVET into the General Education stream (MoPDSI 2021). The target youth for this included students who had graduated Grade 8, as per geographic and market needs.

Government Youth Policies

There exist a comprehensive set of policies for Pakistan's young population in each province.

The 'Punjab Youth Policy' (GoP 2012), 'Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Youth Policy' (GoKP 2016), and 'Sindh Youth Policy' (GoS 2018) propose mechanisms for economic, social, and political empowerment of young people by facilitating, grooming and guiding them to live in peace and harmony, promoting attitudes, skills and knowledge to prepare them to shoulder responsibilities in the new millennium, generating equal opportunities to realise their full potential in a safe, secure and conducive environment through the disbursement of financial resources and loans, and creating a centralised information system for job and internship opportunities.

Of the four provinces, only Balochistan does not have an approved youth policy. However, its draft 'Youth Policy', developed by the provincial Department of Environment, Sports, and Youth Affairs in 2015 envisions an empowered youth that is economically active with developed and quality competencies, socially progressive, gender-friendly, sensitive to diversity, engaged in peer and community interactions and decision-making to uplift the political and civic affairs in Balochistan.

Re-thinking Public Policies and Reforms in Light of COVID-19

COVID-19 revealed the harsh vulnerabilities of society. Youth voices needed to be mainstreamed in the decision-making process. It is crucial to re-think and re-imagine public policy and governance approaches on a macro and micro level to address youth-specific policy and development challenges that emerged during COVID-19. This can be done through:

Technological Interventions

In a few months, COVID-19 ended up disrupting the livelihoods of millions of young people worldwide. Due to nationwide school closures, the learning of 91% of students was disrupted when the Pandemic was at its peak. The marginalised population suffered the heaviest burden as approximately 463 million youth globally were not able to access remote learning because of school shutdowns. Moreover, previous school closures demonstrated that students who had been out of school for extended periods, especially girls, were less likely to return (UNICEF 2020b).

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimated that more than one in six young people would stop working due to the Pandemic. Training opportunities and education for the youth was also interrupted, causing long-term detrimental implications for post-COVID recovery (Robinson et al., 2020).

In 2020, smartphone penetration stood at 51% with only one million school-age students having regular access to digital devices and bandwidth, according to the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (Malik 2020). According to a recent study, women in Pakistan are 38% less likely than men to own a mobile phone, 49% less likely to use mobile internet and 94% less likely to own a mobile money account (GSMA 2021). This is because there are still barriers to young women and girls being allowed to own a phone, particularly in rural areas, so overcoming social barriers is important for ensuring young women gain access to information for learning, education, and awareness of market opportunities.

Normalising women's use of cell phones and raising awareness of the benefits of owning and using such devices could benefit women and their families. This d includes promoting use cases with both personal appeal and externally justifiable benefits, such as providing education for children, supporting family healthcare, and unlocking opportunities to generate income for the family.

The recent shocks also made it evident that it was necessary to focus on the most marginalised youth, including girls, youth with disabilities, and youth living in rural communities or without access to the Internet by connecting them to the Internet and providing them with safe, quality, accessible and equitable online learning.

There is also a need to focus more on digital training and skills development. Enrolment in Pakistan's specialised TVET sector remains low despite the high demand for skills training among both genders. The skills gap has a significant impact on youth employment, so maintaining a dynamic relationship between education and employment has never been more important (MoPDSI 2021).

Digital technologies could play a crucial role in mitigating the effects of the COVID crisis on youth. Digital platforms can help people from different walks of life, such as students who could pursue online learning, entrepreneurs could engage in e-commerce, and workers could earn an income through online freelancing and microwork. Young women and other vulnerable youth had disproportionately affected by the crisis could greatly benefit from such remote opportunities (Robinson et al., 2020).

As mentioned above, the GoP shifted the *Kamyab Jawan* programme online. This move could further increase the overall impact of the programme by:

- ◇ Addressing the digital divide in education at all levels.
- ◇ Investing in technological infrastructure: electricity, Internet, connectivity, and devices – smartphones and computers.
- ◇ Helping design educational models that would be able to withstand future pandemic-related economic and societal shocks and that incorporate digital learning into the national curriculum.
- ◇ Ensuring students have access to adequate resources to remain in school, whether in person or from home (Yayboke et al., 2021).
- ◇ Investing in digital infrastructure and promoting comprehensive data gathering and analysis to better determine how to elevate youth education, entrepreneurship, and leadership (Ibid.).
- ◇ Employing different types of content and different types of solutions adapted to whether youth have access to WhatsApp, SMS, or no connectivity via phone.
- ◇ Training government school and college teachers serving in rural areas and low-income urban areas to be able to use computers and the Internet to deliver online classes.
- ◇ Leveraging the local radio platforms widely accessible to rural audiences to deliver remote education classes.
- ◇ Customising learning courses to the needs of the local markets.

Matric-TECH Pathways has been working on equipping Pakistani youth with TVET skills. To further add to the skill-based training curriculum, introduction of technical skills such as digital and financial literacy, as well as soft skills like leadership and communication, which are job specific, could also be introduced. These measures could help the youth to withstand similar future disruptions (Ibid.).

Productivity, connectivity, and agency remain central to youth's successful growth and launching into larger society as they are interdependent and reinforce each other. To succeed on a large scale, digital skills training programmes should collaborate with stakeholders across a variety of sectors, starting from the agricultural sector as this is where the livelihood of most marginalised youth lies. The young people in rural areas relied on traditional farming practices to support their families passed down to them from generations.

The study under discussion found that young farmers and rural micro-entrepreneurs worked to increase their productivity, but this was limited to the extent of their direct market connections who ended up absorbing and benefitting more from their increased outputs. Even with those market connections, they had a hard time increasing their output without connecting to information sources about what inputs and techniques to use; and even with all these connections, they were not able to use the information and techniques they had learnt if they were not connected to financial and social networks that provided them with access to land, financial capital and other productive assets. There should be a skill-based programme that equips people from these areas to explore and be able to pursue more opportunities for their livelihood, especially in crisis situations.

Social Security and Protection Programmes

The economic crisis caused by COVID-19 threatened to hit the youth the hardest in the coming years, as the number of children living below the national poverty lines is expected to soar by 140 million (UNICEF 2020b). Social welfare programmes are the first ones to get affected during economic crises due to cuts in government spending. Thus, it is imperative to prevent countless more youth from reaching unseen levels of poverty in the years to come through an inclusive recovery plan. This plan should expand the existing social protection programmes for the most vulnerable families, through affordable health services and access to nutrition for growth.

For this, social protection and poverty reduction programmes need to start with integrating rural youth and their perspectives into programme design. This would include building engagement platforms that would be meaningful and feasible in the setting of future programmes (Arslan et al., 2020). It is critical to ensure that social protection systems include all young people, with special attention to those not covered by current social protection measures.

With the onset of the Pandemic and unprecedented changes it brought, the already fragile food and health systems of the vulnerable population had come under greater risk.

The GoP took strict and efficient measures to vaccinate the country's population by announcing they would be blocking the phones of the unvaccinated (Usman 2021). Of Pakistan's total population, 23.7% had been fully vaccinated up until the first week of December 2021, which came to a total number of 52.7 million individuals (Ritchie et al., 2021). However, a major challenge persisted that the youth in remote areas did not have the awareness on how to protect themselves from different diseases and the importance of getting vaccinated. Therefore, it is necessary to provide them with the essential services and knowledge required to live a healthy life.

COVID-19 crisis also exacerbated existing violence, exploitation and abuse as the youth was cut off from key support services while simultaneously suffering the additional stress placed on families in turmoil with increasing economic uncertainty due to layoffs. In order to avoid long-lasting psychological impacts on the youth, it is suggested to integrate sustainable mental health and psycho-social support funding in all crisis responses and commit to increased multi-year funding to better meet the protection needs of young people in crisis. To further safeguard their future, it is important to collect data comprising of age, gender, and disability of young people and those who had contracted COVID-19. This data could be invested in research that could better understand the impacts on their well-being and overall health. This would ensure every young person, regardless of their geographical location, had affordable and equal access to COVID-19 therapeutics, diagnostics, and vaccines in the form of a comprehensive package of essential care.

Moreover, social insurance measures such as sick leave, health insurance provision and unemployment benefits, among others, should be extended and also flexible enough to be

accessed by rural youth (UN 2020), including ones from minorities that are potentially marginalised and ones in fragile situations and contexts.

Promoting Participation in Diversified Labour Markets

Since Pakistan has a high rate of rural to urban migration (O'Neill 2021), policies need to be geared toward enhancing young people's capacities to participate in diversified labour markets in the urban areas as well. For a very long time, there has been talk about empowering youth, but the main focus should be the rural youth because they have been underrepresented in policy reforms and have less access to most public services and the Internet. This prevents them from getting equipped with new skills and keeping up with emerging market trends.

As the world of work has been changing, young people in Pakistan need to be prepared to compete in the markets available to them in the future. In rural areas, there are macro trends that are impacting the ability to sustain viable incomes on primary production and, hence, it is vital that Pakistan invest in training young people on innovating agriculture value chains to be able to gain a better income from value added products from farms. Similarly, this involves training and sensitising them on consumer trends and marketing to urban/peri-urban areas.

Financial Inclusion

Access to funds should also be widely publicised for supporting youth entrepreneurs whose small-and-medium sized businesses not only provide jobs to more young people but also have a social impact. Investing in youth entrepreneurs, especially young women, could alleviate skill and job shortages and ensure sustainable economic recovery from the Pandemic and future crises (Thind et al., 2020).

Young people possess a tremendous transformative potential and extra efforts should be made for young rural women and men, as well as youth representatives from various minorities to not only be systematically included and consulted in all dialogues concerning the impact of COVID-19 but also the post-Pandemic decision-making processes organised by the various sectors and sub-sectors while supporting them in developing their self-esteem and confidence in participating in such dialogues (Yayboke 2021). Thus, elevating and funding youth leadership, peacebuilding, and involvement in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts could help the country prepare for future crises with a new perspective from the primary stakeholders – youth.

Conclusion

In conclusion, economic, social, educational, psychological, and political connections could allow youth to collect resources and utilise them in ways that would increase their productivity and incomes while also generating value for society (Arslan et al., 2020). By creating these connections, individuals would become empowered enough to make informed decisions and respond to crisis situations effectively.

There is a need to realign Pakistan's priorities and invest in equipping young people with the technical skills and resources they need to gain employment. Once they have acquired the relevant skill set and knowledge, they would have a competitive advantage in diversified labour markets. Further, the process of getting employment and setting up businesses should be made seamless for the youth through the introduction of social security and protection programmes. These would serve to safeguard the interests of all young people by providing them with flexible opportunities and relief funds.

Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in the paper are solely those of the author and publishing them does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the opinion by the PPAF.

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◇ In Memoriam: Masood Ashar (1931-2021) and
Abdul Rauf Malik (1926-2021)

**In Memoriam:
Masood Ashar (1931-2021) and
Abdul Rauf Malik (1926-2021)***

Raza Naeem**

* This chapter has been approved as a *Literary Piece* by the referee.

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Abstract

*This chapter pays tribute to two legendary stalwarts of the literary and publishing world, who both passed away in 2021, namely Masood Ashar (1931-2021) and Abdul Rauf Malik (1926- 2021). Ashar made his name as a progressive journalist, but he was also a notable short story writer, whose stories about the liberation of Bangladesh need special mention, owing to the golden jubilee of that country in 2021. He was also a translator par excellence. Malik was the owner and publisher of Peoples Publishing House, a renowned progressive publisher which illuminated the minds of generations of Pakistanis through its publications and translations of progressive literature from around the world, including the iconic writers of the Indian subcontinent like Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, Ahmad Rahi and Amrita Pritam. He was also the author of a highly regarded book on Faiz and a highly readable autobiography titled *Surkh Siyasat (Red Politics)*. This chapter draws on the author's memories of personal interactions with both Ashar and Malik, including the last (unpublished) interview conducted with the former on his 90th birthday earlier in 2021; as well as an (unpublished) interview the author conducted with the latter a couple of years ago. The chapter also discusses the selected works of the two writers and the impact they had on the literary and social consciousness and awareness of the public.*

Masood Ashar: The Gentle Raconteur from Rampur

Masood Ashar – who passed away in Lahore on 5 July 2021 at the age of 90 – was not among those short story writers who established his authority in the very beginning. He came to the short story gradually and after a pause. He did not display swiftness in writing short stories but established his mark slowly. They are unique in the matter of selection of themes, storytelling technique, treatment and appear prominent among contemporary short stories with regard to their manner and finish. Expression of the existential condition of the individual and struggle with society occurs in his short stories in a manner that forces one to think.

The act of raising questions was of fundamental importance for him. He wrote on the flap of his first collection *Aankhon Par Donon Haath (Hand Over Both Eyes)*: *'These are not stories but questions. Questions which I keep asking myself, at various times, on various occasions. Conversations which I have had with myself and keep having. Those dreams, generally scary dreams which I have seen and keep seeing... I will insist definitely on this thing that these stories have*

become the means for my own psychoanalysis. I have achieved catharsis through them and have faced sometimes mental peace and sometimes further emotional anxiety...'

He wrote at the end of this passage: *'The faster the speed of a question emerging in the mind, the need for talking to oneself and with respect to one's self with the collective and society also assumes the same intensity. These stories have been written to fulfil this same single requirement. But the whole problem is that this requirement is never fulfilled...'*

The requirement carried on and so did the series of short stories. Despite his entire manner of caution, Masood Ashar remained within the rank of the representative and distinguished short story writers of Urdu till the very end.

His full name was Masood Ahmad Khan. His family was settled in the state of Rampur in northern India since many generations. He was born in Rampur on 10 February 1931. He began his traditional education from the famous institution of Rampur Madrassa-e-Aaliya and got the qualification of *Aalim Adab Arabi* (Master of Arabic Literature). He passed the Matric (high school) exam from Allahabad Board approximately around 1948 and also did a diploma in Hindi. Then, he did his graduation from Agra University.

In August 1951, he came to Pakistan and became associated with the profession of journalism in Lahore. At the beginning of his journalistic life, he remained linked with the daily *Ehsan*, *Zamindar* and *Aasaar*. In 1954, he was appointed at the position of the Senior Sub-Editor of the daily *Imroz*. In 1958, he was appointed as the Resident Editor, Multan. He was viewed with a lot of appreciation in the journalistic and literary circles of Multan. His short story writing too flourished during this very time.

Masood Ashar had intellectual proximity to progressive thought and was soon under fury in retaliation. During the Zia-ul-Haq era, the workers of Colony Textile Mills were fired upon, so he published this news, unconcerned with government closure. Due to this, he was forcibly transferred back to Lahore from Multan. In 1983, he was dismissed from *Imroz* because of signing the declaration for the restoration of democracy. In 1988, when Benazir Bhutto's government came into power, his job was restored; and he retired as the Editor from the very same place. In 1992, he became associated with the publishing house *Mashal*. This publisher publishes translations of books on the thought and literature of the present time. Masood Ashar was responsible for supervising books published by this publisher; and he also translated many books himself.

Masood Ashar began poetry in adolescence. The eminent poet Shad Arfi was a friend of his paternal uncle and used to participate in literary gatherings at the latter's house. The penname 'Ashar' was bestowed by Shad Arfi. A few poems from his initial poetry were published in the journals of that period, including in *Adabi Dunya* and *Alhamra*, but this series did not continue. He wrote his first short story in the days of youth. *Khaleej Aur Barh Gayi* (The Gulf Widened Further) was published in 1948 in the journal *Fasana* of Allahabad which was edited by Balwant Singh and Siddiq Begum Seoharvi. After this, just one short story was published in *Adab-e-Latif* and another one in *Afkar*. But, these from the first offspring, remained very much the only ones and after this, he did not turn his attention towards this for a long time. In 1964, he wrote a short story on the demand of a literary gathering of Multan to be read there, which was published with the title *Aaraaf* (Purgatory) in *Savera*, Lahore under the editorship of M. Saleemur Rahman. Then, a ripple of life ran through his short story writing with a new humming.

The Urdu short story had passed through many changes from the beginning of his work up till the 1960s. Apart from classical literature, he read the 'Angry Young Men' of England and the 'Beat Generation' of the United States with great attention and acknowledged their deep influence. His short of Masood Ashar too was expressive of the tumultuous changes of this period. However, rather than maintain a link with some peculiar style, he remained convinced of experiments and innovation while staying close to contemporary demands.

So, it appears that his short story was made of a combination of the colours of amazement and anxiety. The ones written during 1964 to 1974 were published under the title *Aankhon Par Donon Haath*. The date December 1974 is entered on the book. About these, Intizar Hussain wrote: '*This is the short story which I met in the period 1970-1971, and I felt that the upheaval which has wrapped us, if it has been expressed anywhere at a creative level, then that is the short story of Masood Ashar. Whatever happened on the surface of the external, happened. But here it seems that a bigger tragedy has passed at the surface of the internal. A bigger fall than the fall of Dhaka. The whole map is scattered. The pictures incomplete and unclear. It seems we are walking in darkness. Again and again some painful question cuts the path.*'

After this, his short stories kept being published in journals, but new ones came forward together with the old collection instead of a separate book in 1987. This collection with the title *Saare Fasane* (All Stories) was published from Lahore. It consists of the admiring opinion of Intizar Hussain associated with the present circumstances. At the beginning of the book, the writer has not taken up any other special matter, but has questioned himself: '*One question I too will put to myself. Why did I write only short stories in the long period of 20, 22 years after*

all? Many collections should indeed have come in this period. But around the world so much more and so well is being written and has been written that all of that does not even give me the leisure to answer this question. I think a lot to write but some book, some journal, some film and some person – yes it also included humans – snatches my time from me and I say why not read something in the time that is left.'

In this sequence, a third collection *Apna Ghar* (My Own House) was published in 2004 from Lahore and the title of this collection was named after the short story that is perhaps his longest composition. After this collection, many short stories were published in magazines. He also wrote pen-sketches and critical essays in a good enough number. His fourth collection of short stories *Sawal Kahani* (Question Story) came out in 2020, while his pen-sketches were under publication (during 2021). He translated many books into Urdu, prominent among them were *Mornings in Jenin* by Susan Abulhawa and *Silence* by Shūsaku Endō.

Masood Ashar remained a long-time resident of Lahore and wrote a permanent column for the dailies *Jang* and *Dunya* until the very end. In 2015, he was awarded *Sitara-e-Imtiaz* by the Government of Pakistan.

Despite being a fellow Lahori living at a distance of mere 15 minutes from my home, meetings with him remained too scattered to be meaningful. Perhaps I was too deferential or intimidated by his seniority and stature. The first interactions with Masood sahib were as a 20-something undergraduate student and budding communist in the late 1990s when he used to visit the *Mashal* offices opposite Barkat Market in Garden Town to peruse their latest translations. I always used to see a white-haired, bespectacled, genial person seated behind a table who looked like a salesman at worst and a loving grandfather at best. In later years, I would think that he looked too important and genial to be a mere salesman and revised my former opinion of him. These interactions increased many years later when as President of the Progressive Writers Association (PWA) in Lahore, I would regularly invite him at the Pak Tea House to preside over the usual literary functions celebrating the centenaries of important writers like Manto, Bedi, Krishan Chander, Bhisham Sahni, Ismat Chughtai, Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, etc.

I was quite amazed to find out that Masood sahib actually read my plebeian literary essays in *The Friday Times* (when it still came out in print) and whenever we met somewhere, he would openly say to my face, '*Are bhai tum toa bohat kaam karte ho!*' and I would get embarrassed in the presence of so many people at such effusive praise from such a great writer as himself. He once even wrote about my contribution to the PWA centenary seminar on Rajinder Singh Bedi in his widely read column when he did not need to. The purpose of mentioning this here

is not to blow my own trumpet but to share that among his generation, some people did still possess the magnanimity to read and encourage younger writers who albeit wrote in a colonial language!

I also remember when in August 2019, he had been invited to preside over a function remembering the great communist poet Makhdoom Mohiuddin on his 50th death anniversary at the PWA, it was my pleasant task to pick and drop him. The problem was that I had already been invited for an hour-long talk at another venue before that event. Would Masood sahib mind not only being picked up so early from his home but also sit through my boring diatribe on 'Kashmir in the Literary Imagination'? He kindly consented and it was during the drive to that particular talk that he actually asked why, a young man like me, with so many diversions and distractions in this day and age, was so attracted to progressive thought, even though unlike the former's own youthful days, the Progressive Movement was no longer the force it once was? I remember that I actually had to think of an answer convincing enough to impress Masood Ashar!

Another characteristic I remember as interactions with Masood sahib increased was that he never treated me as a junior, and whether it was one of his better interlocutors the late Asif Farrukhi, or a young literary upstart like myself, he would use the directly personal *Tum* and not the more informal *Aap*.

Masood Ashar was generous enough to send a friend request on Facebook and when we became Facebook friends, I could see that he would often share columns on his profile as well as his favourite classical music videos, which allowed me a further glimpse into his world on social media. He would often follow and like my posts, especially if I happened to be abroad and posted photos of the trip. After one such trip from Canada back in 2019, when I called him, he said, '*Han bhai kahan ki sairen ho rahi hain?* (So, where have you been travelling, young man?)

When his last book came out, he asked me to come receive a personally inscribed copy, and later Inboxed that I should now stop writing about dead people and should review his book. I am so ashamed as I did read the book and enjoyed it but kept waiting to read his other work in order to write a more complete assessment of his works. Alas, that moment never came! It was partly as a result of immense guilt emanating out of this that I called him in February 2021 after learning that he had had a fall and requested him for some time to interview him for his 90th birthday. I had a sense of foreboding when he said that I should wait for him to get better, but then his son-in-law promptly intervened to say that I should come whenever I

wanted! He cancelled the appointment the next day, i.e., 11th February, a day after his 90th birthday because of his physiotherapy session, but I was able to visit him on 12th February for a three- to four-hour long sitting which drew him out on everything from his early childhood in Rampur to his literary and journalistic lives, his opinions about classic and contemporary writers, the status and survival of Urdu, etc.

I may not have agreed with his opinion about some of the senior female Urdu writers who had passed on or who were currently writing, but I will always cherish two things in the longest one-to-one sitting with Masood Ashar that balmy February morning. One, when I wound up the interview asking him if he had a message for the younger generations, he replied that though he never gives a message, he would say 'live a good life and have a link with good art.' Secondly, I asked his permission to translate one of his classic short stories on Bangladesh into Urdu, given that the year 2021 not only was the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh but also his 90th birthday, to which he graciously agreed. When I suggested that it was probably time to write his memoirs, he dismissed it smilingly with a wave of his hand saying that he had done enough!

I would like to end this tribute with a verse of the distinguished poet Anwar Shaoor, which occurs in the 'Last Word' at the end of *Sawal Kabani*; about which Ashar had written that Shaoor had written this verse very much about him, since this book was coming out after a decade; what more could be described as sloth, slowness, and laziness:

Tasaahul aik mushkil lafz hai, is lafz ka matlab

Kitabon mein kahan dhoondhoon, kisi se pooch loonga main

(Laziness is a difficult word, its meaning

I will ask somebody; I cannot find in any books by gleaning).

Abdul Rauf Malik (1926-2021) and the Peoples Publishing House (1944)

The Peoples Publishing House (PPH) is a well-known institution among the ordinary educated class, who are fond of books generally, and progressive people having Marxist-Leninist ideas and their friends especially. This institution has its distinct political history which is parallel to the beginning and growth of the movement of those with progressive and Marxist-Leninist (left-wing) ideas in the country. The Communist Party of United India established a publishing institution with the name of 'Peoples Publishing House' in Bombay for the publicity of its policy programme and Marxist-Leninist ideology; and created its

branches in different cities for the wide and compact transmission of progressive publications. In Lahore, the branch of PPH was established at the headquarters of the Communist Party located at 114 McLeod Road in 1944. Then, it was systematically transferred to a showroom in the Y.M.C.A. Building on the Mall.

So, the story of PPH Lahore begins with the Communist Party of India and the publicity of progressive books and pamphlets, division of India, anti-communism of the government of Pakistan, arrests, confiscation of the shop, restriction of publications and import of revolutionary literature, discouragement of progressive literature by Martial Law governments (even harassment of readers), and strict watch over the PPH office. These are all the stages through which this institution passed and kept fighting the battle for its survival for more or less 40 years. Eventually around 1985, the PPH office closed. All these crises have a separate history. Here, it is extremely important to mention the progressive literature published by this institution.

From 1944 to 1947, this institution was subordinate to the Communist Party of India. During this period, the poetic collection of Yas Yagana Changezi and a collection of the poetry of Josh Malihabadi *Ramish Darang* was published by PPH Lahore. Many plans to publish the creations of additional poets and writers were under consideration but the Partition riots came in between and the Indian staff of PPH, along with comrade Banerjee, migrated from there.

From 1948 to 1955, the PPH under the subordination of the Communist Party of Pakistan and the editorship of Abdul Rauf Malik, published very beautiful literary books; among which *Dast-e-Saba* and *Naqsh Faryadi* by Faiz, *Shola-o-Gul* by Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, *Trinjan* by Ahmad Rahi and *Naveen Rut* by Amrita Pritam were a breath of fresh air in the milieu of the poetry of that age. Som Anand, India's eminent journalist and writer, has written in his book describing that period: '*In Lahore, a lot of my time was spent at the shop of Abdul Rauf Malik. It was a bookshop and sitting there I not only had the opportunity to read books but would also meet special type of writers and poets. This was actually a place for those who were interested in the Communist movement, now the movement had very much ended and only a few people had remained, who used to dream of a Red Revolution.*'

In this period, after its expulsion from the Y.M.C.A. Building, the PPH office transferred to 3 Nesbitt Road in 1950. After 1955, due to different reasons, it became the property of Abdul Rauf Malik.

After raids at the Nesbitt Road shop, an office was constructed in a room of Naqi Building at the back of the mall and because of restriction on PPH, a board of 'Aljadeed' was placed there.

In 1975, a shop was purchased in the newly built 'Alminara Market' outside Lohari Gate and Abdul Rauf Malik transferred the PPH office there. In 1965, the books were transferred in the Plomer Building behind the Mall, and then, in 1980 in the *godown* (storage area) of 4 Begum Road due to non-availability of financial resources.

In 1989, the office of PPH was located at 18-A Mozang Road. In this period, it published the short stories of Gorky and a collection of essays on the thoughts of Iqbal by Soviet Orientalists. But, after 1955, its publishing activities were next to nothing. During this period, PPH gave its readers progressive literature brought from India, Russia, the United States, and other European countries and became very popular. In those days, PPH did more work as a bookseller; but could not publish books due to its problems, arrests, and confiscation.

By the end of the decade of the 1980s, this institution had nearly shut down. But right until his death early this year, its owner Abdul Rauf Malik wanted youth to take its reins so that the dignity, name, and fame of PPH could be restored.

Appendix: Masood Ashar (1931-2021): The Last Interview

An interview with Masood Ashar conducted on 12 February 2021 on his 90th birthday that ought to have been published in his lifetime.

Author (RN): Please tell us something about your early life and childhood.

Masood Ashar (MA): I was born in the princely state of Rampur, it was a Pathan state. I am a Yusufzai Pathan. Our family was one of *maulvis*, had graduated in Dars-e-Nizami. They were enlightened *maulvis*, who used to compose poetry. My elder brother Saeed Lakht wrote for children and worked with Ferozsons. He migrated to Pakistan before independence.

My childhood was pleasant. My youngest paternal uncle was a friend of Shad Arfi, so literature and poetry were in my genes. My father was a poet but could not be published in his lifetime. My maternal grandfather Hamid Hussain Khan used to compose poetry in a specific genre of Pashto. My elder brother had a taste for literature. Our *mohalla* (neighbourhood) in Rampur is known as *gher* Maqbool Ahmad Khan, which is only populated by our family.

We used to have a sitting in the evening. I loved reading books. I used to read books from Jamia Millia Islamia. When I came of age, it was the heyday of the progressives. I was influenced by all of them, especially Krishan Chander. All the literary magazines of the time used to come to Arfi free of cost. Rampur had an old literary tradition, its *nawabs* had once

invited Ghalib. This tradition is still there. Even today, my youngest brother still lives in Rampur.

RN: Who did you look up to in journalism, poetry, and fiction as a mentor?

MA: I completed my education. I was unemployed when I came to Lahore. At *Imroz*, Hameed Hashmi supported me, and I got employment there. I had a taste of writing and joined journalism. When I joined *Imroz*, Zaheer Babar and Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi were there; Faiz was the Chief Editor. I learnt from them and was trained by them. I used to read Quratulain Hyder a lot. My first short story was published in 1949 in the journal *Fasana* edited by Balwant Singh and Siddiq Begum Seoharvi from Allahabad. It was titled *Khaleej Aur Barb Gayi* and was about Hindu-Muslim tensions.

RN: What has fundamentally shaped you, your mind, your ideology, and your writing?

MA: When I was a student, I was a member of the Communist Party's Student Union, the All-Indian Student Federation. I was very much trained there. Bolshevik Russia was an ideal society for us. I never visited it, but we used to call ourselves communists with pride. I was influenced by the Maoist Revolution and have written articles about it.

Feminism is the biggest movement. The first short story in my new collection *Kon Darta Hai Norman Mailer Se?* (Who is Afraid of Norman Mailer?) is sort of influenced by the feminist movement.

RN: Other than your commitment to freedom of expression in journalism and progressive orientation in fiction, who else among writers, has inspired you the most?

MA: Journalism is my profession while fiction is my passion. I have been inspired by Manto and Bedi, as well as the Russian writers. Among British writers, D.H. Lawrence has influenced me a lot; his criticism is very good. In journalism, the journal *Naya Zamana* impressed me. Also, I am influenced by Latin American writers. It was not a deliberate decision to write.

RN: You have been in journalism for 70 years and in fiction for more than 70 years. You are still writing a permanent column and your new collection of short stories came out last year. How difficult is it to continue doing both?

MA: It is not at all difficult to do both. Both are separate parts. Journalism is 'fiction written in haste'. It is not difficult if one keeps reading and exploring new things. I love to read new things. I studied the 'Angry Young Men' in the UK and the 'Flower Children' in the US a lot,

as well as Black writers. I have also translated them into Urdu, about 15 or 16. Recently, my translation of a story from Tolstoy's last era *Ostrapova* was published in *Dunyazad*.

RN: Apart from fiction and journalism, what else do you do?

MA: Reading, listening to good music and watching films. I am a member of the Indian Classical Music Society.

RN: If you did not go towards journalism and fiction, where would you have employed your talents?

MA: This is very difficult to say. I never planned my life.

RN: Why did you not expand your canvas to the novel?

MA: It really takes one to restrain one's impatience to do so. I was doing journalism and fiction. I really wanted to, but in my fiction, you will see a lot of Pakistan as well as autobiography. Among the latter is *Apna Ghar* (My Own House), but it is not one of my best stories.

RN: If one wants to polish one's fictional abilities, what is a must?

MA: Read those who write well. Good writing is being done in every language.

RN: Have the classic short story writers gone out of date?

MA: No. What is that writer who gets out of date? Manto is the greatest. Among new writers, there is Intizar Hussain, who joined our fiction with the *Dastan*. It is a totally new thing.

RN: Who are your favourites among living writers?

MA: Well, this is a controversial question - Nasir Abbas Nayyar, Kashif Raza, Musharraf Alam Zauqui (he passed away in April 2021), Anees Ashfaq and Julian Barnes. I do not get time to re-read anything.

RN: What is lacking in new fiction writers?

MA: Why should I answer this? Today, there is an obsession with the act of breaking up words, using symbols and inventing a new language. This is creating density. One should write in simple language. Some are successful and some are not. Imitating Western writers like Anthony Burgess. People do keep trying, but I prefer they should learn from writers like Barnes and Kazuo Ishiguro.

RN: In Urdu fiction, the *afšana* has always been the dominant form. Will the novel ever take its place?

MA: Now the novel is taking the place of the short story. New novels are being written. The doctors of Karachi are writing many novels. But, this will not be permanent because we are not used to reading lengthy stuff.

RN: Does literature, especially fiction, influence society?

MA: Yes, literature should influence society. But, our society is an ignorant one. It is strange because at the time, there were Manto and Ismat Chughtai, we could say literature influenced society but as much ignorant as our ruling class is, such a case is hard to find. People like Raza Rabbani having progressive thinking are exceptions. Our society is not a reading society. Religious narrow-mindedness has destroyed us. The theme of my short stories is also very much the same.

Intizar Hussain cannot be called a reactionary. He invented a new style. The role of bringing our narratives (*bikayat*) and sayings of our elders into literature belongs to him.

RN: Today resistance literature is in fashion. Have you ever contributed to it?

MA: I was a member of the Progressive Writers Association before independence in Rampur. I wrote a lot of short-stories during the Zia-ul-Haq period. Similarly, all my stories about East Pakistan during the Ayub Khan period are resistance literature i.e., resistance through symbolism.

RN: What motivates you to write?

MA: One wants to say something. Also, to include others in the reading experience. To become famous. Journalism is another slot.

RN: It is said that a writer only writes for himself. To what extent is this true?

MA: One writes for oneself. The writer expresses himself but does not write only for himself. Whatever is happening in that time, he also narrates about it.

RN: But one idea is that some conditions are only for oneself and not for others?

MA: True.

RN: So, the writer should be a man of taste, an avid reader? Apart from the writer, the reader should also have taste?

MA: Yes. Obviously so that the reader can understand what he is reading.

RN: Is Urdu a camp language, why is it not expanding?

MA: The matter of expansion happens along with society. This is the era of English. New writers are writing in English. English is the language which pays.

RN: Is the literary milieu of Lahore so wholesome in keeping with the length and breadth of the city?

MA: No

RN: Are Urdu and Hindi the same?

MA: No. It is said to be the same language but the manner of writing both is different. There are a few poems and short stories which can equally be read in Urdu and Hindi.

RN: Now some personal questions. First of all, how did your reading and writing pursuits affect domestic life?

MA: It did not make any difference. My wife gave me full opportunities. She worked at Multan Radio. Her name was Zehra Masood, and her portrait was published in the Radio magazine *Aahang*.

RN: Do you go shopping like other men?

MA: My wife never let me do shopping. She freed me from everything. I did not know the price of flour and pulses. She chose my clothes. She also had a contribution in deciding my children's profession. My son is in the UK, a daughter is in Karachi. Another daughter is a psychologist, while another son is a software engineer. I never had the need for shopping!

RN: In a megacity like Lahore, there should have been some improvement in the literary atmosphere in the last 70 – 80 years but doesn't seem likely. The literary atmosphere looks a bit withered. Why?

MA: Lahore was a small city. There used to be one *Halqa-e-Arbab-e-Zauq*. Now, the city has expanded, and people have no time to attend literary gatherings.

RN: Why are there groupings in literature?

MA: This has always been the case. There are misunderstandings among contemporaries; even Ghalib had one with *Zauq*. It is natural to feel that 'I am a greater writer than all the others'. The *Halqa* had ideological opposition to the *Anjuman Taraqqi Pasand Musannifeen*.

RN: Does this lead to damage?

MA: No. Every circle is separate. It does not matter at all. This happens everywhere.

RN: The Progressive Writers Movement came to the fore with great fanfare, but it has now slowed down. What would you say?

MA: The progressives did not accept new literature. Many people were ideologically against them. Writers who came afterwards were not really progressives.

RN: Some say that Urdu will become extinct in the next 50 years?

MA: Many languages would have become extinct if the internet had not come. The internet has saved many languages e.g., the *InPage* software. Otherwise, it was difficult for Urdu to survive. There is the same old issue between Urdu and English. English has given us international recognition. Urdu doesn't have this status. Urdu will not become extinct, but it will no longer be the same as it once was.

RN: Are 'regional languages' national languages as well?

MA: They are national languages. What exactly is a 'regional language'? They are flourishing and a lot of work is being done in them.

RN: How have new writers impressed you?

MA: This is again controversial terrain. There is hardly one; but even he/she cannot be placed at an international level.

RN: What is the biggest weakness of new writers which if they address, they will improve?

MA: This is a very difficult question to answer. They should write good language and not imitate. Our *dastaans* can undoubtedly be said to be magical realism.

RN: I do not see any reading. There should be firmness in the writing of those who read but is not there.

MA: Agreed.

RN: How many books, short story collections, etc., have you authored?

MA: I have written four books. I do not know about the number of translations I have done. There are pen-sketches which are under publication.

RN: One understands that your primary passion is literature, but you have a deep interest in politics. Let me put to you a cliched question, but I think it is still up for debate. Do you think creativity can be regulated to support a certain kind of politics?

MA: No. Well, it can be done but this should not happen.

RN: How do you see the contribution of women writers?

MA: See the opinion Intizar Hussain gave after I wrote stories on women and men following the fall of Dhaka in 1971. He had written: *'Now when I had a meeting with the short story of Masood Ashar, I got to know that the theme of the short story had changed. Now the relation between a woman and man has become the topic of the short story. But, this woman is new too and so is the man. By the grace of God, both are civilised. The woman more so – who thinks that she has been liberated. But along with it has lost her mysterious depth. This liberated hollow woman is the social reality of today. Its identity and its narrative in our short story have come to the lot of Masood Ashar. With such skill, he has brought this new-born character into grasp. I will not ask this foolish question that why the upheaval of today does not say anything to Masood Ashar. That short story had its own meaning. This short story has its own significance. Though the hollow liberated woman too is no less of an upheaval.'* One should begin with Khalida Hussain, Hajira Masroor, and Neelum Ahmad Bashir. I have not read the new collection of Nilofar Iqbal.

RN: How about your professional career? You worked as a journalist for long – even under martial rule – didn't you?

MA: I was the servant of a newspaper when Martial Law was promulgated. Wherever I got the opportunity, I would cheat (the Martial Law regulations), from the Ayub Khan to the Zia regimes. I was not much of an activist. I knew Qaswar Gardezi in Multan, who belonged to the National Awami Party. But I was mentally a socialist.

RN: Many people think that NGOs are not the answer. The right-wing sees NGOs as a Western ploy and the left-wing sees them as a phenomenon that depoliticizes society. Do you agree?

MA: NGOs have done great work. And they are Pakistani NGOs who have worked for women's rights. The right-wing is wrong.

RN: It is a grim picture that you paint when it comes to our society and politics. Is there any hope for us? Also, is there any hope for our art and literature in these testing times?

MA: No. Until we have religious narrow-mindedness and separation of religion and state, we cannot progress. For art and literature, there is no hope. Good literature will keep being written in bad conditions, in every condition.

RN: Several prominent political and literary personalities from the Indian subcontinent are celebrating their birth centenaries this year: Major Ishaq Muhammad, Sahir Ludhianvi, Balwant Singh and Machhlisahar.

MA: I knew Major Ishaq. Salam was not such a great poet. Balwant Singh was a good short story writer. Sahir was the poet of a limited class.

RN: Lastly, any message for your readers on your 90th birthday?

MA: I normally don't give messages. But live a good life and associate with good art. It also has to do with genes.

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Annexure I

About Sustainable Development Policy Institute

Charting the Course of Research Excellence

Born on 4 August 1992 in a small office in the capital Islamabad, with a handful of dedicated employees, the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) is known as Asia's leading non-partisan policy research organisation providing the global development community representation from Pakistan and the region as a whole. Over the past 30 years, it has remained staunchly committed to the mission it set for itself upon inception:

To catalyse the transition towards sustainable development, defined as the enhancement of peace, social justice and well-being, within and across generations.

Registered under the Societies Registration Act, XXI of 1860, SDPI remains one of the few organisations in Pakistan that has been consistently ranked internationally by the Global Go To Think Tank Index since 2016. In 2022, it was given 'Special Consultative Status by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).'

Where We Come From

The Institute's genesis lies in the Pakistan National Conservation Strategy (also known as Pakistan's Agenda 21), which approved by the Federal Cabinet in March 1992, outlined the need for an independent non-profit organisation in the country to serve as a source of expertise for policy analysis, evidence-based research and training services.

What We Do

SDPI functions in an advisory capacity by carrying out robust research, policy advice and advocacy; and in an enabling capacity by strengthening other individuals and organisations with resource materials and training. Specifically, the Institute's broad-based yet holistic mandate is to:

- ◇ conduct evidence-based research, advocacy and trainings from a broad multidisciplinary perspective;
- ◇ promote the implementation of policies, programs, laws and regulations based on sustainable development;
- ◇ strengthen civil society and facilitate civil society-government interaction in collaboration with other organisations and activist networks;
- ◇ disseminate research findings and public education through the media, conferences, seminars, lectures, publications and curricula development; and,
- ◇ contribute to building national research capacity and infrastructure.

How We Do It

The diverse array of projects and programs - from inclusive economic growth to institutional governance; from trade, regional connectivity, energy economics to climate change; from food, water and human security to education; from sustainable industrial growth to hazardous waste management; from religious tolerance to peace and gender equity, that SDPI has been involved in over the past 30 years, outline the following core activities:

- ◇ Providing policy advice to the government.
- ◇ Facilitating and organising forums for policy dialogue.
- ◇ Supporting in-house, local, regional and international academics, students and researchers.
- ◇ Publishing critical research for public and private sector use.
- ◇ Acting as a conduit for North-South and South-South dialogue.
- ◇ Creating an environment for information dissemination and training.
- ◇ Campaigning for regional advocacy and networking.

Why We Do It

The Institute's efforts remain unwavering in its vision to become a Centre of Excellence on sustainable development policy research, capacity development and advocacy in the country and in Asia by producing knowledge that not only enhances the capacity of the state to make

informed policy decisions, but also engages civil society and academia on issues of public interest for the betterment of current and future generations.

How We Reach Out

Since its inception, SDPI has organised innumerable seminars and national and international conferences. The Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) series has become a flagship event of the Institute that not only provides a forum for highlighting SDPI's own research, but also offers space to other academics from South Asia in particular and across the globe in general, to share their work and engage in constructive dialogue with fellow intellectuals, movers and shakers from the public and private sector, students, and the general public. To date, SDPI has organised 24 annual conferences. 2022 will be the SDC's Silver Jubilee.

Annexure II

About Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) Series

INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) has been organising a series of Sustainable Development Conferences (SDCs) since the inception of the Institute. The first SDC was held in 1995. After every SDC, the Institute publishes peer reviewed research work in the form of an anthology. The anthologies are, in fact, an outcome of the deliberations and discussions held during the different concurrent panels and plenary sessions at their respective SDCs. Following is a brief history of past SDCs and their outcomes:

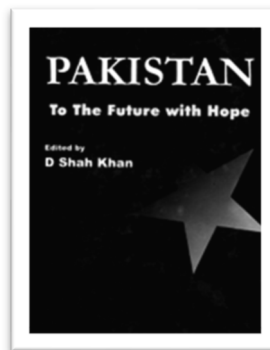
FIRST SDC (1995)

The First SDC titled **The Green Economics Conference** focused on the interaction between economics and environment. It included research papers on trade, fiscal policy, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), green accounting, forestry, energy, industry, and urban environment. After this conference, an anthology titled *Green Economics* was published.



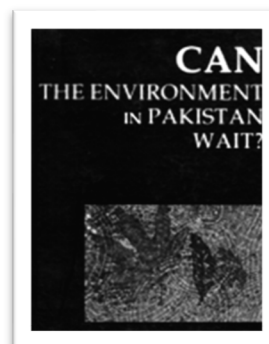
SECOND SDC (1996)

The Second SDC highlighted the broad theme of sustainable development, including pollution abatement, resource management, conservation of biodiversity, the transfer and use of technology, trade and environment, human development and poverty alleviation, and social capital and governance. The conference was successful in highlighting key issues facing Pakistan and bringing out the latest thinking and analysis to identify solutions. The anthology produced as a result of the conference is titled *Pakistan – To The Future with Hope*.



THIRD SDC (1998)

The theme of the Third SDC was **A Dialogue on Environment and Natural Resource Conservation**. The conference focused on stimulating dialogue on practical policy options for key environmental challenges being faced by Pakistan. The two broad thematic areas of Urban Environment and Natural Resources concentrated on urban pollution, water resource management, deforestation and sustainable agriculture with presentations by experts from Pakistan and South Asia. The anthology produced as a result of the conference is titled *Can the Environment in Pakistan Wait?*



FOURTH SDC (2000)

The Fourth SDC titled **Discourse on Human Security** mainly focused on the changes and improvements in government policies and practice with regard to human security. The conference was designed to create awareness among senior policymakers, key federal and provincial government officials and civil society groups like the media and non-government organisations on security issues.

FIFTH SDC (2002)

The Fifth SDC titled **Sustainable Development and Southern Realities: Past and Future in South Asia** re-examined the conceptualisation and implementation of sustainable development in its multiple dimensions: economic, political, social, and moral. The delegates scrutinised and consolidated some of the ideas presented at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, and resituated debates in the South Asian context. The anthology produced as a result of the conference is titled *Sustainable Development and Southern Realities: Past and Future in South Asia*.



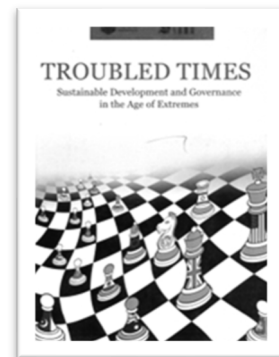
SIXTH SDC (2003)

The overarching theme of the Sixth SDC was **Sustainable Development: Bridging the Research/Policy Gaps in Southern Contexts**. It focused on the problematique of knowledge production in the South. It explored policy/research gaps in two directions: in some places policy needs to be fed by better research; while in others, policy needs to take better account of existing solid research. It focused on the ways and means for translating this knowledge into effective policy initiatives locally, nationally, regionally and internationally by identifying the multiple gaps between research and policies in different sectors. The anthology which came out as a result of this SDC is titled *Sustainable Development: Bridging the Research/Policy Gaps in Southern Contexts*.



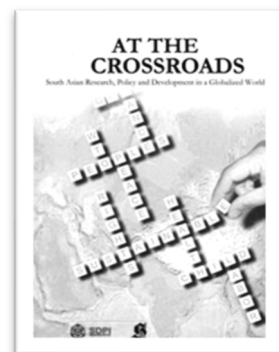
SEVENTH SDC (2004)

Troubled Times: Sustainable Development and Governance in the Age of Extremes was the overarching theme of the Seventh SDC that took up the key questions such as whether there is sound governance around development and whether this is ensuring just development? Whether there is more sharing of resources, including natural and institutional? Is there a strengthening of regional and international institutions? How much progress has been achieved in South Asia vis-à-vis governance? Is government more transparent today than it was a decade ago? Have governments kept their promises to the marginalised, whether the poor, women or minorities? The anthology that came out as a result of this SDC is titled *Troubled Times: Sustainable Development and Governance in the Age of Extremes*.



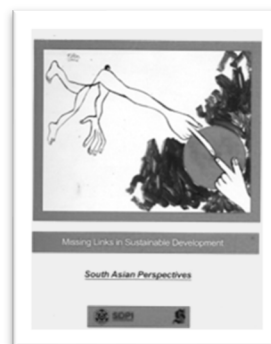
EIGHTH SDC (2005)

The Eighth SDC titled **At the Crossroads: South Asian Research, Policy and Development in a Globalized World** examined the multiple facets of sustainable development in the context of South Asia. The speakers discussed how problems and issues in South Asia could be dealt effectively at various levels based on prior experience of successful policy interventions. The anthology that came out as a result of this SDC is titled *At the Crossroads: South Asian Research, Policy and Development in a Globalized World*.



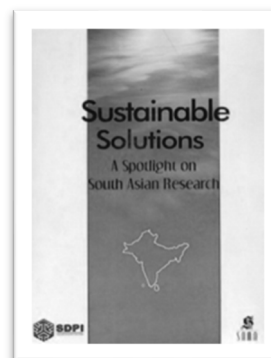
NINTH SDC (2006)

The Ninth SDC titled **Missing Links in Sustainable Development (SD): South Asian Perspectives** aimed at identifying the missing links in sustainable development for South Asia and proposed fillers for those. The region's pool of cutting-edge academics was tapped and top researchers invited together with policymakers, activists and other relevant stakeholders for a vibrant three-day debate. The anthology that came out as a result of this SDC is titled *Missing Links in Sustainable Development (SD): South Asian Perspectives*.



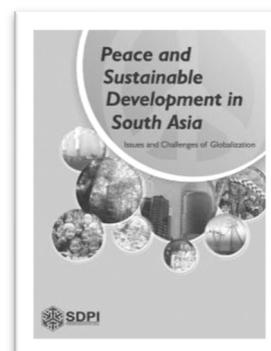
TENTH SDC (2007)

The Tenth SDC titled **Sustainable Solutions: A Spotlight on South Asian Research** explored sustainable solutions to problems such as poverty, illiteracy, mortality and morbidity, environmental degradation and disaster management, gender inequality, insecurity, violence and history. It focused on looking at both innovative solutions, as well as indigenously developed alternatives that have survived generations of development. The anthology that came out as a result of this SDC is titled *Sustainable Solutions: A Spotlight on South Asian Research*.



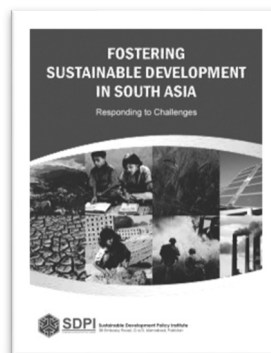
ELEVENTH SDC (2008)

Peace and Sustainable Development in South Asia: Issues and Challenges of Globalization was the theme of the Eleventh SDC which discussed various issues such as where we stand in solving the dilemmas of inequality, poverty, climate change and energy scarcity, natural resources degradation, trade liberalisation policies, food insecurity, violence and conflict, re-writing history, and poor governance. The conference aimed to explore how resolving some non-conventional security threats may turn into added dividends for peace. The anthology that came out as a result of this SDC is titled *Peace and Sustainable Development in South Asia: Issues and Challenges of Globalization*.



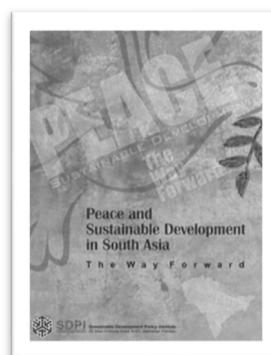
TWELFTH SDC (2009)

The Twelfth SDC titled **Fostering Sustainable Development in South Asia: Responding to Challenges** focused on the six 'Fs' crises - issues related to food, fuel, frontiers, functional democracy and the fragility of climate. Scholars from South Asia and other regions were invited to delve further on these issues and shared with the audience where South Asia stands today vis-à-vis coping with the six 'Fs' crises facing the region. Gender remained a crosscutting theme. The anthology that was published as a result of this SDC is titled *Fostering Sustainable Development in South Asia: Responding to Challenges*.



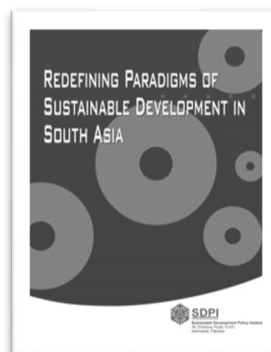
THIRTEENTH SDC (2010)

The Thirteenth SDC titled **Peace and Sustainable Development in South Asia: The Way Forward** deliberated on how economic challenges could be handled with positive results in terms of natural resources, while at the same time increasing the capacity and effectiveness of institutions. The panels covered themes such as post-flood situation in Pakistan, food insecurity, energy and financial crisis, the issue of land acquisition, trade and financial liberalisation, social protection, the eradication of violence against women, the role of think tanks in peace and sustainable development, sound management of chemicals, climate change, religious diversity, labour issues, etc. The anthology published as a result of this SDC is titled *Peace and Sustainable Development in South Asia: The Way Forward*.



FOURTEENTH SDC (2011)

The Fourteenth SDC titled **Redefining Paradigms of Sustainable Development in South Asia** featured a broad spectrum of themes: livelihood, governance, literature, Sufism, poverty, geopolitics, forest management, REDD+, social accountability, 18th Amendment, land rights, food security, education financing, feminism, economic non-cooperation, water governance, and, energy and sustainability. The anthology published as a result of this SDC is titled *Redefining Paradigms of Sustainable Development in South Asia*.



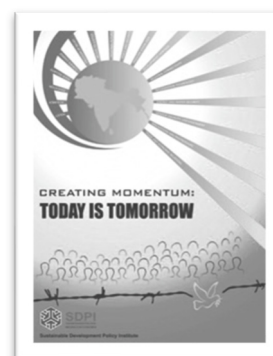
FIFTEENTH SDC (2012)

The Fifteenth SDC **Sustainable Development in South Asia: Shaping the Future** analysed how things will look 20, 30 or even 50 years from now, threw light on issues that will be looming large, made concrete suggestions on how to overcome future challenges, and, gave practical policy recommendations about a sustainable South Asia. The anthology published as a result of this SDC is titled *Sustainable Development in South Asia: Shaping the Future*.



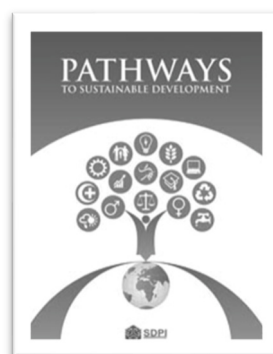
SIXTEENTH SDC (2013)

Creating Momentum: Today is Tomorrow was the theme of the Sixteenth SDC, which highlighted our present position and inclination to forecast and potentially modify our decisions that may improve our tomorrow. Under various sub-themes, the conference brought to attention that failure to act urgently is premised on the argument that waiting for another tomorrow for action will result in wasting opportunities that may not be available ever again. The anthology published as a result of this SDC is titled *Creating Momentum: Today is Tomorrow*.



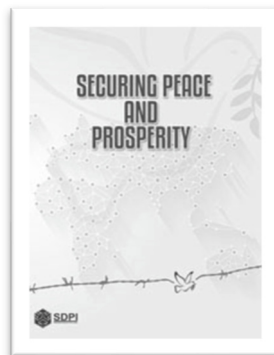
SEVENTEENTH SDC (2014)

The Seventeenth SDC titled **Pathways to Sustainable Development** looked at leadership change in China, Pakistan, Iran, Bangladesh, India, and Afghanistan that could hold the key to shaping development pathways in South Asia. The region needs political and executive leadership that has a commitment to strategise for peace and human security and raise tangible safeguards for the political economy of the region, while engaging with the primary stakeholders, i.e. the people. In this backdrop, issues of climate change, migration, sustainable and inclusive economic growth, sharing energy resources across the region, environmental challenges, food security, human rights, women in the peace process, and regional connectivity were discussed and published in its peer reviewed anthology titled *Pathways to Sustainable Development*.



EIGHTEENTH SDC & EIGHTH SAES (2015)

The Eighteenth SDC titled **Securing Peace and Prosperity** had a thinkers' agenda, a gathering of regional think tanks working closely with policymakers of their respective countries and representatives of existing and potential South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) member countries - a congregation of visionaries in Islamabad. It focused on understanding regional integration and the attempt of SAARC countries at various forums in 2015 to establish new corridors to achieve sustainable development in the region and beyond. Simultaneously, the Eighth South Asia Economic Summit (SAES) - the premier regional platform for debate and analysis of politico-socio-economic issues and problems facing South Asia, was also held. The Summit brought together stakeholders to review and reflect on issues facing South Asian countries. The overarching theme of SAES was *Regional Cooperation for Sustainable Development in South Asia*. The anthology published as a result of the SDC and SAES is titled *Securing Peace and Prosperity*.



NINETEENTH SDC (2016)

The overarching theme of the Nineteenth SDC was **Sustainable Development: Envisaging the Future Together**. It focused on cooperation between developed and developing countries for sustainable development, Sustainable Development Goals, and human centredness. The themes highlighted in this conference were recovering from conflict, SDGs, trade, economic growth, environment, sustainable energy, regional economic integration, minority rights, disaster management and preparedness, climate change, youth employment, gender and demography, gender and democracy, etc. The anthology published as a result of this SDC is titled *Sustainable Development: Envisaging the Future Together*.



TWENTIETH SDC (2017)

The Twentieth SDC titled **Seventy Years of Development: The Way Forward** will be remembered within and by the development sector of Pakistan and the region for some time as one of the largest congregation of the best and brightest minds coming together in 40 panels, roundtables and podium discussions, many of which were concurrent, including four plenary sessions. It examined 70 years of development in Pakistan and the region with participation from around the world. A total of 269 panellists representing 16 countries became part of this mega event - Afghanistan, China, Ethiopia, Finland (via Skype), France, Germany, India, Italy, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand (via Skype), The Philippines, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, United Kingdom, the United States of America. An audience of over 3,000 attended the three-day flagship event. The edited volume published as a result of this SDC is titled *Seventy Years of Development: The Way Forward*.



TWENTY-FIRST SDC & ELEVENTH SAES (2018)

The Twenty-first SDC and Eleventh SAES on **Corridors of Knowledge for Peace and Development** discussed not only economic corridors, but also corridors of connectivity and knowledge and how they could steer the region towards peace and development. During the 40 concurrent sessions, it was highlighted that while a few regional organisations and processes may have stalled, the road to development must go on. This growing trend should not be allowed to impact research and development efforts and learning from each other's best practices. In fact, new collaborative partnerships need to be established on knowledge sharing and building bridges, while simultaneously strengthening old ones. 261 delegates attended these two joint events from 20 countries including Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil (via Skype), Brussels, Canada, China, Germany, Kenya, Maldives, France, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Pakistan and the Philippines, United Kingdom and the United States of America. While 204 delegates came from within the country, the remaining 57 represented the rest of the countries listed. An audience of over 4,000 attended the four-day proceedings. The peer reviewed edited volume produced following these events is titled *Corridors of Knowledge for Peace and Development*.



TWENTY-SECOND SDC (2019)

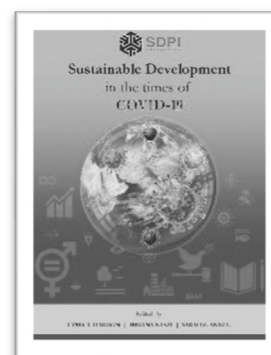
The overarching theme of the Twenty-second SDC **Sustainable Development in a Digital Society** was inspired by the Fourth Industrial Revolution and an era of digitalisation which has changed how human beings interact in the era of rapid revolution in technologies. It brought together scholars, researchers, policymakers, game changers, and members of the civil society to deliberate on ideas how to benefit from the Fourth Industrial Revolution where Artificial Intelligence is playing a lead role in our lives.



The Inaugural Plenary was held on 2 December 2019 at the Aiwan-e-Sadr with President of Pakistan Dr Arif Alvi as the Chief Guest who inaugurated the conference. The conference was attended by 223 panellists from 17 countries. Apart from 192 panellists from Pakistan, 31 speakers came from Afghanistan, China, Finland, France, Germany, India, Iran, Italy, Maldives, Nepal, the Philippines (via Skype), Sri Lanka, Thailand (via Skype), Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States of America. 150 male panellists, 69 female panellists, and 4 transgender panellists presented their ideas and views. The anthology as a result of the deliberations and research presented and was titled *Sustainable Development in a Digital Society*.

TWENTY-THIRD SDC (2020)

SDPI's Twenty-third SDC titled **Sustainable Development in the Times of COVID-19** specifically focused on the impact of COVID-19 and a changing world order since the outbreak of the pandemic. Dr Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan, shared his viewpoints online at a Special Plenary on 16 December 2020 from the Presidency. The anthology was a result of the deliberations and research presented and was titled *Sustainable Development in the Times of COVID-19*. All the sessions of the conference were held online from 14 – 17 December 2020. A total of 45 sessions were organised of which nine were plenary sessions and, 36 concurrent sessions. The conference was attended by 235 panellists from 25 countries. Apart from 174 from Pakistan, 61 speakers joined from Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Brunei, Canada, China, Ecuador, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. All the sessions had a keen and interactive audience. Over the span of four days, the conference was attended by an online audience of over 6,800 from 84 countries.



TWENTY-FOURTH SDC (2021)

SDPI's Twenty-fourth SDC was held in a hybrid format from 6 - 9 December 2021 in Islamabad, Pakistan. The overarching of this conference was **Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind**. Dr Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan, inaugurated the conference on 6 December 2021 at the Presidency. A special message was also delivered by the former Prime Minister, Imran Khan, focusing on inclusive development. A total of 38 sessions were organised, of which 10 were plenary sessions and 28 concurrent sessions. It was a forward-looking conference and a reflection on the two years since the COVID-19 Pandemic. A total of 2,365 in-person and online audience were in attendance.

There were over 230 delegates from 23 countries over a span of four days. Besides Pakistan, speakers joined from Afghanistan, Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Canada, Ecuador, Fiji, France, Germany, India, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, Peru, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The anthology in your hand (or downloaded on your computer/Kindle) is a result of the deliberations and research presented at the Twenty-fourth SDC.

Note:

Previous anthologies can be viewed and downloaded for free from the following link:
<<https://sdpi.org/sdc-Anthologies/publications>>.



Annexure III

Acknowledgements

Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) is grateful for the support provided by the donors and knowledge partners during the Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) 2021 titled *Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind*. They are listed below:

Donors

1. GIZ Support to Local Governance (LoGo) Programme
2. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
3. Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
4. World Food Programme (WFP)
5. The World Bank South Asia Chief Economist Office
6. Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union)
7. International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
8. Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)
9. European Union Delegation to Pakistan
10. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
11. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific: Sub-regional Office for South and South-West Asia (UNESCAP SSWA)
12. The Aga Khan University
13. Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), Pakistan
14. International Republican Institute (IRI)
15. International Trade Centre (ITC)
16. Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF)
17. Unilever
18. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)
19. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Thailand

Knowledge Partners

1. Fatima Jinnah Women University
2. Health Service Academy

3. Institute of Development Studies, United Kingdom
4. South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE)

SDC Anthology Review Panel

The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) prides itself in producing valuable and credible research. The blind peer review process is, therefore, a crucial means of determining both quality and validity of the research work which is published each year in the Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) Anthology. This Anthology also contains peer reviewed papers presented at the Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference.

While our Panel of Referees grows each year, we remain cognizant that reviewer selection is just as critical as the review itself and hence, we chose each one carefully based on their reputation and expertise. Given how important and yet often invisible this activity is to the outside world, we truly appreciate the unbiased and timely feedback we received on the papers that were peer reviewed this year. The Institute and anthology editors wish to thank the following academics, researchers, and professionals for their fair, constructive, and informative critique of the submitted works:

Aadil Nakhoda (PhD) is Assistant Professor at the Department of Economics, Institute of Business Administration in Karachi, Pakistan. His research focuses on trade-related issues. He frequently writes for newspapers and magazines on issues faced by Pakistan's economy as well as on trade-related challenges.

Anita Ghimire (PhD) is Executive Director of the Nepal Institute for Social and Environmental Research. Her areas of research include migration, livelihoods, disasters and social protection and social norms.

Imran Saqib Khalid (PhD) is Director, Governance and Policy at World Wildlife Fund-Pakistan, and a Visiting Fellow at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute. He has a wide-ranging experience having worked with the government, private, academic, and not-for-profit sectors on issues pertaining to water governance, climate risk assessment and environmental management.

Moazzam Ali Janjua works as an independent Development Consultant. He has been associated with local governance since 1981 and has served on different positions. As Additional Secretary to the Punjab Local Government Department, he remained deeply involved in drafting laws, rules, model bye-laws, etc., for local government. After his retirement, he continued to work as a Technical Advisor/Consultant with the German Agency for International Development under its Support to Local Governance Programme.

Muhammad Asim Yasin (PhD) is an Assistant Professor of Economics at COMSATS University Islamabad, Vehari Campus, Pakistan. He has published and supervised research on topics related to Environmental and Agricultural Economics.

Naimat U. Khan (PhD) is Assistant Professor at the Institute of Management Studies, University of Peshawar, Pakistan. For the past 16 years, he has been a scholar, researcher, and teacher at the university level. He is Associate Editor of *Qualitative Research in Financial Markets* (Emerald Publishing). His principal research interests lie in the field of corporate finance, financial accounting, and Islamic finance. He is a recipient of three awards - Highly Commended Paper (2013), Outstanding Reviewer (2014 and 2020) in Emerald Literati Network Awards for Excellence.

Razia Safdar (MBBS) is an Advisor at the Center of Health Policy Innovation, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan. She is a public health expert with considerable experience of working in the public sector. She works on environmental health, climate change, WASH, and inter-sectoral crosscutting public health interventions at the policy level.

Shafqat Munir Ahmad (PhD) works with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute as Research Fellow/Head Resilient Development Programme. He has earlier worked with the United Nations Development Programme, Oxfam, and ActionAid on regional positions, specialising in policy influencing.

Shaheen Ashraf Shah (PhD) works for the World Food Programme, managing gender, protection, and disability portfolios of the WFP across Pakistan. She also served as A Visiting Research Fellow to the University of Western Australia and the Loughborough University, United Kingdom.

Shahla Tabassum (PhD) is Head of Department of Gender Studies at Fatima Jinnah Women University in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. She has published and supervised research on topics related to women, gender, and social issues.

Surinder S. Jodhka (PhD) is Professor of Sociology at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India.

Syed Mohsin Ali Kazmi (PhD) is Associate Research Fellow at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Islamabad, Pakistan. He has diversified experience of over 11 years in demographic surveys and data management.

Syeda Arfa Zehra (PhD) is Professor of History at the Forman Christian College in Lahore, Pakistan.

Syeda Tayyaba Fasih (PhD) is Assistant Professor of Management and Human Resource Management at the College of Business Management, Institute of Business Management (IoBM) in Karachi, Pakistan. She has published research on topics related to talent management, HRM, and social policy.

Waseem Iftikhar Janjua (PhD) is Senior Researcher at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Islamabad, Pakistan; and a PhD scholar at the Center for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST). He is an alumnus of Johns Hopkins University, USA, and the University of Bath, UK. His publications relate to critical discourse analysis, tobacco control, and peace and conflict studies.

Editors

Apart from the guidance from SDPI's Executive Director, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, and Joint Executive Director, Dr Vaqar Ahmed, cooperation of panel organisers and the entire SDPI staff, the Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) and this publication would not have been possible without the constant support of:

Uzma T. Haroon is Director of the Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) Unit; and Managing Editor *Journal of Development Policy, Research & Practice* at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Islamabad, Pakistan. She has over 30 years of experience in media and communication and has been the *tour de force* behind SDPI's annual international conference series since 2003. She is also co-editor of the past 19 SDC anthologies, including this one. Previously, she has worked with the UNDP's project on 'Portrayal of Women in Media'; and, *The Nation* newspaper for over ten years where she was editor of a weekly magazine and was also their senior reporter covering the social sector.

Imrana Niazi is Senior Coordinator of the Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) Unit at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Islamabad, Pakistan. She is also Managing Associate Editor *Journal of Development Policy, Research & Practice*. She has been associated with SDPI since 2008. Previously, she was a lecturer at Bahria University and Fatima Jinnah Women University in Pakistan. Ms Niazi has co-edited 12 SDC anthologies, including this one.

Sarah S. Aneel has two decades of research and strategic communications experience in the development sector of Pakistan; and is currently affiliated with the Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies. Ms Aneel has more than 40 edited books to her credit; and apart from being on the Advisory Board of several journals, is Founding Editor *Journal of Aerospace & Security Studies*.

Special Mention

SDPI also acknowledges and appreciates the support given by **Tayyaba Hanif Maken**, Associate Coordinator of the SDC Unit at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Islamabad, Pakistan, in carrying out similarity review of the chapters and other related assignments pertaining to this anthology. Ms Hanif has 13 years of experience in communications and event coordination.

The editors are also grateful to the publisher of this year's anthology (as well as several previous ones) - Sang-e-Meel Publications - especially to **Ali Kamran** for putting in long nights under tight publishing deadlines and demands.

Annexure IV

Panels at a Glance

SDPI's Twenty-fourth Sustainable Development Conference (SDC)

'Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind'

6 – 9 December 2021, Islamabad, Pakistan¹

Day 1 6 December 2021 Morning Plenary 1.1 Inaugural Plenary - Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind Aiwan-e-Sadr 3:00pm – 5:00pm	
Master of Ceremony:	Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Welcome Remarks:	Ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel, Chairperson, Board of Governors, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Introductory Remarks:	Dr Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Special Remarks by Guest of Honour:	Dr Sania Nishtar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, GoP <i>Ehsaas & Leave No One Behind Agenda</i>
Launch of Publication:	SDC Anthology: <i>Sustainable Development in the Times of COVID-19</i>
Remarks by the Chief Guest:	H.E. Dr Arif Alvi, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Group Photo with the Chief Guest	
Plenary Organisers:	Mr Shahid Minhas & Syed Hassan Murtaza, SDPI, Pakistan
Facebook:	https://bit.ly/3F130oi

¹ All designations are as of December 2021 at the time of the Conference.

Day 1 6 December 2021 Evening Plenary 1.2 Multi-Tiered, Shock Responsive Social Protection in Pakistan <i>In collaboration with Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, Sub-National Governance Programme</i> Serena Hotel, Islamabad 6:00pm – 8:30pm	
Welcome Remarks:	Dr Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Moderator:	Dr Fareeha Armughan, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Scene Setting Presentation:	Dr Sohail Anwar, Advisor Governance and Social Protection, Sub-National Governance Programme, Punjab, Pakistan
Chair:	Mr Qazi Azmat Isa, Former Chief Executive, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, Islamabad, Pakistan
Keynote Speaker (Online):	Mr Makhdoom Hashim Jawan Bakht, Provincial Minister of Punjab for Finance
Special Remarks:	Mr Nadeem Hussain, Founder Easy Paisa and CEO Planet N Group, Karachi, Pakistan
Distinguished Panellists (In-Person):	
1. Mr Khurram Dastgir Khan, Member National Assembly, Government of Pakistan	
2. Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan	
3. Captain Saeed Ahmed Nawaz (Retd.), Additional Secretary, Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division, GoP	
4. Syed Muhammad Mustafa, Technical Advisor, Social Protection, GIZ Pakistan	
5. Ms Beenish Fatimah Sahi, CEO, Punjab Social Protection Authority (PSPA), Lahore, Pakistan	
6. Mr Henlo Van Nieuwenhuyzen, Principal Consultant, Oxford Policy Management, United Kingdom	
Distinguished Panellists (Online):	
7. Dr Adeel Malik, Associate Professor, Oxford University, United Kingdom	
8. Mr Muhammad Ali Asghar, Chief Economist Planning & Development Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	
Plenary Organisers:	Dr Fareeha Armughan, Dr Vaqar Ahmed, SDPI & Dr Sohail Anwar, SNG-FCDO
Rapporteurs:	PR: Ms Dua e Zehra PRs: Mr Ubaid ur Rehman Zia LR: Ms Nudrat Fatima
SM Volunteer:	Syed Faisal Shah
Facebook:	https://bit.ly/3s3yHtr

Day 2 7 December 2021 Concurrent Sessions	
Concurrent Session A-1 9:30am – 11:00am	<p>HYBRID SESSION Building Minimum Consensus on the Architecture of Local Government System in Pakistan <i>In collaboration with GIZ LoGo</i></p> <p>Moderator: Syed Hassan Murtaza, SDPI Chair: Mr Mohsin Mushtaq Chandna Federal Secretary for Inter-Provincial Coordination, GoP Special Remarks: Dr Nafisa Shah, PPP and Mr Inayat Ullah, MPA, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</p>
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Amna Zaidi, SDPI Mr Rainer Rohdewohld, Senior Policy Advisor Decentralization & Public Sector Management, Germany Dr Aamir Taj, Associate Professor, IM Sciences, Peshawar, Pakistan <p>Panel Organisers: Mr Qasim Shah, Ms Rabia Tabassum, SDPI and GIZ LoGo</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Ayesha Ilyas PRs & LR: Ms Oshin Khan</p> <p>Facebook: https://bit.ly/3GOyf6v</p>
Concurrent Session A-2 9:30am – 11:00am	<p>HYBRID SESSION Ecosystem Restoration 2030: A Decade of Action for Sustainability and Resilience <i>In collaboration with WFP</i></p> <p>Moderator: Dr Shafqat Munir, SDPI Chair: Ms Zartaj Gul, Minister of State, MoCC, GoP Special Remarks: Dr Abid Q. Suleri, SDPI & Dr Mushtaq Ahmed Memon, Regional Coordinator Resource Efficiency, UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand</p>
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Adam Savelli, Analyst, The Alliance and CIAT & Mr Iftikhar Abbas, VAMO, WFP-Pakistan <i>Title: Climate Response Analysis – A Case Study of Pakistan</i> Dr Sehrish Qayyum, AP, PNWC, Lahore, Pakistan <i>Title: Post-Pandemic Blue Economy: A Contribution towards 'Ecosystem Restoration 2030' and Sustainable Socioeconomic Development</i> Dr Babar Shahbaz, UAF, Faisalabad, Pakistan Mr Salman Danish, SDPI <p>Panel Organisers: Dr Shafqat Munir & Mr Muhammad Awais Umar, SDPI</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Sundas Shafique PRs & LR: Ms Amina Khalid</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Syed Faisal & Khadija Facebook: https://bit.ly/3EYPGAK</p>

Concurrent Session A-3 9:30am – 11:00am	ONLINE Beyond COVID-19: Challenges to Primary Healthcare and Preparedness in Pakistan <i>In Knowledge Partnership with HSA</i> Moderator: Mr Shahid Minhas, SDPI Chair: Dr Michael Lukwiya, Health Emergency Coordinator, WHO Pakistan Keynote Speaker: Prof. Dr Shahzad Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor, HSA, Islamabad, Pakistan	
	Speakers: 1. Prof. Dr Rana Jawad Asghar, CEO, GHSI & Adjunct Professor, University of Nebraska, USA 2. Dr Yasmeen Sabeeh Qazi, Snr. AA, B&MGF, Pakistan Office 3. Dr Mumtaz Ali Khan, SSRO, CDC, NIH, Islamabad, Pakistan 4. Dr Saadia Mustafa, AP, HSA, Islamabad, Pakistan 5. Dr Adeela Rehman, FJWU, Rawalpindi, Pakistan Title: <i>Psychosocial Well-being of COVID-19 Affected Families and Coping Strategies for Sustaining Familial Relationships: Small Sample Study from Rawalpindi, Pakistan</i>	Panel Organisers: Mr Shahid Minhas & Mr Asim Zahoor Shah, SDPI and Health Services Academy Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Seemab Bibi PRs & LR: Ms Emaan Fatima Atif Facebook: https://bit.ly/3pRko8k
Concurrent Session A-4 9:30am – 11:00am	ONLINE In Memoriam: Remembering the Subcontinent's Authors & Activists We Lost during COVID-19 Moderator: Dr Humera Ishfaq, SDPI Chair: Ms Kishwar Naheed, Poet, Islamabad, Pakistan Documentary Showcase: <i>Life and Work of Mr Ahmed Salim</i> Introductory Remarks: Mr Ahmed Salim, Senior Advisor, SDPI Special Remarks: Dr Abid Q. Suleri, SDPI	
	Speakers: 1. Dr Humera Ishfaq, SDPI 2. Dr Navsharan Singh, Feminist Researcher, New Delhi, India Title: <i>Kissan Tehreek India</i> 3. Mr Raza Naeem, President, PWA, Lahore, Pakistan Title: <i>In Memoriam: Masood Ashar (1931-2021) & Abdul Rauf Malik (1926-2021)</i> 4. Dr Sadia Kamal, Senior Vice President, National Press Club, Islamabad, Pakistan 5. Prof. Shafique Anjum, Associate Professor, NUML, Islamabad, Pakistan	Panel Organisers: Mr Ahmed Salim, Dr Humera Ishfaq & Mr Ali Aamer, SDPI Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Zainab Naeem PRs & LR: Ms Irsa Saeed SM Volunteer: Mr Ibrar Facebook: https://bit.ly/3m1j1D9
Tea Break 11:00am – 12:00pm		

Concurrent Session A-5 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>ONLINE Local Governments and Challenges of Social Inclusiveness <i>In collaboration with GIZ LoGo</i></p> <p>Moderator: Ms Gulalai Khan, Inclusion and Social Impact Expert, Islamabad, Pakistan Chair: Senator Aon Abbas Bappi, Special Minister to Prime Minister on E-Commerce, GoP</p> <p>Opening Remarks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Sajid Amin, SDPI 2. Mr Ulrich Hueser, GIZ Cluster Coordinator, Good Governance, The Netherlands
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Ahmed Iqbal, Chairman (Mayor), District Council Narowal, Pakistan 2. Dr Ghazal Mir Zulfiqar, AP, SDSB, LUMS, Lahore, Pakistan 3. Ms Uzma Qureshi, SDS, The World Bank, Pakistan Office <p>Panel Organisers: Ms Gulalai Khan, Ms Bianca Schnober, GIZ LoGo, Dr Fatemeh Chirani & Ms Amna Zaidi, SDPI</p>
Concurrent Session A-6 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>HYBRID SESSION Progress and Reforms in Social Protection in Pakistan: Post-18th Amendment <i>(Towards Building an Effective Social Protection System)</i> <i>In collaboration with GIZ Pakistan</i></p> <p>Moderator: Dr Fareeha Armughan, SDPI Opening Remarks: Ms Beenish Fatimah Sahi, CEO, PSPA, Lahore, Pakistan Technical Presentation: Syed Muhammad Mustafa, Technical Advisor, Social Protection, GIZ Pakistan</p>
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Haris Gazdar, Director & Senior Researcher, CSSR, Karachi, Pakistan 2. Dr Muhammad Waqas, Research Officer, SPRU, KP 3. Mr Shahid Farooq, Islamabad <p>Panel Organisers: Dr Sajid Amin & Mr Muhammad Umar Ayaz, SDPI & Syed Muhammad Mustafa, GIZ GmbH</p>

Concurrent Session A-7 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>ONLINE Building Local Resilient Food Systems to End Hunger – Leaving No One Behind <i>In collaboration with WFP & In Knowledge Partnership with SAWTEE</i></p> <p>Moderator: Mr Kashif Salik, SDPI Chair: Syed Fakhar Imam, Federal Minister, MNFSR, GoP Welcome Remarks: Dr Abid Q. Suleri, SDPI</p>	
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms Dikshya Singh, PC, SAWTEE, Nepal <i>Title: Fighting the Pandemic: Food System Resilience in Nepal</i> 2. Dr Manoj Thibbotuwawa, RF, IPS, Colombo, Sri Lanka <i>Title: Building Resilient Agricultural Value Chains during COVID-19</i> 3. Prof. Dr Sayema Haque Bidisha, Dept of Eco, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh <i>Title: Assessing Food Poverty, Vulnerability and Food Consumption Inequality in the context of COVID-19: A Case of Bangladesh</i> 4. Dr Heather Ohly, Researcher, UK, Mr Iftikhar Abbas, Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Officer WFP & Dr Sophie Goudet, Senior Researcher & Technical Advisor, Fiji <i>Title: Case Study on Urban Food Systems in Peshawar: COVID-19, Food Security and Resilience</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Mr Joseph George, Trade Analyst, UNESCAP, New Delhi, India <i>Title: Regional Cooperation for Food Security in South Asia</i> <p>Panel Organisers: Mr Kashif Salik & Ms Khansa Naeem, SDPI</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Ezba Khan PRs & LR: Ms Oshin Khan</p> <p>SM Volunteer: Ms Khadija Facebook: https://bit.ly/3ITgFQJ</p>
Concurrent Session A-8 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>ONLINE Addressing Gender-based Violence (GBV) in South Asia during Pandemic: Evidence to advise Policy, Prevention & Response</p> <p>Moderator: Ms Zahra Khalid, SDPI Chair: Ms Kashmala Tariq, Chairperson, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, Fed. Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment of Women Special Remarks: Ms Nilofar Bakhtiar, Chairperson, NCSW, Islamabad, Pakistan</p>	
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms Tahira Abdullah, Activist, Islamabad, Pakistan 2. Ms Saman Ahsan, Portfolio Manager, UN Women Pakistan 3. Ms Shamim Chowdhury, Journalist & Broadcaster, UK 4. Dr Anita Ghimire, Resident Director, NISER, Nepal 5. Ms Saima Ali, ISS, The Netherlands & Ms Meezan Zahra Khwaja, SDPI <p>Panel Organisers: Ms Meezan Zahra Khwaja, Ms Zahra Khalid & Mr Salman Danish, SDPI</p>	<p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Javaria Zulfiqar PRs & LR: Ms Zainab Taj</p> <p>SM Volunteer: Mr Hassan Raza Facebook: https://bit.ly/33IEVua</p>
Lunch Break 1:30pm – 3:00pm		

Concurrent Session A-9 3:00pm – 4:30pm	<p>HYBRID SESSION - #SDG7 Stimulus: Focus on Green Recovery of Pakistan <i>In collaboration with GIZ GmbH and German Cooperation</i></p> <p>Moderator: Dr Hina Aslam, SDPI Chair: Dr Sardar Mohazzam, Managing Director, NEECA Opening Remarks: Dr Philipp Deichmann, Deputy Ambassador of Germany to Pakistan Closing Remarks: Dr Vaqar Ahmed, SDPI</p>	
	<p>Speakers (Online):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Michael Williamson, Section Chief Energy Division, UNESCAP- <i>Green Recovery of the Asia-Pacific Region</i> Mr Simon Mueller, Director Agora EW, Germany <p>Speakers (In-Person):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Hartmut Behrend, GIZ GmbH Mr Ali Zain Banatwala, GIZ, Islamabad <i>Title: Energy Transition for a Greener Pakistan</i> Mr Muhammad Zulfiqar, CUST, Islamabad, Pakistan <i>Title: Financial Viability of Waste to Energy Conversion Processes in Green Recovery of Pakistan</i> Ms Kinza Nadeem, FJWU, Rawalpindi, Pakistan <i>Title: Green Total Factor Productivity, Environmental Policies and Fiscal Decentralisation in Pakistan</i> Syed Mujtaba Hussain, Sr. Joint Secretary (I.C), Ministry of Climate Change, GoP 	<p>Panel Organisers: Dr Hina Aslam, Mr Ubaid ur Rehman, SDPI & Mr Behrend Hartmut, GIZ GmbH</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Saleha Qureshi PRs: Mr Ubaid ur Rehman Zia & Syed Faisal Shah LR: Syed Faisal Shah</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Syed Faisal Shah, Ms Khadija, Ms Huboor & Mr Hassan Raza Facebook: https://bit.ly/33pD33z</p>
Concurrent Session A-10 3:00pm – 4:30pm	<p>HYBRID SESSION Building a Compelling Narrative for Local Governments in Pakistan and Why it Matters? <i>In collaboration with IRI</i></p> <p>Moderator: Ms Nargis Khan, IRI Chair (Online): Mian Mehmood ur Rashid, Local Govt Minister, GoPun Closing Remarks: Dr Vaqar Ahmed, SDPI Special Remarks (Online): Ms Johanna Kao, Regional Director (Asia), IRI, US</p>	
	<p>Speakers (In-Person) Mr Rana Muhammad Waqas Anwar, Add. DC, GoP</p> <p>Speakers (Online) Councillor Shabir Pandor, Leader Kirklees Council, Labour and Co-operative, West Yorkshire, UK</p> <p>Panel Organisers: Ms Amna Zaidi & Dr Fatemeh K. Chirani, SDPI & IRI</p>	<p>Rapporteurs: PR: Muhammad Ayaan Shehryar PRs: Ms Oshin Khan LR: Mr Asim Zahoor</p> <p>SM Volunteer: Mr Kashan Facebook: https://bit.ly/3GFfx0</p>

<p>Concurrent Session A-11 3:00pm – 4:30pm</p>	<p>ONLINE</p> <p>Impact of COVID-19 on the Role of Think Tanks in the Global South <i>(In memory of Dr James G. McGann, Director, TTCSP, University of Pennsylvania, USA)</i> <i>In collaboration with TTI</i></p> <p>Welcome Remarks: Dr Abid Q. Suleri, SDPI Keynote Speaker: Mr Ibrahim M. Barki, Assistant Director, Middle East Center, University of Pennsylvania, USA</p>	<p>Panel Organisers: Mr Qasim Shah & Mr Hassan Murtaza, SDPI</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Zaina Noor PRs: Ms Oshin Khan LR: Ms Fatima Baloch</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Ms Afra, Mr Hamza Arshad & Mr Hamza saeed Facebook: https://bit.ly/3dRT6Jt</p>
<p>Concurrent Session A-12 3:00pm – 4:30pm</p>	<p>ONLINE</p> <p>Services-led Growth and the Rise of Digital Platforms: A South Asia Perspective <i>In collaboration with The World Bank South Asia Chief Economist Office</i></p> <p>Moderator: Mr Abdullah Khalid, SDPI Special Remarks: Mr Najy Benhassine, Country Director, The World Bank, Islamabad, Pakistan Presentation by The World Bank: Ms Valerie Mercer-Blackman, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., USA</p>	<p>Panel Organisers: Engr Ahad Nazir, Mr Abdullah Khalid, SDPI & Ms Zoe Leiyu Xie, The World Bank, South Asia</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Hadia Shahid Sheikh PRs: Ms Zaina Noor LR: Mr Asim Zahoor</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Ms Sundas, Mr Ibrar & Mr Mubashir Facebook: https://bit.ly/31ZZDQ7</p>
<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Shazia Naz, Lahore, Pakistan <i>Title: Impact of Foreign Direct Investment on Services Exports of Pakistan: A Sectoral Analysis</i> Mr Siddharth Sharma, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., USA <i>Title: How Selling Online is Affecting Informal Firms in South Asia</i> <p>Distinguished Panellists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Muhammad Sohail Rajput, Federal Secretary (IT & TC) MoITT, GoP Mr Gonzalo Varela, Snr. Economist, The World Bank, Islamabad, Pakistan Mr Badar Khushnood, Chairman, P@SHA, Islamabad, Pakistan 		

Day 2 7 December 2021 Evening Plenary 2.1 Post-COP26: Private-Public Partnerships and Pakistan's Climate Change Priorities <i>In collaboration with Unilever</i> Serena Hotel, Islamabad 7:00pm – 8:30pm	
Introduction:	Ms Maryam Shabbir, Environmentalist, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Welcome Remarks & Moderator:	Dr Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Chair:	Mr Malik Amin Aslam, Federal Minister and Advisor to Prime Minister of Pakistan for Climate Change, GoP
Special Remarks:	Mr Amir Paracha, Chairman & CEO Unilever Pakistan, Karachi, Pakistan
Distinguished Panellists:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Syed Naveed Qamar, Pakistan Peoples Party, Karachi, Pakistan 2. Ms Romina Khurshid, PML-N (Online), Poland 3. Senator Faisal Javed, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf, Islamabad, Pakistan 4. Ms Fatima Arshad, Head of Sustainability, Unilever, Karachi, Pakistan 5. Mr Hussain Ali Talib, Head of External Affairs, Unilever, Karachi, Pakistan
Concluding Remarks:	Ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel, Chairperson, Board of Governors, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Plenary Organisers:	Ms Maryam Shabbir, Mr Salman Danish, SDPI, Dr Imran Khalid, Visiting Research Fellow & Mr Hussain Talib, Unilever
Rapporteurs:	PR: Ms Dua e Zehra & Ms Ayesha Ilyas PRs: Mr Ubaid ur Rehman Zia LR: Mr Asim Zahoor
Facebook:	https://bit.ly/3m2zSFp

Day 3 8 December 2021 Concurrent Sessions	
Concurrent Session B-1 9:30am–11:00am	<p>HYBRID SESSION Fighting Inequality by Promoting Diversity: Dialogue on Culture in the Post-Pandemic Time <i>In collaboration with FNF</i></p> <p>Moderator: Ms Sana A Khoja, Festival & Event Curator, Development Sector Specialist, C-Founder Lahooti Melo</p> <p>Chair: Mr Asif Hyder Shah, Secretary, National Heritage & Culture Division, GoP</p> <p>Opening Remarks (Online): Ms Birgit Lamm, Director, FNF Pakistan Office</p> <p>Concluding Remarks: Syed Qasim Shah, SDPI</p>
	<p>Video Showcase: Lahooti Melo 2021</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Jami Chandio, Writer & Scholar, Karachi, Pakistan <i>Book: Cultural Federalism</i> Prof. Dr Riaz Ahmed Shaikh, Dean Faculty of Social Sciences, SZABIST University, Karachi, Pakistan Dr Fatemeh K. Chirani, VRF, SDPI <i>Title: The Role of Culture in Reducing Inequality</i> <p>Panel Organisers: Dr Fatemeh K. Chirani, SDPI & Ms Birgit Lamm, FNF</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Emaan Fatima Atif PRs & LR: Mr Farhan Safdar</p> <p>SM Volunteer: Ms Sundas Facebook: https://bit.ly/30qJlPm</p>
Concurrent Session B-2 9:30am–11:00am	<p>HYBRID SESSION Inclusive COVID-19 Recovery: Education for Vulnerable Groups <i>In collaboration with GIZ</i></p> <p>Moderator: Ma Amna Zaidi, SDPI</p> <p>Introductory Remarks: Ms Rabia Tabassum, SDPI</p>
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Fajer Rabia Pasha, ED, PAGE, Pakistan Dr Fareeha Armughan, SDPI <i>Title: Ed-tech and Associated Disparities in Rural Areas of Pakistan</i> Mr Abbas Khan, Commissioner Afghan Refugees, KP Ms Baela Raza Jamil, CEO, ITA, Lahore, Pakistan Mr Shahbaz Tahir Nadeem, Special Secretary Elementary & Secondary Department, KP <p>Panel Organisers: Ms Rabia Tabassum & Syed Hassan Murtaza, SDPI & GIZ</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Bismah Shehzad PRs: Ms Noor Javed LR: Mr Asim Zahoor</p> <p>SM Volunteer: Ms Bisma Shehzad Facebook: https://bit.ly/3lPvC6a</p>

Concurrent Session B-3 9:30am–11:00am	<p>ONLINE ‘Building Forward Better’ Amidst Recovery from Pandemic</p> <p>Moderator: Dr Abid Q. Suleri, SDPI</p>	
	<p>Distinguished Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan, Chairman, BoD, NRSP & RSPN 2. Dr Masuma Hasan, Chairperson, PIIA, Karachi, Pakistan 3. Ms Arifa Khalid Pervez, Former MNA <p>Panel Organisers: Mr Moazzam Bhatti & Mr Amjad Hussain, SDPI</p>	<p>Rapporteurs:</p> <p>PR: Mr Amjad Hussain & Ms Huboor Sohail PRs & LR: Ms Oshin Khan</p> <p>SM Volunteer: Ms Huboor Sohail Facebook: https://bit.ly/3oS3ash</p>
Concurrent Session B-4 9:30am–11:00am	<p>ONLINE Poverty Alleviation and Graduation in Pakistan: Evidence from the Field <i>In collaboration with GIZ Pakistan</i></p> <p>Moderator: Dr Kashif Saeed, PSPA</p> <p>Chair: Captain Saeed Ahmed Nawaz (Retd.), Additional Secretary, Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division, GoP</p> <p>Opening Remarks & Technical Presentation: Syed Muhammad Mustafa, Technical Advisor, Social Protection, GIZ</p>	
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Fida Muhammad, Country PO, IFAD 2. Ms Samia Liaquat Ali Khan, PPAF, Sr. Gp Head Graduation, Director, NPGP 3. Mr Rashid Bajwa, Founding ED, NRSP 4. Mr Muhammad Dittal Kalhoro, CEO, SRSO 	<p>Panel Organisers: Dr Sajid Amin & Mr Umar Ayaz, SDPI; Syed Muhammad Mustafa, GIZ GmbH & Mr Kashif Saeed, PSPA</p> <p>Rapporteurs:</p> <p>PR: Ms Hamna Afzal PRs & LR: Ms Sofia Laraib</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Mr Hamza Saeed & Ms Afra Facebook: https://bit.ly/30v9SLy</p>
<p>Tea Break 11:00am–12:00pm</p>		

Concurrent Session B-5 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>HYBRID SESSION Understanding the Social Footprint of Central Banking & Monetary Policy in Pakistan <i>In collaboration with FES Pakistan</i></p> <p>Moderators: Dr Khaqan Najeeb, Former Advisor MoF, GoP Dr Hafiz Pasha, Prof. Emeritus BNU, Lahore, Pakistan</p> <p>Chair: Dr Jochen Hippler, Country Director, FES Pakistan</p> <p>Welcome Remarks: Dr Sajid Amin Javed, SDPI</p> <p>Technical Presentation: Dr Sajid Amin Javed, SDPI</p>	
	<p>Speakers (Online):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Hamza Ali Malik, Director, Macroeconomic Policy & Financing, UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand 2. Dr Vaqar Ahmed, SDPI 3. Mr Hassan Daud Butt, Chief ED, KP-BOIT, GoP 4. Dr Safia Minhaj, Assistant Professor, University of Karachi, Pakistan <p>Speakers (In-Person):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Prof. Dr Wasim Shahid Malik, Mr Mahbubur Raschid Memorial Chair, SBP, University of Peshawar, Peshawar, Pakistan 	<p>Closing Remarks: Dr Aliya Hashmi Khan, Member, PM EAC & Former Prof, QAU, Islamabad, Pakistan</p> <p>Panel Organisers: Dr Sajid Amin, Mr Ahad Nazir & Mr Abdullah Khalid SDPI & Mr Abdullah Dayo, FES Pakistan</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Rabbia Sajjad PRs and LR: Mr Umair Niazi</p> <p>Facebook: https://bit.ly/3ypI8EF</p>
Concurrent Session B-6 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>HYBRID SESSION Tobacco Control in Pakistan: Challenges and Opportunities Going Beyond the Pandemic <i>In collaboration with Bloomberg's The Union</i></p> <p>Moderator: Syed Ali Wasif Naqvi, SDPI</p> <p>Chair: Dr Nausheen Hamid, Parliamentary Secretary, GoP</p> <p>Guest of Honour: Dr Minhaj us Siraj, Former Joint ED, PIMS, Islamabad, Pakistan</p>	
	<p>Speakers (In-Person):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Waseem Iftikhar Janjua, SDPI 2. Mr Asif Iqbal, MD, SPDC, Karachi, Pakistan 3. Ms Dania Farah, IBA, Karachi, Pakistan <i>Title: Smokeless Tobacco Consumption: Evidence from Pakistan</i> <p>Speakers (Online):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof. Dr Sahana Shetiya Hegde, Head, Dept. of Public Health Dentistry, Dr D.Y. Patil, Dental College & Hospital, Pune, India 2. Dr Zaruhi Grigoryan, RA, AUA, Armenia 	<p>Panel Organisers: Mr Waseem Janjua & Syed Ali Wasif Naqvi, SDPI</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Anum Kauser PRs: Ms Noor Javed LR: Mr Asim Zahoor</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Ms Sundas, Ms Huboor & Mr Hassan Facebook: https://bit.ly/3oUoLjM</p>

Concurrent Session B-7 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>ONLINE COVID and Pakistan’s Poorest Rural Households: Lessons from Impact and Recovery of Pakistan’s Most Disenfranchised Families <i>In collaboration with PPAF</i></p> <p>Moderator: Ms Ameena Ilahi, Country Director, Relief International, Pakistan Chair: Ms Roshan Khurshid Bharucha, Member BoG, SDPI & Chairperson, PPAF & SOS Villages</p>	
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Danyal Ahmed, Communications & Media Strategist, PPAF Ms Themrise Khan, Independent Researcher, Karachi, Pakistan <i>Title: Labour Migration and Systemic Resilience: A Sending State’s Perspective from Pakistan</i> Syed Hassaan Irfan, Visiting Lecturer, NDU, Islamabad, Pakistan 	<p>Panel Organisers: Mr Danyal Ahmed & Ms Shaheera Jalil Albasit, PPAF & Mr Ahmed Khaver, SDPI</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Aiman Khan PRs: Ms Hira Khan Tariq LR: Mr Ahmed Khaver</p> <p>SM Volunteer: Ms Bisma Shehzad Facebook: https://bit.ly/3pWaqCH</p>
Concurrent Session B-8 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>ONLINE Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) amid COVID-19: Assessment of Loss, Relief and Recovery Policies, Coping Strategies, and the Way Forward <i>In collaboration with IDRC</i></p> <p>Moderators: Dr Vaqar Ahmed & Mr Maaz Javed, SDPI Welcome Remarks: Dr Anindya Chatterjee, Regional Director, IDRC, India Guest of Honour: Mr Knut Ostby, Resident Representative, UNDP</p>	
	<p>Presentation: Dr Vaqar Ahmed & Mr Maaz Javed, SDPI</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Faheem Sardar, Economist, The World Bank, Pakistan Office Mr Muhammad Umer Saleem Bhatti, Section Officer WTO Wing, MoC, GoP 	<p>Panel Organisers: Mr Maaz Javed & Dr Vaqar Ahmed, SDPI Rapporteurs: PR: Mr Humayun Saeed PRs & LR: Ms Ayesha Ilyas</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Mr Ibrar, Ms Afra & Mr Mubashir Facebook: https://bit.ly/3yvZOHN</p>
<p>Lunch Break 1:30pm – 3:00pm</p>		

Concurrent Session B-9 3:00pm – 4:30pm	<p>HYBRID SESSION Building Back Better: A Roadmap for Sustainable and Inclusive Trade and Investment <i>In collaboration with ITC</i></p> <p>Moderator: Ms Huma Fakhar, CEO/ Founder Map capital & Soutana Rice, Pakistan Opening Remarks: Dr Syed Tauqir Shah, National Project Coordinator, ReMIT, ITC Keynote Speaker: Mr Muhammad Suaheh Ahmad Faruqui, Federal Commerce Secretary, GoP Concluding Remarks: Dr Vaqar Ahmed, SDPI</p>	
	<p>Speakers (In-Person): 1. Ms Fareena Mazhar, Federal Secretary, Bol, GoP</p> <p>Speakers (Online): 2. Dr Mohammad Saeed, Senior Adviser (Trade Facilitation), ITC, Geneva 3. Ms Dorothy Tembo, Deputy ED, ITC, Geneva, Switzerland 4. Ms Marion Jansen, Director Trade and Agriculture Directorate, OECD 5. Ambassador Xiangchen Zhang, Deputy DG, WTO, Geneva</p>	<p>Panel Organisers: Engr. Ahad Nazir & Mr Abdullah Khalid SDPI & Mr Shoaib Zafar, ITC</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Mr Umair Niazi PRs: Ms Sadia Rana LR: Mr Asim Zahoor</p> <p>Facebook: https://bit.ly/3EX3D1T</p>
Concurrent Session B-10 3:00pm – 5:00pm	<p>ONLINE Impact of COVID-19 on Progress towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in South Asia: Challenges and Way Forward for Regional Cooperation <i>In collaboration with UNESCAP-SSWA</i></p> <p>Chair: Mr Riaz Fatyana, MNA & Convener Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, GoP Opening Remarks: 1. Mr Adnan Aliani, Director, UNESCAP-SSWA, New Delhi, India 2. Dr Abid Q. Suleri, SDPI Moderator: Dr Rajan Sudesh Ratna, UNESCAP-SSWA, New Delhi, India</p>	
	<p>Speakers: 1. Dr Lutfi Rahimi, Head of Research, Biruni Institute, Afghanistan 2. Dr Fahmida Khatun, ED, CPD, Bangladesh 3. Mr Wangchuk Namgay, CPC, Development Cooperation Division, GNHC, Bhutan 4. Dr Nagesh Kumar, Director, ISID, India 5. Dr Sabyasachi Saha, Associate Professor, RIS, India 6. Ms Athifa Ibrahim, Managing Partner, EPIC Consulting, Maldives 7. Dr Posh Raj Pandey, Chairman, SAWTEE, Nepal 8. Dr Abid Q. Suleri, SDPI 9. Dr Dushni Weerakoon, ED, IPS, Sri Lanka</p>	<p>Panel Organisers: Dr Rajan Ratna, Ms Swayamsiddha Panda, UNESCAP; Ms Imrana Niazi & Ms Tayyaba Hanif, SDPI</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Mehdiia Naqvi PRs & LR: Ms Aiman Khan</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Mr Ibrar, Mr Hasan & Ms Huboor Facebook: https://bit.ly/3pYFL7V</p>

Concurrent Session B-11 3:00pm – 4:30pm	<p>ONLINE</p> <p>The Digital Economy: An Opportunity for Decent Work and Economic Growth <i>In Knowledge Partnership with IDS, UK</i></p> <p>Chair: Mr Haroon Sharif, Former Chairperson, BoI, GoP</p> <p>Special Remarks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Muhammad Jahanzeb Khan, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, GoP 2. Mr Parvez Iftikhar, Member PM's Task Force on IT & Telecom, International Consultant on ICT Policy & Regulation, Islamabad, Pakistan 	
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms Rabia Tabassum, SDPI <i>Title: E-commerce and SMEs in Pakistan</i> 2. Ms Li Stephanie Choo, Social Affairs Officer, ESCAP, New Delhi Office, India <i>Gender and E-commerce</i> 3. Dr Arslan Tariq Rana, AP, UCP, Lahore, Pakistan <i>Title: Social Clauses in Free Trade Agreements: An Efficient Tool to Improve Labour Standards?</i> 5. Dr Karishma Banga, Research Fellow, IDS, UK 	<p>Panel Organisers: Dr Shafqat Munir, Ms Rabia Tabssum, Mr Muhammad Awais Umar, SDPI & Dr Karishma Banga, IDS</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Hira Khan Tariq PRs & LR: Mr Ubaid ur Rehman</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Ms Afra & Mr Hamza Facebook: https://bit.ly/3oWFNhj</p>
Concurrent Session B-12 3:00pm – 4:30pm	<p>ONLINE</p> <p>Climate Change and Health Risks (<i>The New Norms of Global Health: How Climate Change Affects Health Risks in LMICs</i>) <i>In collaboration with The Aga Khan University</i></p> <p>Welcome Remarks: Ms Uzma T. Haroon, SDPI</p> <p>Chair: Ms Rukhsana Naveed, Parliamentary Secretary, MoCC, GoP</p> <p>Moderator: Prof. Dr Zulfiqar A. Bhutta, AKU, Karachi, Pakistan</p>	
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof. Dr Anthony Costello, Director, UCL IGH, UK <i>Title: Overview of Health Risks of Climate Change</i> 2. Dr Marina Romanello, Research and Data Lead, Lancet Climate Countdown <i>Title: Tracking Progress on Health and Climate Change</i> 3. Dr Razia Safdar, SDPI <i>Title: Health System Vulnerability / Resilience and Climate Change</i> 4. Prof. Dr Zafar Fatmi, Section Lead, AKU, Karachi, Pakistan <i>Title: Climate Change and Emerging Infectious Diseases</i> 5. Mr Haris Majeed, PhD Candidate, UofT, Canada <i>Title: Effects of Climate Change on Stunting and Wasting in Children: Case from Pakistan</i> 	<p>Panel Organisers: Prof. Dr Zulfiqar Bhutta, Mr Asghar Ali & Ms Diana McKay, AKU & Dr Fareeha Armughan, SDPI</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Nudrat Fatima PRs & LR: Syed Faisal Shah</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Ms Maryam, Ms Bisma & Ms Anmol Facebook: https://bit.ly/3yrTc44</p>

Day 3 8 December 2021 Evening Plenary 3.1 Gender Inclusive Development amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic 5:30pm – 7:00pm	
Moderator:	Syed Ali Wasif Naqvi, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Welcome Remarks:	Dr Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan In conversation with: Senator Sherry Rehman, President, Jinnah Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan <i>Title: A Gender Inclusive Development amidst the Pandemic</i>
Plenary Organisers:	Syed Wasif Naqvi, Mr Naimat Wazir & Mr Moazzam Bhatti, SDPI
Rapporteurs:	PR: Ms Ayesha Ilyas and Mr Umair Niazi PRs: Mr Ahmed Hassan LR: Mr Asim Zahoor
Facebook:	https://bit.ly/30qx79o

Day 3 8 December 2021 Evening Plenary 3.2 Launch of SDPI's Centre of Evidence Action Research 5:30pm – 7:00pm	
Moderator:	Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Chair:	Dr Ishrat Husain, Former Advisor to the Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms and Austerity, GoP
Scene Setting Presentation:	Dr Fareeha Armughan, Research Fellow, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Guest of Honour (Online):	Dr Asim Ijaz Khwaja, Director, Center for International Development and the Sumitomo-Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development & Professor of International Finance and Development, Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University, USA
Distinguished Panellists (In-Person)	
1. Ms Amna Aaqil, Director Executive Education, Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan	
2. Mr Naveed Aziz, Governance Adviser Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, Islamabad, Pakistan	
3. Mr Rana Kaiser Ishaque, Assistant Resident Representative, Chief, Democratic Governance Unit, United Nations Development Programme	
Distinguished Panellists (Online)	
4. Ms Maha Rehman, Director Policy, Mahbub ul Haq Research Centre, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan	
5. Mr Maroof A. Sayed, President & CEO Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan & Senior Fellow and Advisor Harvard's Evidence for Policy Design, UK	
Launch of Reports:	
1. Citizen Perception Survey – Access and Acceptability of Public Services	
2. Centre of Evidence Action Research – Impact Evaluation (RCT), EdTech Hub Consortium	
Plenary Organisers:	Dr Fareeha Armughan, Ms Nudrat Fatima & Ms Linta Noor, SDPI
Rapporteurs:	PR, PRs & LR: Ms Nudrat Fatima
Facebook:	https://bit.ly/3pWAZ4y

Day 4 9 December 2021 Morning Plenary 4.1 Humanitarian Crisis in Afghanistan: Need for Regional & Global Responses	
9:30 am – 11:00am	
Moderators:	Dr Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan & Mr Haroon Sharif, Former Chairperson, Board of Investment, Government of Pakistan
Distinguished Panellists:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. H.E. Ms Wendy Gilmour, Canada’s High Commissioner to Pakistan 2. Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi, Former Ambassador of Pakistan to China 3. Mr Chris Kaye, Country Director, World Food Programme, Pakistan 4. Ms Melinda Good, Country Director, The World Bank, Afghanistan 5. Syed Naveed Qamar, Pakistan Peoples Party
Panel Organisers:	Dr Shafqat Munir & Ms Zahra Khalid, SDPI
Rapporteurs:	PR: Ms Ayesha Ilyas and Ms Sundas Shafique PRs: Ms Sadia Rana and Mr Umair Niazi & LR: Ms Zahra Khalid
SM Volunteers: Facebook:	Ms Bisma, Ms Huboor & Mr Hasan https://bit.ly/31YLT8e
Tea Break 11:00am – 12:00pm	

Day 4 9 December 2021 Concurrent Sessions		
Concurrent Session C-1 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>HYBRID SESSION COP26 and the Way Ahead: Role of Parliaments in Climate Politics & Implementation of the Paris Agreement <i>In collaboration with GIZ GmbH and German Cooperation</i></p> <p>Moderator: Dr Abid Q. Suleri, SDPI Technical Presentation: Mr Hartmut Behrend, GIZ GmbH</p>	
	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;"> <p>Speakers (In-Person):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Thomas Seiler, Chargé d’Affaires a.i., Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan 2. Mr Riaz Fatyana, MNA & Convener Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, GoP 3. Senator Faisal Javed, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf <p>Speakers (Online)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ms Kathrin Henneberger, Green Party, Germany 5. Ms Romina Khurshid, PML-N 6. Mr Pär Holmgren, Green Party, Member of EU Parliament, Sweden 7. Ms Jytte Guteland, Member EU Parliament, Sweden 8. Professor Siegfried Balleis, Conservative Party, Germany </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;"> <p>Panel Organisers: Ms Maryam Shabbir & Mr Salman Danish, SDPI & Mr Hartmut Behrend, GIZ GmbH</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Syed Faisal Shah and Ms Maryam Shabbir PRs & LR: Ms Aiza Zaffar</p> <p>SM Volunteer: Ms Sundas Facebook: https://bit.ly/3EZYRRh</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Speakers (In-Person):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Thomas Seiler, Chargé d’Affaires a.i., Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan 2. Mr Riaz Fatyana, MNA & Convener Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, GoP 3. Senator Faisal Javed, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf <p>Speakers (Online)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ms Kathrin Henneberger, Green Party, Germany 5. Ms Romina Khurshid, PML-N 6. Mr Pär Holmgren, Green Party, Member of EU Parliament, Sweden 7. Ms Jytte Guteland, Member EU Parliament, Sweden 8. Professor Siegfried Balleis, Conservative Party, Germany
<p>Speakers (In-Person):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Thomas Seiler, Chargé d’Affaires a.i., Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan 2. Mr Riaz Fatyana, MNA & Convener Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, GoP 3. Senator Faisal Javed, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf <p>Speakers (Online)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ms Kathrin Henneberger, Green Party, Germany 5. Ms Romina Khurshid, PML-N 6. Mr Pär Holmgren, Green Party, Member of EU Parliament, Sweden 7. Ms Jytte Guteland, Member EU Parliament, Sweden 8. Professor Siegfried Balleis, Conservative Party, Germany 	<p>Panel Organisers: Ms Maryam Shabbir & Mr Salman Danish, SDPI & Mr Hartmut Behrend, GIZ GmbH</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Syed Faisal Shah and Ms Maryam Shabbir PRs & LR: Ms Aiza Zaffar</p> <p>SM Volunteer: Ms Sundas Facebook: https://bit.ly/3EZYRRh</p>	

Concurrent Session C-2 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>ONLINE Towards Post-COVID-19 Resilient Economies <i>In collaboration with UNESCAP Bangkok</i></p> <p>Moderator: Dr Sajid Amin Javed, SDPI</p> <p>Chair & Keynote Speaker: Dr Shamshad Akhtar, former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations</p> <p>Title: <i>Aligning Recovery from COVID-19 to the SDGs Agenda: Challenges and Options for Pakistan</i></p> <p>Welcome Remarks: Dr Abid Q. Suleri, SDPI</p> <p>Closing Remarks: Dr Imtiaz Ahmad, Economic Advisor, Finance Division, GoP</p>	
	<p>Technical Presentations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Hamza Ali Malik, Director, UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand Title: <i>Key Messages on Bringing SDGs back in Recovery from COVID-19</i> 2. Dr Sajid Amin, SDPI <p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Mr Shahid Naeem, Chief, International Trade Section, MoPD, GoP 4. Mr Ashfaq Tola, President, Tola Associates 5. Dr Nadia Farooq, Consultant, ADB 6. Mr Akhtiar Ahmed, Senior Joint Director, SBP 	<p>Panel Organisers: Dr Sajid Amin & Mr Abdullah Khalid, SDPI and Dr Hamza Malik, UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Zaina Noor and Muhammad Umar Ayaz PRs & LR: Ms Rabbia Sajjad</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Ms Huboor Sohail & Mr Hassan Raza Facebook: https://bit.ly/3DXXQIn</p>
Concurrent Session C-3 12:00pm – 1:30pm	<p>ONLINE The Urgency of Placing Young People at the Centre of Pakistan’s Post-COVID Development Agenda <i>In collaboration with PPAF</i></p> <p>Moderator: Ms Shaheera Jalil Albasit, Research Specialist, PPAF</p> <p>Chair: Ms Shandana Gulzar, MNA- PTI and Chair Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (SDG 5)</p>	
	<p>Speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Danyal Ahmed, Communications & Media Strategist, PPAF 2. Ms Mehr Shah, Director Knowledge Management and Communications, Karandaaz 3. Dr Zunaira Saqib, Founder & CEO, Mera Future.pk, Islamabad, Pakistan 4. Mr Dawar Hameed Butt, Research Manager, LAS, Pakistan 	<p>Panel Organisers: Mr Danyal Ahmed, & Ms Shaheera Jalil Albasit, PPAF & Mr Ahmed Khaver, SDPI</p> <p>Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Zainab Zaka PRs & LR: Ms Ezba Khan</p> <p>SM Volunteers: Syed Abdullah, Ms Afra & Mr Hamza Saeed Facebook: https://bit.ly/33IGYhQ</p>

Concurrent Session C-4 12:00pm – 1:30pm	ONLINE Moderator: Ms Sadia Satti, SDPI Chair: Mr Ali Kemal, Chief SDGs, MoPDR, GoP	Women’s Vulnerability in the COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons from South Asia <i>In collaboration with WFP</i>
	Speakers: 1. Dr Shaheen Ashraf Shah, WFP, Pakistan <i>Title: Gender-Responsive Intersectional Approaches in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic</i> 2. Dr Ayesha Nazuk Rao, AP, S3H NUST, Islamabad, Pakistan <i>Title: Impacts of COVID-19 on Women in Pakistan: Taking Necessary Steps towards Recovery</i> 3. Ms Saeeda Khan, PhD Scholar, UoM, Malaysia <i>Title: Family Violence towards Female Domestic Workers during COVID-19 Pandemic in Peshawar, Pakistan</i> 4. Dr Shahla Tabassum, HoD GS Dept. FJWU & Ms Nashia Ajaz, Lecturer, FJWU, Rawalpindi, Pakistan <i>Title: Single Motherhood Inflicted by Increased Widowhood and Divorce Amid Coronavirus Pandemic: Recommendations to Reduce Women’s Vulnerability</i> 5. Dr Syed Mohsin Kazmi, SDPI <i>Title: Factors affecting Financial Literacy of Women Entrepreneurs in the Informal Sector during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study of Pakistan</i>	Panel Organisers: Ms Sadia Satti & Mr Shahid Minhas, SDPI Rapporteurs: PR: Ms Anna Zafar PRs & LR: Ms Emaan Fatima Atif SM Volunteer: Ms Anmol Facebook: https://bit.ly/3dU2c8A
Lunch Break 1:30pm – 3:00pm		

Day 4 9 December 2021 Evening Plenary 4.2 Importance of Sustainable Development Goals for National Security in the Context of Current Regional Developments 3:00pm – 4:00pm	
Welcome Remarks & Host:	Dr Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
In Conversation with:	Dr Moeed Yusuf, National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister, Government of Pakistan <i>Title: Importance of Sustainable Development Goals for National Security in the Context of Current Regional Development</i>
Plenary Organiser:	Ms Sahar Basharat, SDPI
Rapporteurs:	PR: Mr Raja Taimoor Hassan PRs: Ms Amna Zaidi & Syed Faisal Shah LR: Syed Faisal Shah
Facebook:	https://bit.ly/33wmcfH
Working Tea	

Day 4 9 December 2021 Evening Plenary 4.3 CPEC in the Emerging Regional Scenario 4:30pm – 5:30pm	
Hosts:	Dr Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan & Mr Haroon Sharif, Former Chairperson, Board of Investment, Government of Pakistan
In Conversation with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Mr Khalid Mansoor, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, GoP ◇ Mr Li Yong, Economic and Commercial Counselor, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Plenary Organiser:	Ms Sahar Basharat, SDPI
Rapporteurs:	PR: Mr Raja Taimoor Hassan PRs: Ms Amna Zaidi and Mr Umair Niazi LR: Mr Asim Zahoor
Facebook:	https://bit.ly/3IMCH7D
Working Tea	

Day 4 9 December 2021 Evening Plenary 4.4 Pakistan's Environmental Social Governance Dimensions: Securing Access to Long-Term Capital <i>In collaboration with ACCA</i> 6:00pm – 7:30pm	
Welcome Remarks:	Dr Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Moderators:	Dr Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director & Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Message by:	H.E. Mr Imran Khan, Prime Minister, Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Chief Guest:	Mr Shaukat Fayaz Ahmed Tarin, Minister of State, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Government of Pakistan
Launch of Publication:	SDC Anthology <i>Sustainable Development in the Times of COVID-19</i>
Opening & Closing Remarks:	Mr Arif Masud Mirza, Regional Head Policy, Middle East & South Asia (MESA), Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
Keynote Speaker:	Ms Sadia Khan, Commissioner, Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), Government of Pakistan
Distinguished Panellists:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Hassan Daud Butt, Chief ED, KP-BOIT, GoP (Online) 2. Ms Ayla Majid, Founder & CEO Planetive (Online) 3. Mr Muhammad Shamoan Tariq, Vice Chief Investment Officer/ Partner, Tundra Fonder AB 4. Dr Hina Aslam, Research Fellow, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan <i>Title: ESG and Energy Transition</i>
Plenary Organisers:	Dr Sajid Amin & Dr Syed Mohsin Kazmi, SDPI & Mr Assad Hameed, ACCA
Rapporteurs:	PR: Ms Sadia Rana and Ms Sidra Khan PRs & LR: Ms Sidra Khan
Facebook:	https://bit.ly/3oVoXiQ

Day 4 9 December 2021 Evening/Closing Plenary 4.5 Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind 8:15pm – 8:30pm	
Moderator:	Ms Ayesha Ilyas, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Excellence Performance Award	Mr Inderyas Masih and Mr Muhammad Riaz, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Vote of Thanks:	Ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel, Chairperson, Board of Governors, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan
Plenary Organiser:	Ms Sahar Basharat, SDPI, Islamabad, Pakistan
Rapporteurs:	PR: Syed Faisal Shah PRs: Mr Ahmed Hassan & Syed Faisal Shah LR: Mr Asim Zahoor
Facebook:	https://bit.ly/3oVoXIQ

Abbreviations & Acronyms

ACCA	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
ADC	Additional Deputy Commissioner
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
ATTAC	Aim to Terminate Tobacco and Cancer
AUA	American University of Armenia
BIG-IDEAS	Bhutan Inclusive Growth and Innovation for Alternative Development Strategies
BISP	Benazir Income Support Programme
BoG	Board of Governors
Bol, GoP	Board of Investment, Government of Pakistan
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
BNU	Beaconhouse National University
CCP	Competition Commission of Pakistan
CDC, USA	Center for Disease Control, USA
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERP	Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
CIAT	International Center for Tropical Agriculture
COO	Chief Operating Officer
CPC	Chief Program Coordinator
CPD	Centre for Policy Dialogue
CSSR	Collective for Social Science Research
CUST	Capital University of Science & Technology

DG	Director General
EAC	Economic Advisory Council
ED	Executive Director
EU	European Union
FAO	The Food and Agriculture Organization
FCDO, UK	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, United Kingdom
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
FJWU	Fatima Jinnah Women University
FNF	Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom
GHSI	Global Health Strategists and Implementers
GIZ GmbH	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
GIZ LoGo	GIZ – Support to Local Governance Programme
GNHC	Gross National Happiness Commission
GoP	Government of Pakistan
HEC	Higher Education Commission of Pakistan
HRCF	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
HAS	Health Services Academy
IBA	Institute of Business Administration
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGH	Institute for Global Health
IM Sciences	Institute of Management Sciences
IPS	Institute of Policy Studies
IRI	International Republican Institute
ISID	Institute for Studies in Industrial Development
ISS	International Institute of Social Studies
IT	Information Technology
ITC	International Trade Centre
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
KP-BOIT	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade
LAS	Legal Aid Society
LG	Local Government
LUMS	Lahore University of Management Sciences
MHRC	Mahbub ul Haq Research Centre
MNA	Member National Assembly
MNFSR	Ministry of National Food Security & Research
MPA	Member Provincial Assembly
MoC, GoP	Ministry of Commerce, Government of Pakistan
MoCC, GoP	Ministry of Climate Change, Government of Pakistan
MoFEPT,GoP	Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Government of Pakistan
MoI&P, GoP	Ministry of Industries & Production, Government of Pakistan
MoNARCON, GoP	Ministry of Narcotics Control, Government of Pakistan
MoPD, GoP	Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Government of Pakistan
MoITT, GoP	Ministry of Information Technology & Telecom, Government of Pakistan
NCSW	National Commission on the Status of Women
NeCC	National e-Commerce Council
NIH	National Institute of Health
NISER	Nepal Institute for Social and Environmental Research

NPGP	National Poverty Graduation Programme
NRSP	National Rural Support Programme
NUST	National University of Sciences and Technology
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
ORF	Observer Research Foundation
PAGE	Pakistan Alliance for Girls Education
P@SHA	Pakistan Software Houses Association for IT &ITES
PBC	Pakistan Business Council
PBM	Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal
PC	Programme Coordinator
PD	Project Director
P&DB	Planning & Development Board
PIDE	Pakistan Institute of Development Economics
PIIA	Pakistan Institute of International Affairs
PILDAT	Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency
PIMS	Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences
PMLN	Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz
PNWC	Pakistan Navy War College
PPAF	Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund
PPP	Pakistan Peoples Party
PO	Programme Officer
PSGS	Pardee School of Global Studies
PSPA	Punjab Social Protection Authority
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf
PWA	Progressive Writers' Association
QAU	Quaid e Azam University
RF	Research Fellow
RIS	Research and Information System for Developing Countries
RSPN	Rural Support Programmes Network
SAA	Senior Advocacy Advisor
SAPM	Special Assistant to the Prime Minister
SAWTEE	South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment
SAU	Sindh Agriculture University
SBP	State Bank of Pakistan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDSB	Suleman Dawood School of Business
SDPI	Sustainable Development Policy Institute
SDS	Social Development Specialist
SECP	Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan
Sec.Gen.	Secretary General
SMEDA	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority
SNG	Sub-National Governance Programme
SPDC	Social Policy and Development Centre
SPRU	Social Protection Reform Unit
SPSU	Social Protection Strategy Unit
SRSO	Sindh Rural Support Organization
SSRO	Senior Scientific Research Officer
The Alliance	The Alliance of Bioversity International
The Union	International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease

TTCSPP	Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program
UAF	University of Agriculture Faisalabad
UCL	University College London
UCP	University of Central Punjab
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCAP-SSWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific: Sub-regional Office for South and South-West Asia
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UoK	University of Karachi
UoM	University of Malaya
U of T	University of Toronto
VAMO	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Officer
VC	Vice Chancellor
VRF	Visiting Research Fellow
WAPDA	Water & Power Development Authority
WEF	World Economic Forum
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Beyond the Pandemic: Leaving No One Behind

For every think tank, providing quality policy inputs through informed research, objective analyses and dialogue is raison d'être. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) is no different and its annual Sustainable Development anthology encapsulates all the areas on which SDPI has worked during the year and the key policy directions needed on national, regional, and global issues affecting Sustainable Development. Policy imperatives that have been the main impetus of all the chapters in this volume include (but are not limited to) the need to:

Develop a digital economy and a Digital Silk Road in Pakistan under a whole-of-government framework.

Adopt a robust public-oriented green policy to enhance adaptation capacity of vulnerable communities to prepare them for climate-induced risks.

Commit public sector financing to green infrastructure through robust valuation of biodiversity and climate risks.

Create a national 'Social Protection Council' & initiate social protections schemes around the inclusion and participation of local communities.

Improve food system resilience in South Asian countries through the digitalisation of food supply chains, social safety nets for farmers and better access to farm credit and storage facilities.

Add a chapter in the Constitution of Pakistan that provides a detailed explanation of devolving powers to the lowest tier of local government & reform the Local Government System so that voices of the marginalised are heard.

Re-envison nano and micro finance structures in urban and rural areas.

Focus on financial inclusion of youth for economic empowerment through skills development, vocational training, entrepreneurship support & political participation.

Invest in strengthening labour emigration and migrant protection policies to be able to respond more effectively to major external shocks.

Adopt a multistakeholder approach to make the public policymaking process gender inclusive.

Execute existing laws to tackle Gender-Based Violence rather than designing new ones.

Address policy gaps around issues such as violence & extremism through a multistakeholder engagement approach.

Implement the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC).

Integrate intersectionality approaches in humanitarian response programmes to identify and support the most marginalised sections of society.

Have a broader focus on Research and Development (R&D) and joint learning through inter-country coordination to achieve the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

