

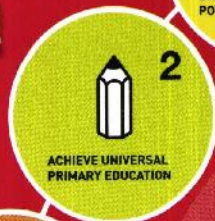
# Women of Pakistan

Millennium

Development

Goals

**Missed MDGs,  
Must achieve SDGs**



Diary 2015



Uks - A Research, Resource &  
Publication Centre on Women and Media



exclusively breast-fed children has remained static, with just a microscopic increase evident over the last 7 years.

According to the Demographic Health Survey, this percentage has risen only from 37.1 per cent in 2006-07 to 37.7 per cent in 2012-13. However, when it comes to the bottle-feeding rate, Pakistan has no close competitors; bottle-feeding rates have risen from an already undesirable 32.1 per cent in 2006-07 to a shamefully high 41 per cent in 2012-13.

Dr. Tabish mentioned that exclusive breastfeeding rates are lowest among educated women belonging to the upper socioeconomic strata, and that bottle-feeding rates are high among working women, women belonging to the upper income class, those residing in urban areas, and those seeking care from health professionals. According to conservative estimates, the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding can reduce neonatal mortality by over 10 per cent. There is reason

all the more to promote breastfeeding because it comes with no cost. Dr. Tabish said, Rs142 per unit is all that is needed to promote exclusive breastfeeding; even inflation were to be factored in, the sum would still not exceed Rs200 per unit. He pointed out that even though the culture of breastfeeding is highly acceptable in Pakistan, with more than 90 per cent of women putting their children to breast, the practice drops to 7 per cent in the next six months.

Summing up, Dr. Tabish said Pakistan has the highest bottle-feeding rates and lowest exclusive breastfeeding rates in South Asia. Showing the way forward to policy-makers, he recommended implementation of the breastfeeding and marketing code, effective targeting of healthcare providers for improved breastfeeding counselling; revision of undergraduate curriculum with a greater emphasis on good infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices; creation of baby-friendly health facilities; formulation of behaviour change

strategies to promote the culture of breastfeeding; development of effective messages on IYCF; and counselling of women of all education levels.

Speaking as chief guest, Saira urged Dr. Tabish to constitute a committee at the federal level for promotion of breastfeeding, and for effective coordination with the provinces in pursuance of the agenda of child survival. "Rather than holding a yearly activity, let us dedicate a year to the promotion of breastfeeding," she proposed, urging the electronic media to dedicate some time to Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives as well. She conceded that weaknesses at the implementation level had brought Pakistan to its current dismal state vis-à-vis child health.

Dr. Muhammad Ayub, nutrition specialist at the Planning Commission, attributed Pakistan's slack performance in the promotion of breastfeeding practices as "a national policy concern with serious economic implications, rather than just a

health issue."

Earlier, Silvia from Unicef counted the benefits of breastfeeding for the child, the mother, and the environment. She said early initiation of breastfeeding promotes stronger uterine contractions; reduces the likelihood of uterine bleeding; reduces the risk of hypothermia; and improves bonding between the mother and the child. She said mother's milk is uniquely suited to her baby's needs, providing 200 components that children need in the early days of life. She said, breastfed children are less prone to psychological problems and have a higher IQ as well. Breastfeeding, she said, is an environmentally sound practice because it requires no fossil fuels for its manufacturing, and reduces pollution as well. "Moreover, it has no cost. Infant formula, according to earlier research, costs \$600 to 800 per year," she added. A vote of thanks by Dr. Iqbal Raza, joint executive director of PIMS, was followed by lunch.

*The News - August 1, 2013*

Cutting back

## Family planning doesn't figure on govt's priority list

Poor service delivery, overpopulated population welfare department blamed for low contraceptive prevalence

SEHRISH WASIF  
ISLAMABAD

ISLAMABAD: Despite injecting billions of rupees to promote the use of contraceptives in the country, progress can only be described as dismal, with the government's role in providing family planning services continuously shrinking in the face of unmet demand.

Altogether, the government and donors have invested Rs39 billion to raise the contraceptive prevalence rate in the last decade, but it has increased by less than 1% a year, said Dr Ayesha Khan, chief executive officer of Research and Development Solutions (RADS) — a policy research organisation.

While talking to The Express Tribune, Dr Khan said lack of expenditure on providing family planning services to married couples had created a huge gap which was currently being filled by national and international donor agencies.

The private sector is providing over 50% of family planning services out of which 15% are provided by non-governmental organisations, while the government provides only 32%.

The government is spending 85% of its funding on paying salaries to the staff of population welfare departments, while the rest is spent on procuring and supplying family planning services and contraceptives, she added.

It is estimated that only 12% or 2.9 million of married women of reproductive age (MWRA) in Pakistan receive family planning services every year, which

UNMET DEMAND

32%

of family planning services are provided by the govt

is worrisome, Dr Khan stated.

According to the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2006-2007, in Pakistan there are around 23 million MWRA, out of which 5.5 million who want to avail family planning services and use contraceptives, but have not been able to and therefore have an unmet need, she said.

Some 5.1 million MWRA use modern contraceptive methods, while another 1.8 million using traditional contraceptive methods and 10.6 million do not use either.

"We have witnessed a shrinking role of the public sector in the delivery of family planning services that now serve 35% of users driven by inefficient supply of costly services, supply interruptions and weak governance." Government programmes should prioritise family planning service delivery and not rely on donors who might stop funding any time, she added.

Dr Khan said population welfare clinics serve only one or two clients a week on average, mainly because lady health workers (LHWs) do not refer their clients, according to research.

They also do not ask women with more than four children if

they need family planning services.

It is estimated that one LHW serves around four women a year, while community midwives who are trained for the job are not working as yet. She was of the view that population welfare departments were heavily overstuffed.

An official at the population welfare department who wished not to be named said, "The government isn't focused on population planning and service delivery and the situation has worsened after the devolution of the Ministry of Health under the

Government programmes should prioritise family planning service delivery and do not rely on donors who might stop funding any time.

Research and Development Solutions Chief Executive Officer **Dr Ayesha Khan**

18th Amendment."

There is lack of coordination and communication between the concerned departments, said the official.

"The available funds and resources for improving family planning services and procurement and supply of contraceptives are not being properly utilised and lack monitoring and evaluation," he added.

*The Express-Tribune  
August 1, 2013*



Mr Ishaq Dar, have been working alongside the Prime Minister during the visit. Particular emphasis is being paid to energy projects. On energy, the advice has been for Pakistan to be present where the decisions are being taken. The push is to get funding, and to get technology. Adopting the approach of drawing up a plan in Pakistan, and hoping that will be enough for international help to materialize, will not work. Pakistan must penetrate the mainstream discourse, which in international diplomacy is centered around human rights. Also known in Pakistan as a "sazish". Environment is another topic of concern in the international community. The Pakistani government's talent in the Environment Ministry was described by an official with experience of working with them, as "blunt knives".

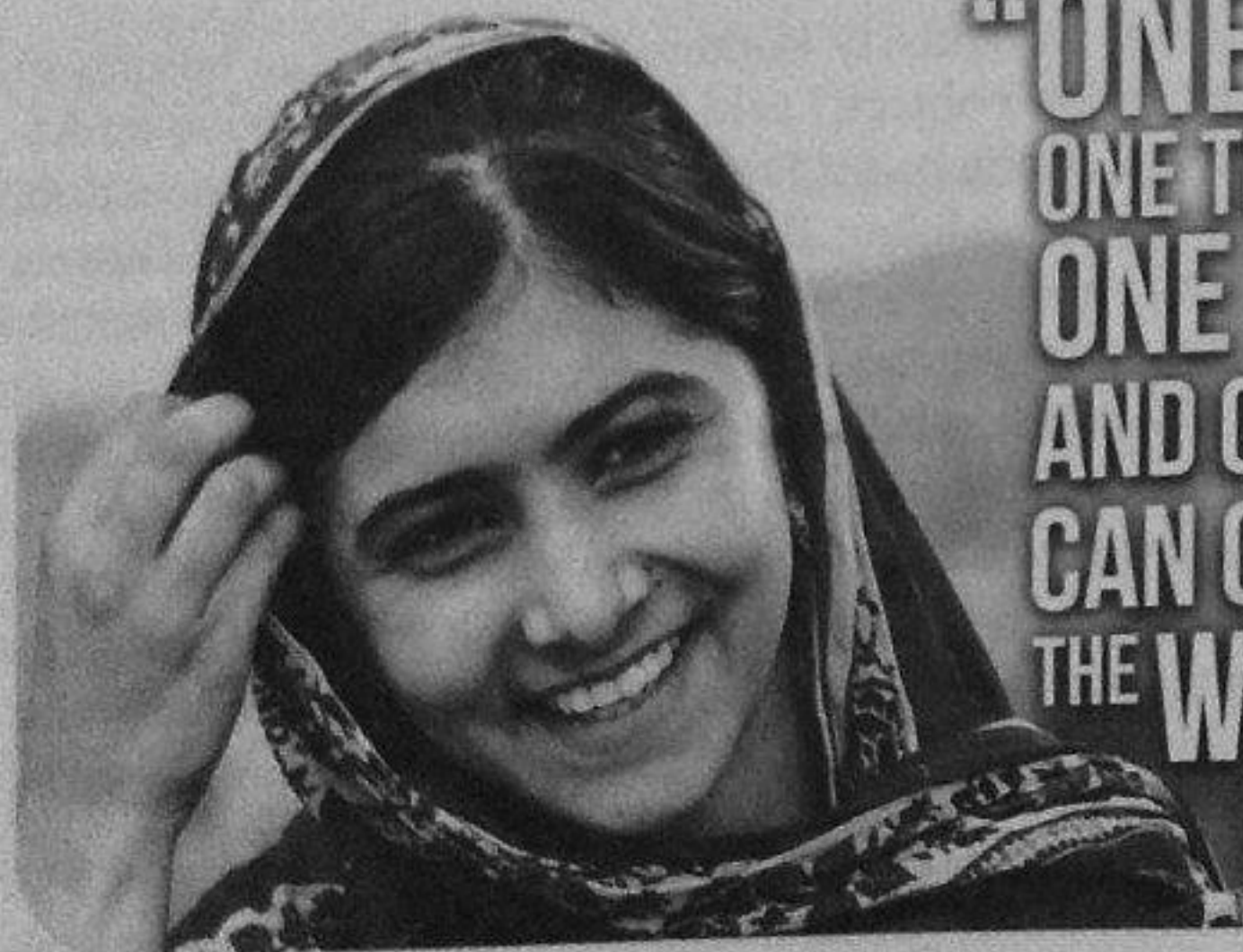
That the Environment Ministry is considered unimportant and unattractive in Pakistan and relegated more as a favour than with any sense of urgency, is one of the illustrations of the government's underestimation of the importance of the Ministry.

Tailpiece: Iran is likely to be assisting financially with IP funding. Loans on easy terms may be extended, since Pakistan has made no allocation for the pipeline in the budget of 2013-2014, and the project is to be completed January 1, 2013 if a daily penalty of \$3 million is to be avoided.

Rameeza Nizami, The Nation - September 27, 2013

**"ONE CHILD,  
ONE TEACHER,  
ONE BOOK,  
AND ONE PEN  
CAN CHANGE  
THE WORLD."**

- MALALA YOUSAFZAI



## High child mortality linked to inadequate immunisation

Low coverage of routine EPI major factor for unprotected children

SEHRISH WASIF  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan is among the top 10 countries where children lose their lives to vaccine-preventable diseases, according to the United Nations Children's Fund's UNICEF fact sheet.

"One out of five children is still unprotected against vaccine-preventable diseases and over 70% of these live in Afghanistan, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and South Africa," according to the fact sheet.

Talking to The Express Tribune, Dr Rana Muhammad Safdar, national programme manager for the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI), said in Pakistan, 46% children out of 6.1 million under the age of one year, are not fully immunised against vaccine-preventable diseases due to the low coverage of routine immunisation. "There is a need to increase the percentage of fully immunised children from

ALARMINGLY LOW

**9,000**

is the number of vaccinators in the country

75 to 90 percent by 2015 by increasing routine immunisation coverage from 54 to 80 per cent across the nation." It is estimated that out of 0.43 million children under the age of five in Pakistan, 88,000 die every year from vaccine-preventable diseases. This is a major reason behind the high infant mortality rate due to which Pakistan is lagging behind in achieving Millennium Development Goals 2015, he added.

Dr Safdar said that other challenge that Pakistan was facing included an inadequate number of fixed sites for vaccinating children and shortage of vaccinators. At present, there are only 9,000 vaccinators in the country. The distribution of vaccinators at the union council level, field monitoring and supervision, strategic, operational planning and coordination are in need of improvement while limited community engagement and demand creation compound

the problem.

"Some parents are still not making efforts to vaccinate their children under the EPI, either because they're unaware of its importance or because they are deprived of this facility in nearby healthcare centres," he

**"**There is a need to increase the percentage of fully immunised children from 75 to 90 per cent by 2015

EPI National Programme Manager Dr Rana Muhammad Safdar

said. "However, the government will be launching a new immunisation policy in October-November 2013 and will also finalise a five-year strategic plan for 2014-2018 by December this year to address these issues."

EPI is facing a shortage of \$15 million to carry out an anti-measles campaign across the country. "We've to carry out an anti-measles campaign before the next spring season to save lives of millions of children and for that we have requested the Finance Division for financial assistance."

Express-Tribune - Oct 2, 2013



# Pakistan to miss Millennium Development Goals targets

By Mehtab Haider

ISLAMABAD: Despite government's Rs456 billion annual allocations for education sector supplemented by multi-million dollar funding by multilateral and bilateral donors, Pakistan will not be able to meet its targets for Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 primarily due to governance and management issues.

In a bid to support development of this sector, the embassy for the Kingdom of Netherlands is investing 10 million Euros and 14 million Euros in two multi-year education projects in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, respectively.

Accordingly, these funds are being utilised for the improvement of quality of infrastructure, teaching, learning and community engagement towards education and schooling of approximately 135,000 students in 600 government schools in three districts of Balochistan (Quetta, Qila Abdullah and Mastung) and in Battagram district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

One of embassy's key implementing partners is an international nongovernment organisation namely 'Save the Children'. The NGO's

Senior Director Education and Child Development Shahzad S. Mithani said these projects are designed and planned, in partnership with education departments in both the provinces along with local partner organisations, to address learning outcomes and development of students in the formative years, in addition to supporting teacher's capacity building, improved management and governance. Talking to The News, he reiterated the fact that what we see as symptoms, i.e., drop out, teacher absenteeism, absence of school monitoring or resource allocation without factoring demographic shifts is a result of limited planning and lack of good governance.

He further said that according to existing enrolment and retention trends more than 80 percent of the students enrolled drop out before they reach grade six, reflecting an alarming trend. Some of the basic reasons for this trend are lack of adequate facilities especially for girls and minimum relevance to what is taught in schools with students' daily lives, he added.

There is only one girl primary school for every three primary schools for boys,

though numbers of boys and girls are equal if one looks at the demographics. This ratio becomes worse for middle and secondary schools.

Good responsive planning and monitoring can actually address these basic issues, he believed, saying that the public sector would have to take a leading role to set the pace and direction for solving the lingering challenges and there is no alternative to that.

He said that the enrolment in targeted areas of Balochistan has already jumped by 35 percent. The project's completion date is November 2014.

The project for Balochistan is expected to establish 105 early childhood centers, besides up-gradation of schools and refurbishing of 340 schools with missing facilities.

He said that the administrative cost was no more than 10 percent. He added the financial audits of these projects would be carried forward by third party as well as Save the Children's global audit to ensure transparency.

*The News - Feb 2, 2013*

## PIMS ADVOCACY SEMINAR

# Pakistan makes zero progress in exclusive breastfeeding in seven years

Shahina Maqbool

Islamabad

While the infant formula industry happily reaps the dividends of its aggressive marketing of a product that is scientifically proven to be detrimental to child health, cross-country comparisons show Pakistan lagging behind every South Asian country, both in terms of timely initiation of breastfeeding, as well as exclusive breastfeeding.

Serious misalignment of priorities at the policy-making and implementation levels, coupled with lack of attention to the creation of an enabling environment for promotion of breastfeeding, are two key impediments that need to be overcome if Pakistan wants to protect itself from being

## Wins bottle-feeding race in South Asia

known for all the wrong reasons in the discipline of child survival and development. Breastfeeding cannot be promoted in the absence of effective crackdown on the unethical promotion of infant formula by the industry; it can also not be promoted in the absence of strictest possible implementation of the breastfeeding and marketing code, and revitalisation of the currently dormant Infant Feeding Board.

Together with the above interventions, the creation of mother-friendly workplaces, and motivation of gynaecologists and lady health workers to advocate in favour of breastfeeding through-

out the pregnancy term, can collectively help Pakistan inch closer to those winning the race on exclusive breastfeeding in the region.

These concerns and thoughts were echoed at a Breastfeeding Advocacy Seminar organised Friday by the Department of Paediatrics, Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, in collaboration with Unicef, the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (NHSRC), and the South Asian Infant Feeding Research Network Pakistan. Arranged to commemorate World Breastfeeding Week, the seminar had Minister

for NHSRC Saira Afzal Tarar as the chief guest.

The head of paediatrics at PIMS Dr. Tabish Hazir stole the day with his effective presentation skills and might of knowledge. Referring to children who have had no exclusive breastfeeding (defined as complete reliance on breast milk, with no additional food or water being given to a newborn for the first six months of life), he informed that their risk of dying among is 14 times higher as compared to children who are exclusively breast-fed. They also have an 11 times higher risk of dying of diarrhoea. Focusing exclusively on where Pakistan stands, Dr. Tabish informed that the percentage of



of disaster, providing information and sources of assistance to people displaced from their homes. There are examples from around the world that illustrate the fact that education can be improved by media interventions. For instance, a project in Nicaragua produced a radio programme that improved test scores in maths among primary students. People in disaster situations need information as much as water, food, medicine or shelter. Information bestows power and can save lives, livelihoods and resources. In conflict-stricken Darfur, for example, the BBC World Service Trust used local shortwave radio to deliver lifesaving information on issues such as malaria prevention to displaced populations who were not in camps. The extent of damage done in the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan came to be known initially only through media reports. Later, the media played a critical role in galvanising relief efforts led by thousands of volunteers from all over the country and abroad.

Research shows that development-related media messages have resulted in changes in behaviour. For example, a 2001 study found that 32 percent (38 percent among teenagers) of African respondents with high exposure to Soul City TV said they always use condoms, compared to 31 percent with medium exposure and 28 percent with low exposure. Uneducated women in Zambia who are regularly exposed to broadcast media are twice as likely to use birth control as those exposed to no media. Media is a vital and important vehicle for providing information to local communities such as community radio, which is an important source for relaying information as well as building communal ties. Media also shapes public opinion and influences public policy. An example is the sixteen-fold increase in newspaper coverage of children and adolescents in Brazil which led to a Brazilian children and adolescent rights advocacy organization. But these past examples do not absolve the media of their current responsibility of reaching out to the people on information, analysis and updates on MDGs, and the progress made so far.

Media in some countries has also contributed to specific areas discussed in the MDGs, but that is insufficient. For example, though the media has played a vital role in spreading awareness on HIV and AIDS in the last two decades, to attain the Millennium goal of reduction in infection rates, a lot more needs to be done. There is an urgent need to evaluate the work that has been done and to re-examine the global media strategies for the future. It is also imperative that media takes positive action in a manner parallel to the international and national agencies, NGOs, the private sector and the medical profession dealing with HIV/AIDS. This can help reverse the effects of HIV/AIDS. Thus, it can safely be said that most of the media around the globe has failed to convey specific messages/reporting on MDGs. Much of the money in media development today, in fact, goes not to building independent, professional media, but to paying for issue-specific programmes.

We have missed the MDGs, but we do have the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Media coverage of SDGs must have gender as a crosscutting theme. This can be done through gender integration, which requires the media to realise that women's views, perceptions, needs and aspirations shape the development agenda as much as those of men. This requires that gender be integrated into media policy planning,

programming, implementation and information dissemination. Gender mainstreaming is a means of consciously raising the visibility and support to women's contributions to poverty alleviation. It is important to note that in achieving gender equality there is a conscious effort to ensure that one's rights or opportunities do not depend on being male or female. Unfortunately, most media fails to be aware of the fact that its efforts and contributions to poverty reduction must be coupled with actions to eliminate gender inequalities in order to promote sustainable human development.

The question that needs to be asked is not only what can be done to implement SDGs in Pakistan but also how can the media be made partners in this process? First of all, the approach needs to be changed. They should be structured as Pakistani programmes or programmes for Pakistanis, not government of Pakistan's programmes. There also has to be political will and commitment to take development messages forward, and also to be participatory. There has to be firm belief that SDGs are not just programmes/projects, but a movement which requires wholehearted commitment from all segments of society.

The media needs to be mobilized at every level. Language barriers need to be overcome. Although Urdu is the national language and is widely spoken, people in some districts are restricted to communicating in their local dialects only, and hence information should be given in the language of that area. Also, interactive methods of communication, such as theatre, can lead to a better response. Understanding that we are largely a segregated society, we should keep in mind the various strata of society. An effective media strategy has to be a broad-based strategy giving space to various segments such as, women, minorities, youth/children and also keeping them in one loop. The most important factor that needs to be utilized is Pakistan's private media and tele-communication network. Pakistan has one of the largest cellular phone networks in Asia, and people at practically every rung of the socio-economic ladder have access to cell phones. Radio and informal messages through cell phones can motivate people and help achieve set goals.

In order for the media to contribute to the achievement of SDGs, the information gap between the media and the SDGs needs to be bridged. Coordination between the two is required, such as updating the media about progress regarding the goals. A full-fledged communication strategy should be developed with regard to taking forward best practices and tracking down failures and reasons. It needs to be emphasized that the SDGs need to be reported through the gender lens and in languages of different communities. The youth needs to be enlightened about this movement as well, in order to ensure more effective implementation. One of the most important steps that needs to be taken is a higher level of journalistic training about the concepts of SDGs and how to report more sensitively through continuous orientation and update.

One wonders if all this will be given any thought by our media? And by our governments?

Wishing you a happy, safe and peaceful new year!

Tasneem Ahmar  
Director, Uks Research Centre



72 percent by 2013. Total number of broadband subscribers has touched 2.5 million. Total number of telephone subscribers (both fixed line and cellular) was 128.1 million, including 122.1 million subscribing to cellular phones. Total number of broadband subscribers is 2.51 million.

Daily Times - January 19, 2014

### **MDGs: Pakistan off-track on 16 targets**

Pakistan is far away from achieving 16 targets set in the year 2000 and to be realised in 2015, reveals Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report-2013. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a set of 8 goals adopted by 189 countries, including Pakistan in 2000 and to be achieved by 2015.

The aim of Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report-2013 is to assess progress towards achievement of the goals, challenges towards achievement and help for post-2015 development agenda for Pakistan. According to the report, Pakistan is totally off-track on all three targets about the goal to achieve Universal Primary Education. Pakistan is also off-track on two targets out of three to Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger. The report says that Pakistan is off-track on four targets out of five in the achievement of Promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

Likewise, Pakistan is off-track on five targets out of six about Reducing Child Mortality. Pakistan is also off-track on all indicators to achieve goal to improve Maternal Health, etc. About the goal of Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger, Pakistan is off-track in two targets while on track on one out of three targets. Under MDG-1, Pakistan aims to halve by 2015, the proportion of people living below the poverty line, to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, and to halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. There has been persistent downward trend in poverty incidence over the past decade - the percentage of population below the poverty line fell from 34.5 percent in 2001/02 to 12.4 percent in 2010/11. Pakistan is on track to achieve the target with regard to poverty. One of the factors contributing to this drop may include increased allocations to the poor under the Benazir Income Support Programme.

Those contributing to poverty include natural and man-made disasters, slow economic growth, the global recession and higher food inflation. Pakistan's employment to population ratio increased from 27.1 percent in 2001/02 to 30.9 percent in 2010-11, making the prospects of full employment by 2015 highly unlikely. The report further says that Pakistan

is totally off-track on three targets of the goal to achieve Universal Primary Education. The MDG-2 for Pakistan targets 100 percent primary school enrolment, 100 percent completion of education from grade (class) 1-5 and 88 percent literacy rate. The literacy rate is 58 percent overall, but this is highly skewed toward males - 70 percent of males are literate compared to 47 percent of females.

About the goal to Promote Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, the share of women in non-agriculture wage employment is 10.45 percent in 2010/11, still short of the 14 percent target. In short, Pakistan has shown consistent, though slow, progress on many of the Millennium Development Goals. The Report-2013 was launched by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

While addressing the launching ceremony, Ahsan Iqbal expressed dissatisfaction over the Report-2013 saying that it is a matter of shame for us. He said, "It's a wakeup call for us. We have failed to invest in our people. We are completely less developed country because we are among the bottom ten countries for achieving goals. He said that these goals are relevant to our future and we failed to justify it. "The report reflects that it is a challenge for us and we will set new goals and indicators and our government would achieve them in future," he said.

He said the role of the provinces has increased after the passage of 18th Amendment. He said federal government is answerable about the contract made with international community, but now the delivery on achievement of these goals has become ownership of provinces. He said district managements have to play key role in achieving these goals.

He said the Planning Commission has called 'National Social Summit' on January 28 to discuss as to how we could bring emergency in education sector. He said there is need to launch campaign at the national level for education. He said in this regard media should play a positive role.

Haoliang Xu, UN Assistant Secretary General/UNDP Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific said while addressing the ceremony that Sri Lanka achieved the goals despite civil war. Similarly, Bangladesh also achieved many goals despite political instability. He said economic development is linked with social development. He said we cannot run long-time economic policy without social development. He said the accountability of the government, good governance and use of better resources and capacity building in civil structure would help achieve the goals and targets.

Naveed Butt, Business Recorder - January 23, 2014



# 'Primary school survival rate 70% in Pakistan'

ISLAMABAD: Paris UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova has said the primary school survival rate is 70 per cent in Pakistan, while a gender gap still exists.

She said the survival rate for girls in primary schools was 68 percent compared to 71 percent for boys.

She made these points in her message on the International Literacy Day.

She said Punjab, primary school survival rate today was better with 76 percent, but not without a gender gap of 8 percent with the girls' survival rate at 72 percent compared to 80 percent for boys.

She pointed out the better average per student spending in primary level (ages 5 to 9) in Punjab, which was Rs 6,998 compared to the national average.

She said in Balochistan, although almost the same amount of money, Rs 6,985, was being spent, but the primary school survival rate was only 53 percent. The girls' survival rate was slightly better with 54 per-cent than that of boys, which was 52 percent, she added.

She said in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, the primary school survival rate was 67 percent, which was lower than the national average of 70 percent. She added that the gender gap also existed with girls' survival rate at 65 percent compared to 68 percent for boys.

She mentioned that per student education expenditure in

primary level (ages 5 to 9) in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa was Rs 8,638.

Islamabad UNESCO Director Dr Kozue Kay Nagata drew on the point made by Irina Bokova and highlighted its relevance in Pakistan's context.

Referring to a recent national survey carried out by the Education Ministry, Trainings and Standards in Higher Education, Dr Nagata pointed out that in Sindh, the primary school survival rate was 63 per-cent. She said the girls' survival rate was 67 percent compared to 60 percent for boys. Per student education expenditure in primary level (ages 5 to 9) in Sindh was Rs 5,019.

"Literacy is much more than an educational priority - it is the ultimate investment in the future and the first step towards all the new forms of literacy required in the 21st century. We wish to see a century where every child is able to read and to use this skill to gain autonomy."

Like every year, the UNESCO supported the relevant federal and provincial governments and NGOs working for the promotion of literacy, to organise meaningful events in their respective constituencies to mark this year's International Literacy Day.

A total of 21 events (two seminars in Karachi, three in Lahore, two in Quetta, two in Peshawar, one literacy walk each in Islamabad and Peshawar, one seminar each in

Sialkot, Muzaffargarh, Rahim Yar Khan, Multan and Hafizabad and one seminar each in five districts of Balochistan, Pishin, Ziarat, Nushki and Qilla Saifullah, were being organised by relevant stakeholders with the UNESCO's support.

These events include advocacy campaigns on LED digital screens (electronic hording boards) in Islamabad, literacy walks, seminars, speeches and art competitions, and seminars of teachers' associations. About nine events were being organised in the rural communities to mobilise the communities to send their children to schools.

Dr Nagata underscored: "Illiteracy in Pakistan has fallen over the last two decades, thanks to the government and people of Pakistan for their efforts in working towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals. Today, 70 percent of Pakistani youth can read and write. In 20 years, illiteracy has been reduced significantly."

However, she also emphasised the need to do more to improve the literacy rate in the country and said: "The proportion of population in Pakistan lacking basic reading and writing skills is too high. This is a serious obstacle in the development of the society".

APP, Daily Times  
September 10, 2013



Coordinator for GCAP South Asia, said that the allocations for health and education, which are already low, are frequently slashed for sparing resources for other areas.

Rana Riaz Saeed, Member National Steering Committee GCAP, said poverty is causing social and political damage, especially in the context of war against terror and after the 2010 floods.

According to independent research studies, about 45 percent population of Pakistan lives below poverty line (\$1 per day). About 7.8 percent people are unemployed, 46.8 percent of them unable to join any employment if available because of their poor health. More than 70 percent of the population does not have access to safe drinking water, which means increase in deadly diseases like Hepatitis and TB. Per capita income has dropped from \$960 to \$661, he said. Fayyaz Baqir, Director of Akhtar Hameed Khan Centre, also spoke.

Israr Khan, The News – May 22, 2011

## **Pakistan Millennium Development Goals, Annual Report 2013: Planning Commission Government of Pakistan**

### **Post-2015 Consultations in Pakistan**

The UN selected Pakistan one of the 100 countries for the national consultations. UNDP, on behalf of the UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, conducted national consultations to gather inputs and feedback from different stakeholders on the Pakistan specific priorities for the Post 2015 Development Agenda. The consultation process in Pakistan started on the 20th December 2012. Until end of March 2013, more than 21,987 people around Pakistan belonging to different professions and representing diverse communities were consulted through face to face meetings / workshops and an online survey. The people who participated in the process included representatives from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), farmers, labourers, employers and workers associations, religious, ethnic and sexual minorities, students, parliamentarians, academia, development partners including donors and national staff of UN agencies, disabled persons, government officials at the federal and provincial levels, media, private sector, internally displaced people, women organizations etc. Through the online survey, feedback from across Pakistan was gathered. The inputs were gathered by employing different formats including face to face discussions, online survey, focus groups discussions, seminars and panel discussions.

To benefit from the existing knowledge base, different policy documents / strategies, situational analyses, thematic reports etc were used to draw key messages for the post 2015 agenda. A few reports to mention here include the Meta Analysis Report / Common Country Assessment 2011 undertaken by the UN System for the second generation One UN Programme in Pakistan, the Planning Commission's Framework for Economic Growth 2011, Global Peace Index, Pakistan's Participatory Poverty Assessment National Report 2013, the Global Competitiveness Report 2012-13, National and Provincial MDGs Reports, National Climate Change Policy 2012, Household Integrated Economic Survey 2010-11 and a number of other documents.

## **Priority Areas for Post-2015**

### **1. Reflections on the MDG framework**

One of the key messages, especially from the civil society and academia, that emerged during the consultations was that the MDGs framework, though useful in its own right, would have made more impact had it been localized at the provincial level at the onset. A large number of respondents doubted the reliability of the national data used for MDGs monitoring and progress reporting. A useful recommendation for the post 2015 development agenda is that there should be adequate investment in developing the capacities of statistical machineries to generate, compile and analyze timely, reliable and accessible (to public at large) data. One of the feedbacks was that while the government should lead the process of progress reporting on the post 2015 MDGs framework, it should also involve the civil society and academia in this process to help ensure broader acceptability for the government reports. The respondents also proposed that the post 2015 development agenda should be guided by the principles of human rights. The new development framework must include issues like violence against women, right to freedom of information and expression, reproductive rights, health and education rights etc. The participants also proposed that it should be binding on the states to put in place appropriate policies, plans, budgetary frameworks and legislation to pursue the post 2015 development agenda.

### **2. Peace and security**

Peace and security emerged as the most critical development challenge for Pakistan. There was a complete convergence among the respondents that without resolving the issues concerning security, law and order in the country, the achievements of other development targets will remain



## Progress on MDGs still a mirage

Leaning on the bed for support, Nadra was collecting her personal effects — comb, mug, a few medicines — in a plastic bag in this general ward of a government hospital.

Discharged early in the morning, she had been waiting for her husband ever since. Her home was a seven-hour bus ride away, and she wanted to get there before sunset. She smiled faintly when I asked her a question, nodding in acknowledgement of my concern.

She had been brought to this Karachi hospital from Mirpurkhas, having developed a post-natal gynaecological complication that required surgery — a facility that was not available in her hometown.

The 27-year-old Nadra, the mother of four girls aged between eight years and five weeks, has never been to school, a nurse told Dawn. And yet, she is amongst the lucky women in Pakistan whose family cared enough to provide her the medical care she needed.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is expected to make an address at the 68th session of the UN General Assembly next week, where countries are expected (though not required) to present their performance reports on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Is Pakistan prepared?

There are reasons to be doubtful.

Despite all the plans, the state has over the years not been able to keep up with the challenge of extending a basic social infrastructure cover to vulnerable segments of society. Focus on improvements in maternal health, for example, can be gauged from the fact that the latest data available is six years old. According to figures in the draft of the MDG progress report, which is yet to be finalised, the maternal mortality ratio was 276 per 100,000 live births in 2006-07, with a target of reduction to 140 by 2015. The draft report has been made available to Dawn by the Planning Commission of Pakistan.

The country is behind the targets in all the MDG areas, according to the UN country snapshot available online. But the lack of focus does not stop the leadership from taking large entourages to UN meetings that are meant to track MDG progress.

This year's UN General Assembly session is to commence on Sept 22. But "it will take more time to finalise the country report since after the [passage of the] 18th Amendment, it is absolutely necessary to consult

the provinces on issues related to public health and education in particular," senior economist Shahid Naeem told Dawn over the telephone from Islamabad. "We intend to incorporate their input before publishing it."

He said that the draft progress report had been dispatched to the Pakistan mission to the UN and relevant officers of the Pakistan embassy in Washington in the second week of September, and is confident that the report will be ready before the prime minister starts his journey next week.

The draft of the progress report falls short of its purpose: report progress against 2013 MDGs benchmarks. Pakistan pledged to reduce poverty to 13 per cent by 2015. On this count, the draft says: "... there is no consensus definition available to measure poverty. ... The incidence of poverty, based on official poverty-estimation methodology and PSLM [Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurements Survey] data sets, appears to have reached closer to target. Due to some technical differences in estimation methodology, Pakistan has not reported exact poverty headcount numbers since 2007-08".

The draft mentions the Poverty Alleviation Fund and the Benazir Income Support Programme but the outcome of these interventions in terms of catapulting the country towards MDG progress is not clear.

"The methodology argument is a cover-up," commented a senior officer who is in the know. "The poverty data has not been collected or/and made public to avoid embarrassment." Similarly, "the draft appears to have been prepared in haste," commented an economist who was shunted out of government during Shaukat Aziz's prime ministerial tenure. "It is documentary proof of the ruling coterie's attitude towards vulnerable people and their problems."

But a senior member of the current economic team blamed past governments for the lack of progress towards development objectives. "It would be unfair to blame a three-month-old government for the failings of the state over the past 13 years," the gentleman pointed out.

For eight of the 13 years since Pakistan made its MDG pledges, the country was ruled by Gen Musharraf; the next five years saw a PPP-led coalition government. Without doubt, they are responsible for not doing enough. And yet the PML-N, which made passing references to the MDGs at just two points in its 110-page election manifesto, cannot claim to have integrated them into its economic strategy.



# No chance to achieve edu sector MDGs: Speakers

OUR STAFF REPORTER

teacher ratio, etc.

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE) and Society for Access to Quality Education (SAQE) organised a consultation on 'Education for All: Role of Media' on Tuesday.

Highlighting the role of media in 21st Century where it is esteemed to be one of the founding pillars of modern state in reshaping the lives of the citizens, participants were welcomed on behalf of National Coordinator Zehra Arshad. The purpose of the meeting was to create a strong liaison between media and civil society to bridge the gaps for the progression and enactment of article 25-A after the 18th Constitutional Amendment.

Talking to the participants Javed Hasan Aly, a civil servant, said government educational institutions are getting collapsed with each passing day and the reasons are many. In America 90 per cent of the children go to public schools where as in Pakistan only those find their way to public schools who cannot afford private schools. This lack of trust of is the outcome of multiple factors, such as missing facilities in schools, student

He further added that in 1950, Pakistan and Malaysia were enjoying the same growth, which in case of Pakistan consistently deteriorated, and in case of Malaysia, accelerated due to their social preparedness. Countries such as China, Malaysia, South Korea invested adequately in human capital thus during the last 10 years they achieved milestones in terms of progress.

He emphasised the need for educating the girls who are worst effected in all provinces. With a cumulative 57.7 per cent of literacy and highest dropout rate in the world, Pakistan stands at second in terms of primary out of school children. Mushrooming of Maddariss which count to be around 13000 in Pakistan are just because they provide food, shelter and education.

This hunger stricken nation cannot afford to breed mindsets not to accept difference of opinion. He further highlighted that government so far could not provide education to all at no cost, which Maddariss are effectively providing.

Moreover the government has failed to allocate

the promised 4 per cent of GDP to education. It has substantially failed to utilise the allocated budget, which is undermining the education sector.

Education Task Force report grimly highlighted that Pakistan is far behind in achieving MDGs and EFA due it its 7 million children out of school and those 3 million who will never find their way to school. There is a zero per cent chance that Pakistan would be able to achieve MDGs. To ensure education for all, Pakistan need to intake all the children into its schools and simultaneously raising the education budget from 2 percent to 4 percent and then to 7 percent as pledged. Another distinguished speaker Zaigham Khan referred to the research work of Amratiya San and Dr Mahboob Ul Haq, how Asian Tigers covered 100 years distance in 10 years. Traditional economists could not explain how Korea and Malaysia made progress during the past years. China's progress was rapid than India due to their social preparedness that was provided in the form of health and education.

*The Nation - May 16, 2012*

Maternal Health:

## 'Pakistan Cannot Achieve MDG 5 by 2015'

**Lack of coordination, credible data cited as factor**  
**SEHRISH WASIF**  
**ISLAMABAD**

Pakistan will not be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 5, that relate to bringing about an improvement in maternal health, by the targeted year of 2015. This was stated by Special Adviser to the Prime Minister and Chairperson National Assembly Special Committee on MDGs Shahnaz Wazir Ali on Thursday.

She was addressing participants at a National Policy Dialogue on Monitoring Implementation of MDG 5 in Pakistan at a local hotel.

Ali said dictatorship, slow pace of work, lack of integrated coordination and planning between the federal and provincial ministries after the 18th amendment and unavailability of credible data on health and family planning are major factors behind the failure to achieve the set targets on time.

She expressed concern over low prevalence of safe family planning measures which is one of the major reasons behind high maternal mortality rate in Balochistan despite heavy funding. Ali revealed that allocations under the NFC Award for Population Welfare were need-based rather than determined by population size and hoped that these would be used to promote maternal health. "Now the provinces

have to come up with strategies to enable the country to achieve the targets. The federal government will, however continue to offer financial support," she said.

Presenting the findings of the research on progress achieved so far under the MDG 5, Khawar Mumtaz said that the maternal mortality rate

tives or facilities, he added.

Moreover, the report presented by Mumtaz stated that widespread unmet need for family planning among women and no safe abortion or post-abortion care is available across the country. In rural areas, basic health units have inadequate staff while some are inaccessible due to inconvenient location. A whole range of unregulated informal and formal health services result in widespread quackery, negligence and malpractice.

MNA Nafisa Shah said the committee on MDGs should come up with guidelines to address issues regarding family planning and health. She recommended better coordination between health and population welfare departments to avoid duplication of services and effort after the 18th amendment.

Meanwhile, Secretary Federal Bureau of Statistics Sohail Ahmed emphasised on the need for federal government to re-invent its role post-18th amendment for coordination of international commitments and to serve as a bridge between provinces and donors for achievement of MDGs. He suggested the federal government should offer matching grants to provinces for achievement of MDGs.

The event was organised by Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre.

ABYSMAL

785

per 100,000 live births is the maternal mortality rate in Balochistan

(MMR) is 276 per 100,000 live births in the country which needs to be reduced to 140 by 2015. Similarly, contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) is 30% which needs to be increased to 55% by 2015, while total fertility rate (TFR) is 4.1 live births per woman which need to be reduced to 2.1.

In Balochistan, MMR is 785 per 100,000; CPR is 14%, while TFR is 4.1. Discussing the appalling situation in his province, Balochistan Health Minister Haji Ainullah Shams said the term family planning is taken as a plan for not having children in the province, which needs to change.

Similarly the province is deprived of all basic health facilities and health officials who are deputed in the BHUs they are not given any incen-

*The Express-Tribune*  
June 6, 2012



## Pakistan's underperformance in achieving MDGs

Since the past two decades, the need to place people rather than economic growth at the centre of national and international development efforts has gained wide acknowledgement. Pakistan is also among the 189 nation states which endorsed a UN backed declaration back in 2000, aiming to focus on eight basic goals to help improve the lives of poor people around the world, by 2015. However, two years before the deadline set for accomplishing these Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the ground realities in many developing countries, including Pakistan, are not very encouraging.

The Commonwealth Foundation has recently reviewed progress made in terms of achieving MDG targets across several countries. A report was also prepared for Pakistan based on analysis of several secondary sources including government, UN and other international agencies' assessments as well as consultations with major NGOs. The results indicate that Pakistan is lagging behind its commitments with respect to almost all the MDG indicators.

Pakistan's progress on poverty alleviation remains dismal after some initial progress at the beginning of the past decade. Food inflation is particularly reversing steps taken to eradicate poverty. Ineffective targeting and design flaws within major social welfare schemes have limited impact in terms of helping poor households survive, much less overcome their deprivation.

While literacy rates have increased since 2000, they have not done so sufficiently to achieve the MDG target (88 per cent) by 2015. Similarly, Pakistan is still a long way off from ensuring that all girls and boys in the country, at least, complete primary schooling. The task of achieving gender parity within primary and secondary education has also not shown significant progress.

Progress, in terms of health related indicators, also remains lacklustre. While maternal and child (under five years) mortality rates have declined, the progress made is not sufficient. Pakistan also severely lags behind in providing clean drinking water and sanitation to its citizens. Our government representatives readily sign onto international declarations. They have pledged to protect children, safeguard women's rights and to ensure a range of other human rights. Showing the required political will to fulfill these commitments, however, remains problematic. The experience pertaining to accomplishing the MDGs is no different.

The internal security situation and a spate of natural disasters are repeatedly quoted by officials to explain the disappointing progress. However, the varied failures in terms of responding to the MDG related challenges are less readily acknowledged.

Conversely, the UN's articulation of MDGs had also implied that the onus of alleviating global deprivations was not only the responsibility of developing countries, but also of the numerous multilateral agencies mandated to work on development issues. The international community's failure to offer adequate support must also be highlighted while assessing the failure of achieving MDG targets in Pakistan. Moreover, the global food and fuel price shocks and the global financial crisis, have also combined to undermine MDG progress across much of the developing world.

If the experience of Pakistan is anything to go by, rhetorical assertions of international cooperation and pledges of national resolve will remain insufficient to achieve grandiose objectives such as the MDGs.

Syed Mohammad Ali, The Express-Tribune - September 27, 2013.

## Pakistan lags on development goals: UNDP

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) said on Friday Pakistan's progress towards achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is lagging as of total 33 indicators, only nine are on track.

The sources said the reduction in poverty might be included in the achieved indicators as Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal had signed an official notification for inclusion of controversial poverty figures of 17.2 percent in 2007-08 and 12.4 percent in 2010-11 into the upcoming progress report on MDGs, which is in the process of finalisation at the moment.

"The current evidence and estimates suggest that Pakistan's progress towards achieving the MDGs is lagging. Of the 33 indicators for which data is available at the national level, Pakistan is on track on only nine indicators," stated a statement by the United Nations Development Programme.

The statement said with less than 900 days left to the deadline of 2015, the world is making a final push to achieve the MDGs adopted by the UN member states in September 2000.







allocation. The total funds allocated for the health sector amount to about 2 per cent of the annual GDP and within the health sector resources allocated for maternal health stand at a meagre 0.6 per cent. Likewise, the fact that almost 80% of healthcare is in the hands of unregulated private sector has not been taken into account in the report.

In the end, the analysis mentions that the PMDGR 2010 fails to capture all the dimensions that influence the country's progress towards MDG 3 and 5. It says that ensuring achievement of MDG 5, and target in particular, is critical to achieving all the MDGs. But within MDG 5, universal access to reproductive health is equally important to achieve the overall goal of improving maternal health. To highlight the report's shortcomings and ensure that the Government portrays the correct depiction of the situation in Pakistan, the civil society organizations have formed a group, 'MDG5b 2010', which will focus on ensuring that MDG 5b is not left neglected.

Myra Imran, The News - August 8, 2010

## **Achieving MDGs is tough for Pakistan: report**

ISLAMABAD: Security issues, financial crunches and certain other domestic and international issues in the period since 2006 has undermined the efforts of Pakistan in attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

This was revealed in the 'Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report (PMDGR)' launched by the Centre for Poverty Reduction and Social Policy Development (CPRSPD), Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan, here on Friday.

The Pakistan Millennium Development Report, the fourth one in the series, is a part of monitoring and evaluation process in attaining Millennium Development Goals. The report covers the period since 2006 in which numerous and far-reaching developments have taken place in Pakistan.

The report determines the standing of Pakistan in this regard while it only has half a decade to attain these goals by 2015. The recent report covers the period which has transformed the social, political and economic landscape of the Pakistan which has affected the outcomes, achievements and targets of Pakistan's Millennium Development Goals.

According to the report, security issues have been of concern for last many years but since 2007-08, they have been highly aggravated, af-

fecting the physical, social and human capital outcomes, undermining the development efforts.

The economy has suffered losses in foreign domestic investment and exports due to the spillover effects of the global recession; followed by the financial crisis in developing countries like Pakistan.

Moreover, the devastating floods of August-September 2010 have affected more than 20 million people, ravaged different rural and urban areas, destroying infrastructure and agricultural heartlands of Pakistan. This has adversely impacted the overall economy, and achievement of many of the MDG targets will remain an ambitious objective.

According to the report, status of MDGs targets is as following. Pakistan has adopted 16 national targets, 37 indicators against the 8 MDGs, keeping in view the priorities and data availability. Pakistan is ahead in 6 indicators; on track in 2; slow in 4; lags behind in 20 indicators and is off track only in one indicator.

<http://www.infochangePakistan.net>

Yasir Ilyas - September 17, 2010





## MDGs deadline 2015 approaching: Pakistan on track of 10, behind in 24 indicators

ISLAMABAD: While cut-off date of 2015 is fast approaching for meeting all 34 indicators, Pakistan is on track of 10 and behind in 24 indicators set under Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

According to the official details, the reasons for missing most of the indicators include internal and external economic and non-economic challenges, including natural disasters, conflicts, institutional, administrative and political changes, weak commitments to economic reforms, lack of awareness, fading commitments by the development partners due to global recession of 2007 and belated ownership of MDGs agenda at the sub-national level.

The impact of above challenges was reflected in slow progress and hence non-achievement of many of the indicators. The government has taken a number of steps for achieving MDGs by 2015. These include provincial engagement and agreement on MDGs Acceleration Framework, in the first instance, on education. Enhancing capacity of the people through human resource development that involves better education, health, population welfare, skill development services, improved access to clean water and sanitation and gender mainstreaming initiatives.

Provision of productive assets is inclusive of micro-finance at individual level, moving towards a comprehensive social safety net to protect the vulnerable and those suffering from natural or man-made disasters, provision of adequate resources for financing the poverty reduction programmes and reforming and strengthening institutions for better delivery of public services to people, improving access and quality of education and health services, and providing improved population welfare facilities, infrastructure development.

To help augment physical assets of the poor, the following programmes have been launched: Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund for improved access to micro-finance, subsidy on fertilizer and tractors, Tameer-e-Watan Programme and development communications for creating awareness, targeted interventions for the poor and vulnerable under social safety net programmes include Benazir Income Support Programme, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, subsidy on food, Employees Old Age Benefit Scheme and Workers Welfare Fund.

Between 2001 and 2011, based on consistent official methodology and Pakistan Living Standards Measurement Survey data, it appears that pov-

erty headcount has declined from 34.5 percent in 2001-02 to 12.4 percent in 2010-11. However, a technical group on poverty has been set up by the Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms to review official methodology for poverty estimation and validate poverty numbers.

Net Enrolment Ratio has improved from 42 percent in 2001-02 to 57 percent in 2011-12 while Completion Rate to Grade 5 has remained stagnant at 57 percent during the period.

In Health MDGs, estimates for 2012-13 show decline in Under-Five Mortality Rate from 94 (per 1,000 live births) in 2006-07 to 89 (per 1,000 live births) while Infant Mortality Rate declined from 77 deaths (per 1,000 live births) in 2001-02 to 74 by 2012-13. The proportion of children under two years who have been fully immunised against six preventable diseases has increased from 53 percent to 80 percent between 2001-02 and 2011-12, while the proportion of children under one-year immunised against measles has increased to 81 percent during the same period.

Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) declined to 276 (deaths per 100,000 live births) in 2010-11 from 350 (deaths per 100,000 live births) in 2001-02. The share of deliveries attended by skilled personnel has gone up to 52 percent in 2012-13 from 24 percent in 2001-02 while Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) among married women improved from 28 percent to 35 percent during the same period. A decrease in the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) over the period 2006-07 to 2012-13 has been recorded from 4.1 to 3.8. The percentage of TB cases detected and cured has increased from 79 percent in 2001-02 to 91 percent in 2010-11.

Primary Education Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Pakistan has improved from 0.82 in 2001-02 to 0.88 in 2010-11, while Youth Literacy GPI increased from 0.65 in 2001-02 to 0.63 in 2010-11.

Inequality in terms of women's political participation and share in the national decision making process has been satisfactory in Pakistan.

Since 2001-02 the land area under forest cover improved from 4.8 percent (of the total area of Pakistan) to 5.2 percent in 2011-12. As per PSLM survey data for 2011-12, the coverage of improved drinking water has increased to 89 percent from 86 percent in 2001-02.

The debt servicing as a percentage of exports of goods and services decreased from 50.9 percent in 2001-02 to 28.5 percent in 2010-11. Targets relating to connectivity show remarkable improvement as tele-density of cellular phones reach 68 percent while total tele-density, at





BY ZUBEIDA MUSTAFA

## Dignity, not charity

Poverty alleviation can also focus on self-respect

ONE problem with our poverty alleviation strategies is that they benefit the givers more than the recipients. Yet another problem is that they generally involve doling out in public view money to the underprivileged which is demeaning and robs them of their dignity.

The government itself has reduced us to a nation of beggars by going around the world with a begging bowl. As a quid pro quo it willingly sells its sovereignty.

Against this backdrop, it is immensely satisfying to see people in our midst who believe in meeting the needs of the poor without hurting their self-esteem. I met one such couple, Ali Raza and his wife Shibli, who founded Waseela in 2010 with the idea of bringing about a change in society.

Initially, they called their organisation the Kaam ka Bank but changed the name when the Intelligence Bureau and the police got suspicious — the word bank alerted them — and started investigating informally if it was involved in any financial fraud.

Since the Razas had no motive apart from devising ways and means to recycle discarded stuff and sell it really cheap to the poor, it was no big deal for them to register their organisation under another name. Thus Waseela was born.

What Waseela does might not in itself be an extraordinarily innovative idea. Recycling goods for reuse is something many have been doing and is a big industry in many parts of the world. In Karachi itself, Nargis Latif has been a champion of the concept of reusing used stuff to produce new material. Hence the Razas did not break new ground when they collected worn garments and made them as good as new by laundering, darning and packing them in cellophane, cleaned up textbooks and notebooks by erasing pencil marks and doodles, repaired tools and household electronic goods to make them usable again, cut biscuits cartons into strips to light the stove burner from another lighted one. These are simple 'ideas' if one may describe them as such.

It is the underlying spirit that is inspiring. The commitment and dedication of the founders — basically a husband/wife team and some members of their family and two friends — that set them apart. Their concern was to alleviate the distress of the poor. But, as Ali Raza, an electronic media consultant stated it was important not to bruise the dignity of the poor and let them take pride in themselves as men and

women with self-esteem.

So Waseela was not to be a huge charitable organisation. It was to operate within a systematic framework with a discipline in which every element is interconnected with the other and the human being is recognised as a multidimensional entity. This means that every member of society is important and has a role to play.

If one is weak and poor or the other is strong and affluent it doesn't mean the first is inferior and deserving of charity. Ali Raza learnt the art of philanthropy from his father and he believes in helping the needy to help himself.

That is why Waseela does not give handouts. It facilitates. Its own organisation is structured to meet this need. The original eight founders have been joined by 28 unpaid volunteers and 33 paid workers — the last are reasonably well paid with a monthly salary ranging from Rs8,000 to Rs15,000, with annual leave, medical benefits and education allowances for their children.

Waseela generates substantial earnings — since 2010, Rs4.5 million have been raised which provide a livelihood to the workers and allow a gent's shirt costing Rs500 in a shopping mall to be sold for Rs80, looking brand new. Ali Raza says a lower middle class boy aspiring for social status can dress himself with dignity at the cost of Rs200.

Waseela's founders have no ambitions except to make it a hub for a recycling industry. They have two sales outlets in low-income localities. At present, much of the process involved is basically reconditioning. Now Ali Raza is working on plans to recycle plastic, paper and metal. But whatever is done will keep human dignity in view.

Buyers have to pay for whatever they take, even if it costs Rs5. People who send in goods they do not need any more are expected to honour this spirit. Ali Raza is upset when people send him stuff he calls garbage. He returns it saying "ours is not a garbage dump". He would love to decentralise the project so that many Waseelas spring up all over the city.

Did Waseela face any resistance? Shibli told me that her mother-in-law was initially upset with what she called "smelly stuff" that was collected. But now she is an enthusiastic member of the team.

[www.zubeidamustafa.com](http://www.zubeidamustafa.com)

Dawn — February 5, 2014

## Editorial

### Education targets

There are conflicting claims about just how many children are in school in the five to nine age group, and how many are not. Disparity in the figures is highlighted by the Punjab School Education Department (SED) saying that it is likely to achieve 100 per cent enrolment of children in this age bracket by 2015 — which on the face of it is very good news indeed. There has been a drive across the province to get children into school and by most accounts, it is having a measure of success.

The provincial government has exceeded its official target for new enrolments in 2013, which was 2.8 million children and this is to be applauded, but as with everything associated with education in Pakistan, there are caveats. The conflicting figures supplied by the government and an independent source are one such. A recently released report indicates stagnation in the enrolment of children in the target group, and that the percentage of children out of school aged six-16 is currently 16 per cent, which is precisely what it was in the previous year. The ASER report for 2013 also finds that 8.3 per cent of children in the six-10 brackets have never enrolled in any school and another two per cent in the same bracket have dropped out. The Punjab government is rather more optimistic and the statistical tussle looks set to run and run.

Disputed numbers aside, it is evident that there are more children attending school but a large question mark hovers over just what it is that they get by way of an education, having been persuaded to attend. Much effort needs to be put into educating teachers to educate their students. Many teachers themselves have no training at all and some are barely literate themselves. There has never been a national or provincial benchmark that defines minimum standards for a teacher, and we would like to see maximum investment in teacher training with a goal of all teachers of the five to nine cohorts having, at least, a basic training by the end of 2015.

Looking at the picture for education in other provinces, there is a marked lack of synchronicity, and whilst under other circumstances, diversity is to be applauded; Pakistan is badly in need of national conformity when it comes to education standards, curricula and best prac-

tices. Devolution of education to the provinces under the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution has been a

very mixed blessing, and now with the PMLN-N government apparently determined to reverse most of the recruitment to official posts in the last five years, education is going to inevitably suffer. Thousands of teachers' posts are at risk, and not all of them would have been made to satisfy political imperatives. In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, there was a declaration last September that a 'uniform' system of education would be introduced across the province by March 2014, a declaration that has yet to bear much fruit and another example of the imperfect interface between political rhetoric and the practical realities of reforming a complex system. In Sindh, countless ghost schools are staffed by spectral teachers and in every province, education budgets are underspent in many of their budget-lines.

Whilst we warmly welcome the goal-setting in Punjab and hope that education for all can become a reality, to bring real change to an education system that is damaged by decades of neglect and chronic underfunding is a task that can only be tackled on a war footing. Pakistan, as a whole, is in the midst of an education emergency that is being tackled piecemeal rather than in a coordinated manner. Individual provincial initiatives have their merits and are obviously successful in some instances but not in others. The experiment that attempted to merge 400 primary schools in Sialkot district has comprehensively failed, for example. Our education system is in urgent need of some joined-up thinking and a purge of toxic politicking.

“Pakistan, as a whole, is in the midst of an education emergency that is being tackled piecemeal rather than in a coordinated manner

*The Express-Tribune, February 24, 2014*



# One baby dies every three minutes in Pakistan: Unicef

## Report highlights inequalities in health, education in rural versus urban areas

● OUR CORRESPONDENT  
ISLAMABAD

A baby dies every three minutes in Pakistan, a Unicef report has found, with more than 350,000 children in Pakistan dying before the age of five. Of these deaths, 20 per cent are caused by pneumonia, even though Pakistan was first among South Asian countries to introduce the pneumococcal vaccine.

The report, titled "Improving Children's Lives: Transforming the Future" and published by Unicef, marks 25 years since the General Assembly of the UN adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report explores rates of child health, welfare and education, highlighting the discrepancies between children from higher and lower income families, as well as those in rural versus urban areas.

For instance, Unicef found that at least 24 per cent of women in Pakistan, aged 20 to 24, were married before turning 18, with girls from poor families more likely to get married before the age of 18 than those in richer families (46 per cent

### UNDER AGE MARRIAGE

46%

women are likely to get married before age of 18 in poorer families as against

18%

in richer families

as compared to 18 per cent). Also, 29 per cent of women aged 20 to 24 living in rural areas of the country married before the age of 18 compared to 16 per cent of those living in urban areas.

### Child health

Unless Pakistan and Afghanistan - two of the remaining three polio endemic countries in the world - stop transmission of the remaining polio

reservoirs, the threat of the virus spreading to polio-free countries "remains real", Unicef states.

The neonatal mortality (death in the first 28 days in life) rate in Pakistan was 42 per 1,000 live births in 2012, with 202,000 neonatal deaths in the year. Another interesting fact that the report pointed out was that only about half of the births, or 49 per cent, were attended by skilled health staff during the period 2007-2012.

"Pakistan has the lowest birth registration rate in the region, with 73 per cent of its children under five not being registered," the report further stated.

The report reveals that while Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka have ratified the Optional Protocols on protecting children in armed conflicts, Pakistan has not.

### Stunting in children

Unicef describes 'stunting' as a process of slow growth that starts before birth and is caused by poor maternal nutrition, poor feeding

### EDUCATION

57%

children in their fifth year of primary education cannot do two-digit division

practices, poor food quality as well as frequent infections. The report states that 43 per cent of children under the age of 5 in Pakistan in 2010 had stunted growth as compared to 55 per cent in 1990.

The report draws correlations between mothers' level of formal education and stunted growth, stating 20 per cent of mothers who received secondary education and above have children with stunted growth, while the percentage rises to 50 per cent for mothers who had received no education. Additionally, around 50 per cent of children in rural areas had stunted growth as compared to 35 per cent in urban areas.

### Education

In Pakistan, one in three children between the ages of five and nine are not in school, Unicef says, with a gap of 50 per cent between the richest and the poorest children.

In Pakistan, armed conflict in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa in 2009 displaced an estimated three million people - some 600,000 children in three districts alone were reported to have missed at least a year of schooling in the three districts that saw the heaviest fighting, the report states.

Meanwhile, 51 per cent of children in Grade 5 cannot read Grade 2 level texts in their local language. Also, 57 per cent in their fifth year of primary education cannot do two-digit division. In rural areas, only 38 per cent of girls can do simple arithmetic compared with 45 per cent boys. Only 43 per cent of the girls can read as compared to 48 per cent of the boys. In rich families, the gender gap does not exist when it comes to education. Just 15 per cent of girls from poorest families can read basic Urdu as compared to 21 per cent of boys and 42 per cent of girls from richer families.

Express-Tribune, March 12, 2011

## Pakistan unlikely to meet MDG on health by 2015

Research study reveals low caste women facing double disadvantages  
OUR STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD - Of five of the six maternal deaths in the past four years in the village field site had occurred amongst the lowest caste of the village. In other words, 23 per cent of all maternal deaths were concentrated in the 17 per cent of the village population. This high rate of maternal deaths occurred despite the availability of significant maternal health services in the region, says a research study.

The findings of the study were shared at a workshop here on Thursday. The University of Alberta, Canada, Punjab Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Programme and Real Medicine Foundation jointly conducted a Knowledge Dissemination Workshop to share findings of a 10-month ethnographic research titled 'Disparities in Access to Maternal Health Services in Punjab: Poverty, Gender and Exclusion' here in Islamabad.

The workshop commenced by Dr. Zafar Ikram, MNCH Programme Chief, through his welcome speech. Dr Zubia Mumtaz of the University of Alberta and principal investigator of the research gave a detailed presentation, where she explained that despite the Safe Motherhood and Millenni-

um Development Goal initiatives, Pakistan is unlikely to meet MDG goal No. 5 by 2015. A key reason for this failure, she suggested, was that strategies used to date have been failed to understand and address the key social and economic factors that restrict access to maternal healthcare for women living at the economic and social margins of society.

The research aimed to develop a detailed understanding of ultra-poor and socially excluded women are and specifically how their vulnerabilities and maternity experiences are structured by caste, economic class, and gendered power dynamics that serve the interests of the privileged. A major finding is that of five of the six maternal deaths in the past four years in the village field site had occurred amongst the lowest caste of the village. In other words, 23 percent of all maternal deaths were concentrated in the 17 percent of the village population. This high rate of maternal deaths occurred despite the availability of significant maternal health services in the region.

Dr Mumtaz described the ways in which the traditional South Asian caste system, based on occupational hierarchy, is the basis

for the systematic exclusion of the lower caste people (also known in Kammi and Mussalis in villages) from economic and social resources and opportunities of all kinds. They thus face a vicious cycle of chronic, intergenerational poverty. Low caste women are doubly disadvantaged, as gender values and norms ascribe a lower value to women's lives. The design and implementation of existing health and poverty programs are poorly equipped to address these underlying factors that are the key drivers of high maternal mortality rates in Pakistan.

During the presentation, different maternal death cases were shared with the audience in order to illustrate the subtle, complex ways in which caste, economic class and gender interact to exclude Kammi women from maternal healthcare.

Dr Nisar Ahma Cheema, DG Health Punjab, concluded the workshop, acknowledging the importance of addressing the various factors that marginalize poor women from maternal health services and outlined some ways in which the program aims to address them.



The data used in the draft document is not standardised. The MDGs focus on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability, and forging global partnerships for development with targets for aid, trade and debt relief. Every September, world leaders gather to report progress and adjust strategies.

Afshan Subohi, Dawn - Sep 18, 2013

## Pakistan to miss all eight MDGs

New York - The UN General Assembly isn't all handshakes and photo-ops. There's also the matter of the countries of the world coming together to share progress and discuss problems they all face. Poverty, food insecurity, disease, climate change, and so on. Who decides what issues everyone has in common? The UN and its member countries do. And why should Pakistan care that there are protocols in place to monitor and measure progress on these lines? In the words of a senior Pakistani diplomat, "Because they just make sense".

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), eight markers of progress to be achieved by the year 2015 are up for review this year, as the year before. The targets are in numerical measurement, to establish trends in primary education, maternal health, gender empowerment, child mortality, extreme hunger and poverty, environmental sustainability, development and the incidence and care of diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria.

Pakistan is on track to miss the MDG targets. All eight of them. And not by small margins. "These were not empty commitments," read the PM's statement at the roundtable on MDGs. Admitting 'many shortfalls', the tone of the statement was explanatory, to justify the embarrassment of not having made progress comparable to the nations of sub-Saharan Africa, "Our dilemma is that large portions of our resources have been consumed by the war on terrorism." It may be uncomfortable to be detailing and excusing your misfortunes and failures to the world, but it is a necessary exercise. The question to answer is, why has Pakistan not done what is clearly in Pakistan's own interest to do?

The PM at multiple forums stressed on an increase in education spend-

ing from 2% GDP to 4%; and health expenditure from 1 to 2%. "This... is modest, but it is a beginning." The game doesn't end in 2015 and there is no prize for those who do achieve these set targets - save for a healthier population and a more prosperous future. Pakistan, among other nations, is likely to extend the MDGs deadline further into the future. We'll keep trying; it'll just take longer than it should.

On the issue of insecurity and terrorism, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif according to sources privy to the exchanges during the relevant meetings, has been clear and unequivocal during bilaterals that the Taliban have an "unacceptable world view". But in public, and most recently in an interview to the Wall Street Journal, Mr Sharif has been conscious to hedge his bets every which way, "This incident which took place in Peshawar [a church bombing on Sept 22] has been disowned by the Taliban. They have specifically said that they haven't done it and they disowned this. They haven't said that before. On this particular incident, they have said it. Our intelligence agencies are trying to determine that."

The changes in tone, and degree of certainty, are for two different audiences. In private meetings with world leaders, Pakistan hasn't a prayer of being able to justify any kind of belief in the Taliban and their statements. But in public, Mr. Sharif is not just Prime Minister, he is also a politician and back home, Imran Khan and Khurshid Shah are making news, pushing for opening a political office for the Taliban, and starting talks, respectively.

The Americans are not particularly bothered about Pakistan talking to the TTP. "We certainly don't object," said Special Representative on Afghanistan and Pakistan, Ambassador Dobbins, in response to a question. The worry for the US is the Afghan Taliban. Pakistan's problems are its own, but the Afghan Taliban are a US problem. There are reports that although Senator Kerry's call on the PM was cordial, and materialized in a final date for the US-Pakistan bilateral in Washington, the focus during the meeting remained mostly on security in Afghanistan and Pakistan. With respect to Pakistan, concern was voiced about "extremist elements overwhelming" the state. In a conversation with the Prime Minister on Wednesday evening, Mr Sharif revealed that a Pakistani ambassador was "soon" to be appointed to Washington DC. From the confidence of the statement, it appears a name is close to being finalized.

Minister of Water and Power, Mr Khawaja Asif, and Finance Minister,



## National Conference on MDGs: Govt allocates Rs12.5 billion to help accelerate progress

Prioritising social development initiatives, Rs12.5 billion has been earmarked in the 2014-15 budget for community-led initiatives to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Minister for Planning, Development and Reform, Ahsan Iqbal said this on the second day of the "National Parliamentary Conference on Millennium Development Goals" at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services on Tuesday.

To map out a strategy to meet MDGs, legislators were split into working groups, each tasked with developing parliamentary work plans to accelerate progress on an MDG.

National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq suggested provincial lawmakers constitute committees in their respective legislatures to oversee provincial governments' progress on MDGs.

According to a report on MDGs, the first of which is about eradicating poverty, the persistent downward trend in poverty over the past decade is reflected by the decline in the poverty line which fell from 34.5% in 2001-2002 to 12.4% in 2010-2011.

Pakistan's unemployment to population ratio increased from 27.1% in 2001-2002 to 30.9% in 2010-2011, making the prospect of full employment by 2015 highly unlikely.

Malnutrition measured as prevalence of underweight children less than five years of age has decreased from 40% in 1990-1991 to 31.5% in 2011-2012 but is still far off the MDG target of less than 20%. With two out of the three targets off-track, the country is unlikely to achieve MDG1.

Former speaker of the National Assembly, Dr. Fehmida Mirza said, "No development scheme can be successful without taking women on board".

Dr. Aliya Khan from Quaid-i-Azam University observed that "There is a need to develop human capital to deal with inequality. Although representation of women has increased in legislatures globally, Pakistan is 135th out of 136 nations according to the 2013 Gender Gap Report. Women comprise only 22 per cent of the workforce."

In a separate session on MDG2 on education, Seema Aziz from Care Foundation stated, "Education is the biggest equaliser and change can be immediate." Pakistan's target of 100% primary school enrolment, 100% completion of education from grade 1 to 5 and an 88% literacy rate are unlikely to be met.

Rates of net primary enrolment and completion increased up to the mid-2000s. In 2011-2012, it decreased from 57% to 50%. The literacy rate is 58% overall, but it is highly skewed towards males at 70% as compared to 47% for females. Pakistan is off-track on all three targets.

Special MDG Task Force Chairperson MNA Maryum Aurangzeb stated that a time-bound and goal-driven work plan would be drawn up and revised annually.

The conference was called in response to UNDP research indicating that Pakistan adopted 16 targets with 41 indicators, but of the 34 indicators for which data is available, 24 are off track and unlikely to be met by 2015. The legislators will work to determine a way forward.

The conference will continue tomorrow with more working group sessions on individual MDGs.

The Express-Tribune - June 4, 2014.

## Substantial spending for education urged

Journalists have stressed the need for an increased budgetary allocation for education and renewed efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

This was the consensus at an editors' roundtable organised by Ilm-o-Agahi initiative of Mishal Pakistan in collaboration with Ilm Ideas on Monday, says a press release.

The speakers noted that according to the Economic Survey of Pakistan 2013-14, the literacy rate is only 60 per cent, while the MDGs target to take it to 80 per cent by 2015.

"Pakistan is one of the countries that spend the least on education. All segments of society should join hands to highlight the issue and put pressure on the government as it is a matter of survival for our future generations," the press release read.

A number of journalists, including newspaper editors and television news directors attended the meeting.

Earlier, a training workshop on education journalism was also organised. Over two dozen education reporters from various media houses attended the workshop.

Anchorperson Matiullah Jan said journalists covering education should focus more on field reporting. Reporting on education can drive readers' interest only when it gives a complete picture, he stressed.

The Ilm-o-Agahi initiative aims to improve accountability and media coverage of education issues.

The Express-Tribune - June 10, 2014.



Primary education:

# Plan to enrol 5m out-of-school children by 2016 a pipe dream

Riaz ul Haq,

ISLAMABAD: As the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz-led government continues to grapple with the circular debt and energy crises, primary school education has been put on the backburner — until recently.

State Minister for Education Balighur Rehman has taken a keen interest in the out-of-school children (OOSC) issue that has been plaguing Pakistan for decades. In collaboration with Unicef and Unesco, the Ministry of Education, Trainings and Standards in Higher Education has compiled a comprehensive report that dissects the current state of education in the country.

While the figures may be appalling, the government's plan to enrol 5.1 million children from the ages of five and nine under a three-year National Plan of Action from 2013 to 2016 and comprising a four-tier strategy is encouraging yet ambitious.

The four provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), Gilgit-Baltistan and Fata are covered in the plan, which is expected to cost Rs188 billion.

Punjab appears to have the most ambitious plan, as it aims to achieve 100 per cent enrolment by 2016, while the country is expecting to reach 91 per cent overall by the same time period, according to the report.

As of 2011-12, 6.7 million — or 32 per cent — of children in the five to nine age-bracket were not enrolled in schools, a number which is expected to be brought down to 2.1 million by 2016.

According to various Economic Survey of Pakistan issues, the total education expenditure as a percentage of GDP has been abysmal over the years.

Since 2003-04, it has hovered above the two per cent mark, hitting a low of 1.8 per cent in

2010-11. The government is planning to enrol the children in public sector formal and non-formal schools, feeder schools, private sector schools and madrassas.

The four-tier strategy includes enrolment in existing schools, establishment of additional rooms and hiring of more teachers, building new schools and introduction of incentives for the children.

## Strategy A

Focus on enrolling OOSC in existing primary schools with underutilised capacity. Several closed schools which can be made functional may also be used. Children above the age of seven will be enrolled in non-formal basic education, feeder schools or madrassas.

## Strategy B

In existing public formal schools, where extra space is available, an additional classroom and teacher will accommodate new students.

## Strategy C

In far-flung areas, new two-room formal and one-room non-formal schools will be constructed to improve students' access to education.

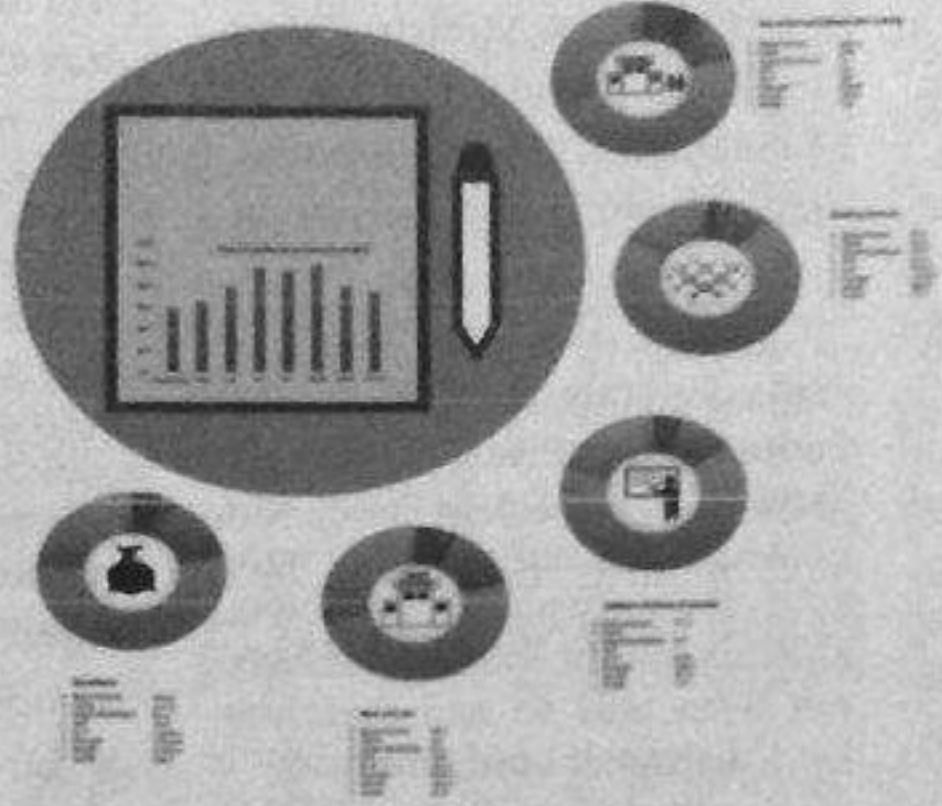
## Strategy D

Strategy aims to use incentives to retain students, particularly girls and those from disadvantaged groups who drop out before completing primary school due to financial constraints. These include stipends, food-for-education and uniforms.

## ICT

Of all the provinces and areas, ICT is the only one in which girls, with 72 per cent, have a higher enrolment rate than boys, at 68 per cent. In addition, only 10 per cent of students drop out before completing their primary education.

*The Express-Tribune*  
September 6, 2013





# Steps needed to reduce maternal, new-born deaths

OUR STAFF REPORTER

KARACHI - A new global consensus has been agreed on the key evidence-based interventions that will sharply reduce the 358,000 women who still die each year during pregnancy and childbirth and the 7.6 million children who die before the age of 5.

According to an extensive three-year global study, essential interventions, commodities and guidelines for reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, is designed to facilitate decision-making in low and middle-income countries about how to allocate limited resources for maximum impact on the health of women and children.

The authors, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Aga Khan University and The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH) reviewed more than 50,000 scientific papers to determine the proven effectiveness of interventions and impact on survival. Suitability for low and middle-income countries includes a global landscape analysis of what countries and the 440 PMNCH partners were doing to reduce maternal and new-born deaths.

"What came back was a hodge-podge," says Dr Zulfiqar Bhutta, founding chair of Women and Child Health at the Aga Khan University, Pakistan, who headed the study

team. "PMNCH partners had very different ideas of what should be undertaken."

In overall, 142 interventions were assessed for their effectiveness and impact on survival by addressing the main causes of maternal, new-born, and child mortality.

Dr Bhutta and Elizabeth Mason, Director of WHO's Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and their team also studied the intervention suitability for use in low and middle-income countries. After extensive consultation and review by a wide group of experts, the list was honed down to 56 essential interventions, accompanied by brief guidelines and reference materials.

Maternal and child deaths are still a problem. Though considerable progress has been made towards reducing maternal, infant and child deaths, sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia, including Pakistan, will fall short of the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals 4 & 5, which aimed at reducing child deaths and improve maternal health by 2015.

More than half of maternal deaths are caused by excessive bleeding (35 percent) and hypertension (18 percent).

*The Nation - December 17, 2011*

## Govt urged to allocate 10pc of GDP to achieve MDGs

ISLAMABAD: Economists and civil society representatives have demanded that the government allocate at least 10 percent of GDP for education, health, safe drinking water, sanitation and basic infrastructure to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

This was the gist of a pre-budget seminar on "We Demand Budget for MDGs" held on Saturday. They pointed out that India is spending nine percent of its GDP on health and education, but Pakistan spends less than three percent in these two areas (0.6 percent on health and 2.1 percent on education).

Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) Pakistan, Awaz Foundation Pakistan and Journalists for Democracy and Human Rights (JDHR) jointly organised the seminar.

Senior economist from Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) Dr Zafar Moeen Nasir said the country needs to decentralise the development budget at district level by allocating Rs. 2 billion per year for consecutive ten years so that all districts can plan and implement their development needs. "Putting all districts in competition can produce good results. We need to rationalise subsidies limiting it to a few food items to end hunger, the first MDG." Nasir called for linking up the economy with MDGs. "We need political commitment to ensure services delivery under MDGs commitments."

Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Sajjad Ahmad Shaikh, said that before budget allocation, the Ministry does a situation analysis of each sector. "We need to do post-budget analysis to ensure implementation of the budget. We should take all MDGs-related demands to provinces after the 18th amendment, as now resources will be transferred to them."

He added that the country's social sector spending is about to reach 8.5 percent.

Earlier, setting the scene for the debate, Shafqat Munir, President JDHR, demanded imposition of tax on agriculture income. He added the government needs to spend resources on people through local representatives. There is need for restoration of local governments with strong governance mechanism and financial independence and accountability and monitoring of the system by citizens, he said.

Mohammad Zia-ur-Rehman, Chief Executive Awaz Foundation and





# Survey raises alarm over mother, child malnutrition

By Mukhtar Alam

KARACHI, Jan 10: Public health experts have called for comprehensive plans and better coordination among various departments to improve the state of nutrition among children and women in Sindh, after a national nutritional survey report launched on Jan 10 showed that food insecurity was the highest in the province.

Fight against hunger could be won through long-term plans and interventions targeting women and children with the involvement of the health, education, family planning and women welfare, legal and other social development departments, along with a constant societal advocacy for an increased domestic food production and promotion of the right to food as a human right, said the experts, including representatives of foreign donor agencies.

They were speaking at a workshop organised by the Sindh health department's nutrition cell in collaboration with Unicef, Karachi, to launch the National Nutritional Survey (NNS) 2011 report and prepare an integrated nutrition strategy.

Besides Sindh Health Minister Dr Sagheer Ahmad, Secretary Syed Hashim Raza Zaidi and Special Secretary Dr Suresh Kumar, representatives of the World Health Organisation, the World Food Programme, and the United Nations Children's Fund also

spoke to the executive district officers for health who participated in the workshop.

Dr Sajid Soofi of the Aga Khan University, which was awarded the task of the national survey in question, told the participants that about 6,500 households in urban and rural areas across the province were included in the survey.

He said the survey showed that about 49.4 per cent of the sample households in Sindh used gas as cooking fuel, followed by 48.1pc who used firewood and 2.5pc kerosene oil. At the national level, 58pc households used firewood to cook food, he added.

Regarding distribution of households by source of drinking water, it was found that 50.8 per cent households used tube-wells, followed by 32pc who had piped water, and 17pc who used other sources such as community taps, wells and bottled water.

Discussing formal education, he said the survey highlighted that 64pc mothers were illiterate, while 10.1pc of the sample did complete their school education. About 34.9pc of the urban mothers were illiterate in comparison to 85.4pc mothers in the rural areas, according to the survey.

Severe to moderate rate of iron-deficiency anaemia in mothers was found between 0.6pc and 20.3pc, while only 16.8pc mothers had the desirable level of Vitamin D in

Sindh.

## Malnutrition in children

The survey showed that 17.9pc children in the urban areas and 32.8pc children (both under five) in the rural areas of Sindh were faced with severe stunting.

Anaemia level was assessed as severe in 4.9pc and moderate in 67.6pc children. Child retinol was severe in 18.8pc and mild in 34.5pc sample children.

Forty-two per cent children were found suffering from Vitamin D deficiency, while 38.6pc were found to be zinc deficient.

The participants were told that the survey was the largest survey of its nature to date in the country and the first to target provincial level specificity.

It confirmed that maternal and child under-nutrition remained a major issue for the province where only 28pc of the households were food secure.

The report concluded that anaemia and zinc deficiency among women and children were major public health concerns in Pakistan.

Food insecurity and poverty were major drivers of under-nutritional childhood, especially stunting, but maternal education appeared to be an important factor in its own right. According to the report, the rate of initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive

breastfeeding have increased, but indicators of complementary feeding suggested major deficiency in frequency, food choices and quality of feeding and parallel maximum deficits in growth in infancy.

He said that the survey found that indicators for water, sanitation and hygiene remained poor and burden of diarrhoea and respiratory infections remained high. These might be additional contributory factors and must be addressed concomitantly, he added.

"Survey to help focus on needs"

Sindh Health Minister Dr Ahmad, who was the chief guest, said that the national nutrition survey had certainly provided a window to the needs of the province in respect of the food security of the population, especially women and children.

"I understand that the participants in the workshop, largely government officers and NGO representatives, have now become aware of the root-cause of malnutrition and they will definitely put their efforts towards preparation and implementation of a well-integrated nutrition

strategy in the province," he said. He said the government realised the seriousness of food insecurity and other lapses that our children had to undergo and finally fall prey to diseases of complicated nature.

The minister said that the Sindh health department had a record of coming up to the expectation of the population of Sindh, which was affected due to floods and heavy rains in 2010 and 2011, and again would be able to improve all indicators of the national survey 2011 with the support of Unicef, the WHO and the WFP and other donors.

The chief secretary and the chief minister were already on board, he said, adding that other departments would also join in the struggle to improve food and health status of the people, including women and children, of the province.

Unicef representative in Sindh Andro Shilakadze said that malnutrition was not only a health subject but was also related to other sectors.

He said it needed enhanced efforts by all relevant sectors and authorities to address the issues related to children and women. A good nutrition status acknowledged as to how a country worked and excelled socially and economically, he said.

A high prevalence rate of malnutrition among women and children jeopardized not only the health and future of the children but also national security.

He said that the issue of anaemia in children should be addressed without any delay.

Dr. Salma Kausar, the head of the Sindh health de-

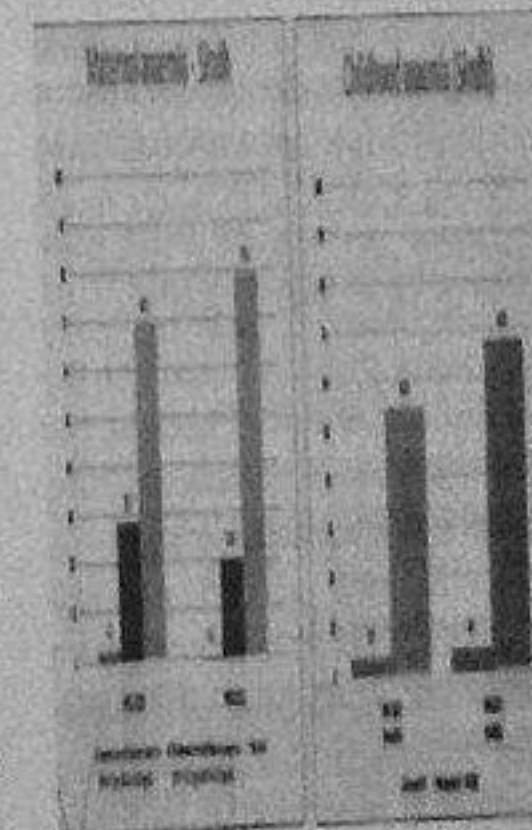
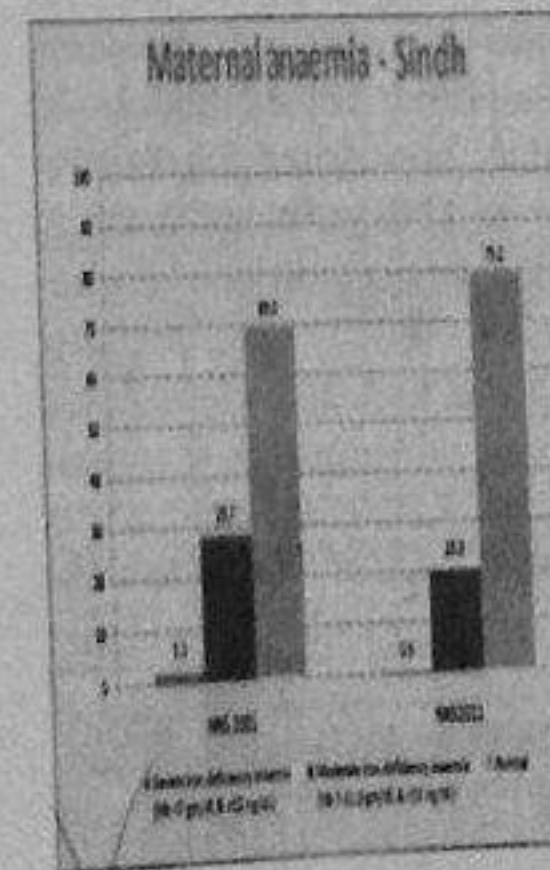
partment nutrition cell, said that a set of recommendations had also been finalised during the workshop.

She said various groups had suggested a coordinated structure and institutional set-up, comprising provincial, district nutrition steering committees and technical advisory or task force for responsibilities like advocacy, policy, planning, resources and implementation.

Priority action areas as recommended by the officers include direct nutrition interventions, health services, agriculture and food security, water and sanitation, education sector, social sector and food industry.

They have also stressed the need for revival of school health programmes with a revised plan of action and resources, and facility of micro-credit schemes for women and conditional and unconditional cash grants and training to vulnerable groups.

Mukhtar Alam,  
Dawn - November 1, 2011





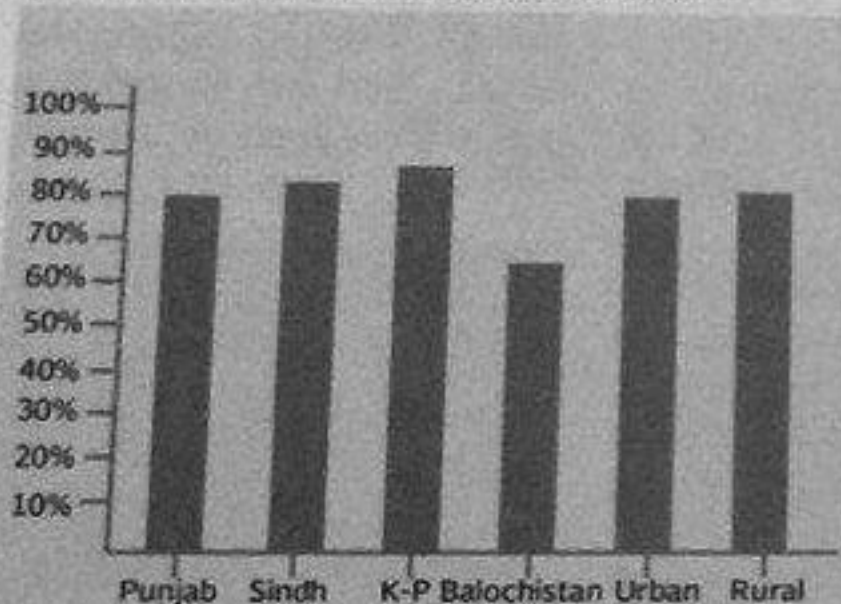
Director of Health Awareness Society, Dr Samia Babar said, "Usually the moment a baby is born, nurses bottle-feed them, even before the parents get to see them. So when the mother tries to breastfeed the infant, they are unable to make the switch."

Unaware that the Breast-feeding Ordinance 2002 discourages the sale of formula milk, a salesman at Sector F-11's leading pharmacy, said they sell around 10-15 packs a day. "I don't know about the law. I just see the doctor's prescription and give customers what

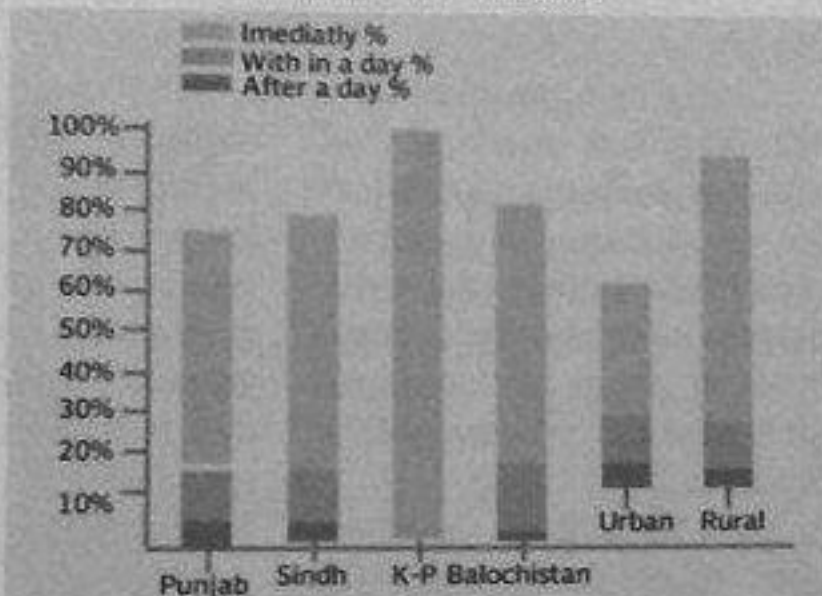
they come for," said Bashir, not looking too concerned. His responsibility, after all, is to tend to his customers who can easily get the same product from one of the hundreds of pharmacies and shops.

*The Express-Tribune*  
October 5, 2013

MOTHERS ADVISED USE FORMULA MILK FOR INFANTS UNDER SIX MONTHS OF AGE



MOST MOTHERS AWARE OF EARLY INITIATION OF BREASTFEEDING



## Failing MDGs

Noor Ahmed Jugri

It is no secret that Pakistan is going to fail the target of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. On the other hand Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India are on track to achieving the MDGs by 2015. What is alarming, according to a report, is that Sindh will achieve MDGs in 2049, Punjab in 2041, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2064 and Balochistan in 2100.

Furthermore, the education sector is in a terrible state. There are 25 million out-of-school children throughout Pakistan. It is

reported that one in ten children in the world not in primary school lives in Pakistan. Just imagine how frail and weak the education sector is. Moreover, 26 countries are poorer than Pakistan but send more children to schools. Only one in three Pakistani women in rural areas can read. Only 50 percent of Pakistani school-children can read a sentence. The real reason behind the massive failure of the education sector here is politicisation of the system.

*The News*  
April 14, 2014

## Millennium Development Goals: Pakistan stays steadfast to development targets says UNDP

ISLAMABAD: Despite the country missing several of its development targets, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would continue supporting Pakistan to meet Millennium Development Goals 2015.

"The UNDP reaffirms its support to the Government of Pakistan for accelerating progress towards MDGs," said Nicholas Rosellini, the UNDP's deputy regional director for Asia and the Pacific in his message issued on Friday.

He said Pakistan despite various socio-political changes, economic challenges, natural disasters and internal and external security issues, had remained steadfast to its MDGs commitment.

"With the level of commitment that the government has demonstrated through its different actions in the recent past, I am confident that Pakistan will make substantial progress on some of the lagging MDGs by 2015," Rosellini added.

Appreciating the role of Planning Commission of Pakistan (PCP), the UNDP's media office in Pakistan said the commission had played a lead role in setting policy direction for MDGs, monitoring progress and coordinating efforts of different stakeholders. "Pakistan government and the UNDP have worked closely to promote this agenda through a number of joint initiatives that reflect the adoption of the MDGs in public policy and their adaptation to the local context," the statement said.

It, however, pointed out that the provincial MDG reports developed with UNDP's support (2010-2012) had revealed inter and intra provincial differences in the pace of progress towards MDGs, adding that the process of preparing the Pakistan MDG Report 2013 was underway in the PCP with UNDP's support.

The statement said that the federal and provincial governments acknowledge the need for accelerated actions. "The recently announced Prime Minister Programme for Youth is a testimony to this commitment. The Government is making a renewed effort to create jobs, especially for the youth, with such initiatives."

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) – strategic planning docu



"Moreover, provincial MDG reports developed by provincial governments with UNDP's support (2010-12) have revealed inter- and intra-provincial differences in the pace of progress towards MDGs."

"The Planning Commission is preparing MDG Report 2013 with UNDP's support – recognising the collective efforts and resources needed to accelerate progress."

"The report will document successes and challenges in the journey towards MDGs, narrate Pakistan's priorities for the post-2015 development agenda and motivate a final push for the MDGs in Pakistan."

"The federal and provincial governments acknowledge the need for accelerated actions and have embarked on a number of initiatives."

"The recently announced Prime Minister's Programme for Youth is a testimony to this commitment. With this and other initiatives, the government is making a renewed effort to create jobs, especially for the youth."

"Despite various sociopolitical changes, economic challenges, natural disasters and internal and external security issues, Pakistan has upheld its commitment to achieve the MDGs."

"The Government of Pakistan and the UNDP have worked closely to promote this agenda through a number of joint initiatives that reflect the adoption of the MDGs in public policy and their adaptation to the local context."

"The Planning Commission has played a leading role in setting policy direction for MDGs, monitoring progress and coordinating efforts of different stakeholders."

"The Centre for Research on Poverty Reduction and Income Distribution, established in the Planning Commission with UNDP's support, served as a hub of knowledge and policy advice on MDGs through empirical, qualitative and policy-oriented research on key development issues."

"The Centre was instrumental in poverty measurement, research and analysis of public policies on poverty, progress monitoring of MDGs through the development of four national MDG reports, and technical support to the government in pro-poor policies and programmes."

"There has been an unprecedented increase in funds allocation for Pub-

lic Sector Development Programme, especially for health and education, in the recent budget, which reinforces the government resolve to achieve MDGs," said Ahsan Iqbal.

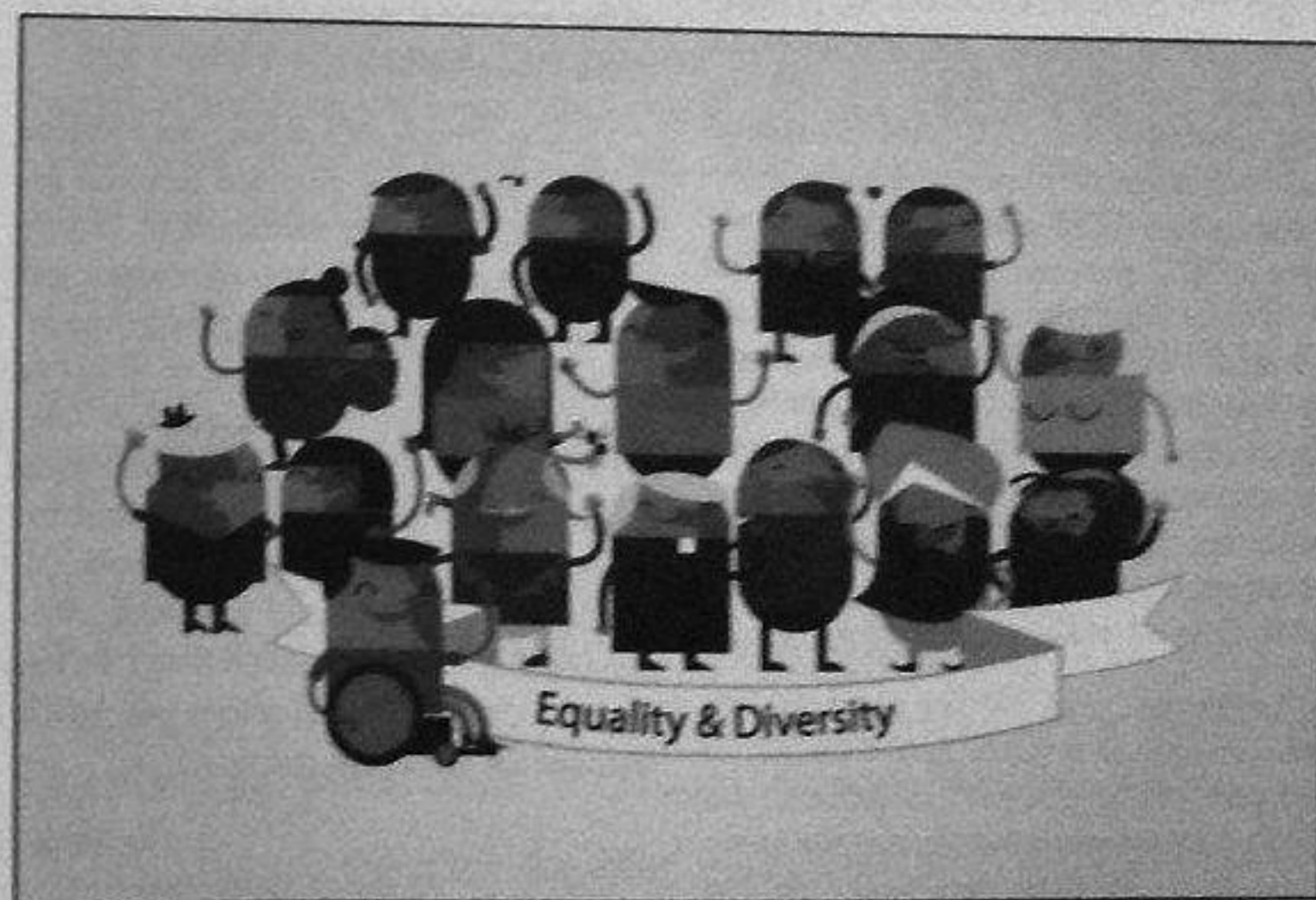
"We need to invest in youth, technology and innovation to find quick wins and solutions to some of the constraints hampering the achievement of MDGs," Iqbal said. In his message, Nicholas Rosellini, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific UNDP, said: "Today when the Prime Minister of Pakistan is scheduled to address the UN General Assembly, UNDP reaffirms its support to the government of Pakistan for accelerating progress towards MDGs."

"With the level of commitment that the government has demonstrated through its different actions in the recent past, I am confident that Pakistan will make substantial progress on some of the lagging MDGs by 2015," Rosellini said.

The PRSP, strategic planning documents first formulated in 2000, which identified targeting the poor and vulnerable as one of the key pillars and focused on MDG targets.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-3-204729-Pakistan-lags-on-development-goals-UNDP>

Mehtab Haider, The News – September 28, 2013





a distant dream. Majority of the respondents were of the view that the current security situation in Pakistan is the direct consequence of the international war on terrorism. The respondents emphasized that the international stakeholders, in the war on terror, should therefore appreciate the realities on the ground and shouldn't enforce its policies / agenda on the national government. At the national level, efforts should be made to enhance social cohesion among people from different sects and ethnic groups with the objective to promote tolerance for diverse views and beliefs.

### **3. Good Governance**

Good governance underpinned by the principles of transparency, accountability and the rule of law emerged as the second most pressing priority for the people of Pakistan. The respondents opined that bad governance had been the main barrier to the achievement of MDGs in Pakistan. The government officials themselves recognized the need for increasing efficiencies in the public service delivery systems and the Results Based Management system in the public offices. The respondents also underlined that full functioning local government system brings governing apparatus closer to the citizens and improves accountability and transparency mechanisms through greater people's participation. As part of the good governance system, rule of law and access to justice was identified as a key priority for Pakistan. The respondents observed that access to and use of legal system is unevenly distributed among different social and economic groups. The national legal system should be inclusive and should protect the property rights of women and marginalized groups and should provide safeguards against the abuse of political, economic or institutional authority by the elite class.

### **4. Inclusive Economic growth**

Economic growth in Pakistan has remained volatile resulting into unsustainable patterns of employment creation. But even high growth periods have not led to substantial reduction in poverty and inequalities in Pakistan. Some of the academics observed that the current political and economic structures in the country generate rents for the rich. The national economy needs institutional reforms to promote more equitable distribution of productive resources / assets (like land) and to help ensure that poor people participate as partners / actors in the economic development process rather than mere beneficiaries. Pakistan is bestowed with a huge youth bulge which should be converted into a "youth dividend" by enhancing their income generation skills and providing them

business development opportunities. The need for inclusive economic growth was highlighted.

### **5. Rule of Law**

The Workers' Federation emphasized that to foster inclusive economic growth and decent employment, rule of laws and implementation of laws, especially the Industrial Relations Laws to guarantee the rights available under ILO Conventions 87 and 98, should be accorded priority. Investment in Human Resource Development should also be prioritized and apart from developing 'market-based strategies', some basic standards need to be developed to measure workers' performance while keeping in view their specific challenges.

### **6. Inclusive Social Development**

Pakistan needs an agenda for inclusive social development. High fertility rate is one of the key obstacles to reaping the benefits of growth and should therefore be prioritized for appropriate interventions in the post MDGs' era. Women's reproductive rights should be guaranteed. Besides recognizing education as a fundamental human right, the quality of education should be improved. The education system should be equitable by providing equal accessibility and benefits to the rich and the poor cadres of the society. The government, civil society and media should promote spaces for cultural and social activities especially for youth. Social development services, especially health and education services shouldn't be the sole responsibility and domain of the public sector. The private sector stands ready to contribute to the social development in the country and should therefore be encouraged and provided enabling environment to play its due role.

### **7. Gender Equality and Women Empowerment**

There was a strong voice for gender equality and women empowerment. The participants observed that different forms of violence against women have put constraints on women's meaningful participation in social, economic and political fields. Women share in wage employment is one of the lowest in the South Asian Region. Programmes like Benazir Income Support Programme, a social safety net initiative, plays an important role in women's empowerment and should therefore be pursued and expanded. Women should be provided enabling environment, like the provision of safe transport, protection against harassment and abuse, so that they could freely take part in the social and economic activities. Pakistan has



## Millennium Development Goals Govt likely to miss most targets

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is set to miss most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a wide gap as it grapples with a continuous poor showing on this front, according to official sources.

The province is no way near to the targets of any of the 18 MDGs, Pakistan has set eyes on to achieve by the 2015 deadline, according to an official document available with Media. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is lagging far behind the globally set MDGs, including poverty alleviation, improving literacy rate, improving ratio of girls in schools, decreasing infant mortality rate, bringing down maternal mortality ratio, improving access to water and sanitation, and achieving the aspired limits of aid as a percentage to gross domestic product (GDP). An official said the province grappled with a soaring poverty rate that presently stood at 39 per cent, missing the 30 per cent target set for 2010. The province was required to bring it down to 20 per cent by 2015, according to the document.

"Our province is not an exception when you compare it with the other federating units on the MDGs' front," said an official. He added that the country as a whole was 'off track' as far as the status of the first seven MDGs was concerned. Pakistan's poor showing on the MDGs' front, said a knowledgeable official, was reviewed at a November last year meeting of D-10 Forum comprising Pakistan's development partners, including Asian Development Bank, UK's Department for International Development, Japan International Cooperation Agency, World Bank, UN agencies and some of the bilateral donors.

The province persists with a low literacy rate which, as per official estimates, stands at 47 per cent. The target for 2010 was 55 per cent and for 2015 it is 75 percent. The provincial government, said an official, was trying its best to improve the rate of literacy, but its efforts received a setback because of militancy and devastating floods in 2010. The province, he said, lost thousands of schools because of the two reasons. The primary net enrolment, which makes part of MDG-2, also appears to be a major concern for the provincial government.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, according to the document, has a 49 per cent primary net enrolment rate against 80 per cent target for 2015. Similarly, it lags far behind the assigned target of MDG-3 as the ratio of girls to boys in the primary schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa stands at 0.52:1 against

the 2015 target of 1:1. "The negligible performance in the education and health sectors has much to do with decrease in public sector expenditure on social sectors when you take into account growth in real terms as per the World Bank view," said a development planner.

He said that the province might have recorded an increase but KP is likely to miss most of targets in expenditure on education and health sectors, but it was nullified by increase in population. Also, achievement of MDG-4 or achieving an infant mortality rate any way near to the target seems to be next to impossible. As per official data, 63 infants out of every 1,000 live births die in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The target for 2010 was 60 deaths per 1,000 live births and for 2015 it is 40 per 1,000 live births.

In respect of the maternal mortality ratio, the province is struggling with a high rate as well. It has an alarmingly high rate of maternal mortality ratio that is evaluated to be 275 per 100,000 live births. The target for 2015, as per MDG-5, is 140 per 100,000 live births.

Major targets in terms of MDG-7 also appear to be a far cry for the provincial government, according to sources. The provincial government is required to provide access to drinking water and clean sanitation facilities to 85 per cent population by the due date in 2015. "The provincial government's data shows that some 71 per cent population of the province has access to drinking water and 66 per cent to sanitation facilities," said an official.

Intikhab Amir, Dawn - Jan 6, 2013

### Maternal and child health: Achieving MDGs a distant dream for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Despite a significant decrease in the maternal and under-five mortality rate in the country from 1990 to 2011, achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 seems like a distant dream.

This was revealed in an annual report, Accountability for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival- The 2013 Update, launched at Women Deliver – the third global conference on women's rights, concluded recently in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Launched by Countdown to 2015, a global movement of academics, governments and international agencies, the report also highlights countries' achievements in increasing coverage of key interventions and identifies remaining challenges many



ters have played major roles in stunting efforts to achieve the goals.

Aurangzeb explained that the war on terror's impact of Rs500 billion has affected Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa the most. She said the security situation has had a direct impact on education and increasing carbon emissions have immensely affected the environment.

Adding to that, she said increasing cases of polio have contributed to the failure to meet health indicator targets. She also cited influxes of displaced persons from the tribal belt and Afghan refugees as having an impact on health indicators.

Moreover, post-18th Amendment, the lack of a unified platform to coordinate with the provinces has also led to several drawbacks such as collecting accurate data for better analysis. There has been no monitoring of aid and expenses for the past 13 years, she said. Moreover, data collected at various times reveals contradicting information, she added.

"Members of different political parties have their own ideologies, but they have come together for Pakistan's development for the first time. Everyone is on the same page," she said. "Unless legislators take the driver's seat for development, we won't get anywhere" she added.

Set to be achieved in 2015, the MDGs are both global and local, tailored by each country to suit specific development needs. In Pakistan, the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals strategy is set to replace existing MDGs and brainstorming sessions on how to localise the SDGs will be done by the MDGs Task Force through action plans for 2014-15 and deliberations on post-2015 SDGs.

Meanwhile, speaking of the new plans, Aurangzeb said that while MDGs take a top-down approach, Vision 2025 looks at development from a bottom-up approach.

The shift will include a focus on peace and stability, good governance, monitoring and accountability, driving socio-economic development reforms, public-private partnerships in development discourse, and tackling exclusion, inequality, health, youth, climate and media issues.

In an effort to monitor ongoing development, MDGs desks established at the Planning and Development Ministry will seek feedback from stakeholder consultations at federal and provincial levels.

The conference will run till June 4 at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services.

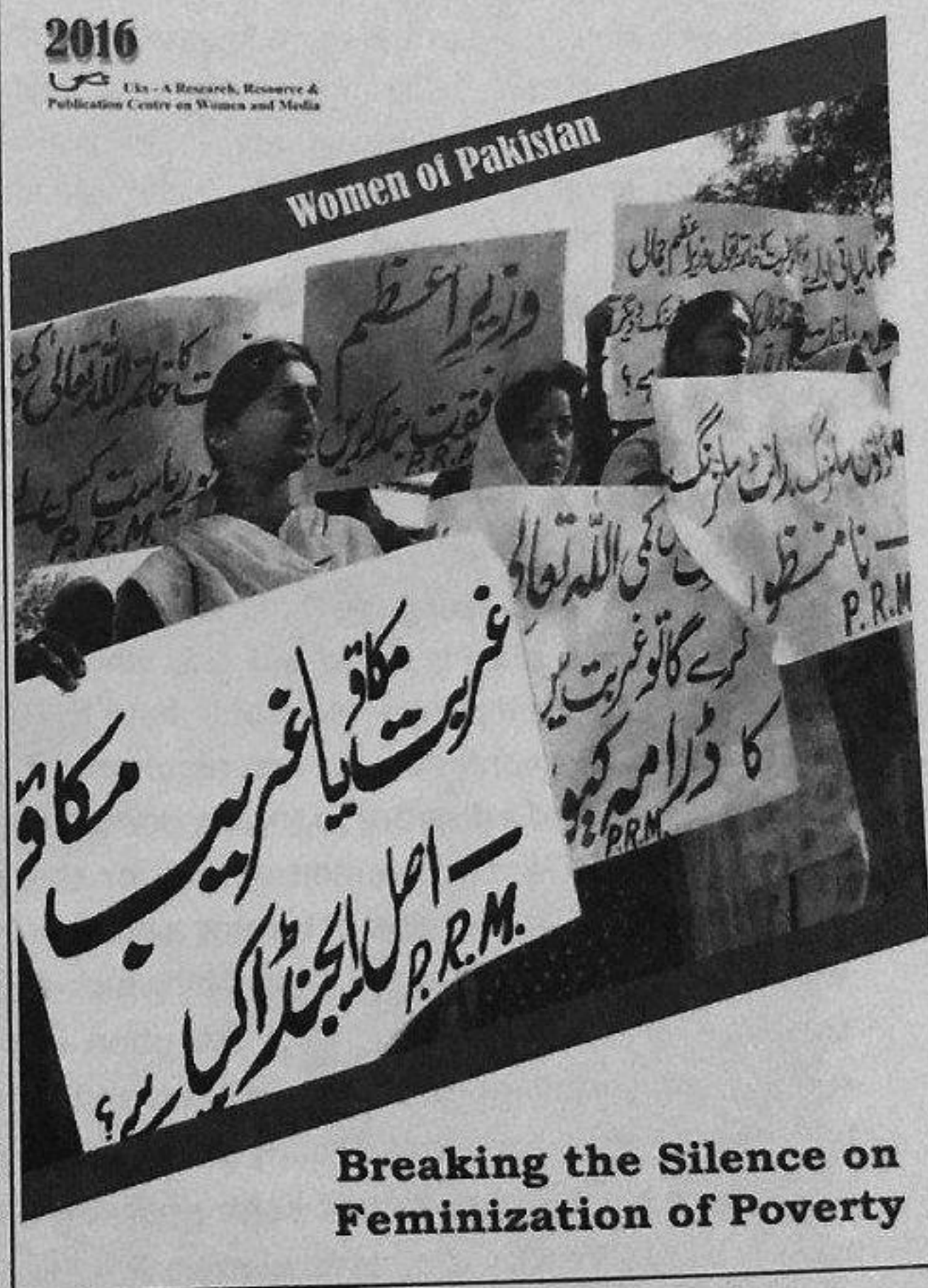


Someone asked me 'What is the theme of the 2016 Uks diary? I replied the 'Feminization of Poverty', only to discover that the media person posing the question had no idea what the feminization of poverty was! I found myself quite taken aback by the fact that certain members of the media, particularly those in key positions, were so ill informed. It occurred to me that where ignorance of such critical issues to Pakistan and to the world was so often highly visible in members of the media, what hope was there that members of the bureaucracy, the military, and the rest of civil society would comprehend the urgency of issues related to the 'feminization of poverty'? The first step in formulating policies which encourage a gender balanced society is to acknowledge the bias everywhere against fifty percent of the population of Pakistan, the women. It is only when the 'taboos' in the bureaucracy (and the powers that be) realize how detrimental their present, gender biased policies are to the wellbeing of all Pakistanis, and to the nation and country as a whole, that things may change for the better.

In the present climate of general ignorance, how and from whom do concerned citizens/groups demand gender-disaggregated data on the labour force, for example? In so far as the media is concerned, only well informed, aware, intelligent women and men can endeavor to fulfill the mammoth task of educating the public and holding the ruling cliques to task so that they too may fulfill their promises. Thus, this year's diary is focusing on issues pertaining to the 'Feminization of Poverty' in an attempt to highlight relevant issues for members of the media as well as the general public so that they may use the knowledge to achieve development goals, including gender balance in all areas of life.

The diary carries content about women's disproportionate and rising share of poverty worldwide, thus, the 'feminization of poverty' described by UNIFEM as 'the burden of poverty

borne by women, especially in developing countries'. It also places importance on analyzing gaps in gender in poverty analysis and policy, with a special focus on media coverage or lack thereof of 'feminization of poverty'. When conducting research for this diary, we were hampered by the dire lack of 10 available data even though we searched as far back as the 1960s, i.e. editorials, columns, and opinion pieces in the print media. We found that this term is, at best, mostly used in a superficial manner, often unsubstantiated, and ignoring what constitutes the core issues. Writers and reporters do not go beyond the surface and write simply about the helplessness of poverty-hit women. This patronizing, often sermonizing tone







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# Diary 2015

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## Women of Pakistan: Missed MDGs, Must achieve SDGs

 **Uks - A Research, Resource &  
Publication Centre on Women and Media**



## Civil society points out loopholes in MDGs report

Terming it contradictory to the situation on ground, the civil society organizations have pointed out embarrassing loopholes in Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report (MDGR) 2010 drafted by the Government to defend its position before high level UN-led Millennium Development Goals (MDG) review meeting in September. The Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report 2010 (PMDGR 2010) is the fourth in the series of progress reports, covering the time period from 2005 to 2009. The report aims to highlight the development challenges facing Pakistan among the masses and building consensus, ownership and cooperation amongst various stakeholders including development partners at the global, national and provincial levels in achieving the MDGs.

In an analysis drafted to highlight loopholes in MDGR 2010, civil society organizations, who have been actively engaged in initiatives to achieve one or more of the MDGs, say that the report tries very hard to down play the dismal state of affairs - in the process often sounding technically flawed and providing an overall sense of contradiction. The analysis shared by World Population Foundation (WPF), Pakistan, points out that the report's sheer emphasis on MDG 8 (develop a global partnership for development), claiming it to be the single most important factor in achieving the remaining 7 goals, unfortunately serves only the purpose of fuelling disappointment.

"With specific reference to MDGs 3 (promote gender equality and empower women) and 5 (improve maternal health), the picture painted in the report is misleading to say the least," it says. Chapter 4 of the report discusses the progress made with regard to MDG 3. The report states that as of 2010, Pakistan is on track with regard to all the indicators except "share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector" for which progress has been defined as "slow".

The assessment states that a closer study of the report contradicts the claim of being "on track", especially with regard to the indicator for female literacy rate. While it is stated on the one hand, "Despite the fact that Pakistan has missed the MDG target of gender parity in primary and secondary education in 2005, with the current pace, the MDG target of gender parity in primary and secondary education is likely to be achieved by 2015." However, little has been mentioned of what precisely will be done to achieve parity in primary and secondary education when the female literacy rate at 45 per cent is considerably lagging behind as compared to male literacy rate of 69 per cent.

The most glaring paradox arrives when the same report states, "However, despite some improvement, it is highly unlikely that the MDG target of female literacy will be reached in 2015." About MDG 5, the analysis mentions that Pakistan suffers from an alarmingly high Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) - 276 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. The ratio is considerably higher when the individual average of provinces is taken into account with Balochistan taking the lead with 856 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. However, despite this grim situation, the report claims that Pakistan is on track vis-a-vis reducing maternal mortality ratio.

Once again the report contradicts itself when it states that Pakistan is lagging in all other corresponding indicators (i.e. proportion of births attended by skilled birth attendants, contraceptive prevalence rate, total fertility rate and proportion of women 15-49 years who had given birth during last 3 years and made at least one antenatal care consultation) and yet it will be able to achieve the target for reduced MMR by 2015. The fact that Pakistan is lagging behind in 3 out of the 4 indicators for MDG 5, it does not register how then the MDG target of bringing MMR to 140 can be achievable?

Moreover, chapter 6, which defines Pakistan's progress with regard to MDG 5 lacks on a number of other aspects. Firstly, it sports no reference to abortion, when the incidence of unsafe abortions serves as an important cause of maternal deaths in Pakistan. Secondly, not very unexpectedly, maternal mortality has been dealt with as a public health agenda and emphasis has been placed on improving infrastructure and access to Lady Health Visitors/Workers (LHVs/LHWs) to reduce maternal deaths.

Thirdly, the weight of the whole strategy to reduce maternal deaths has been founded on the assumption that increased access to LHVs will solve the problem and that strategies need to be put in place to counter the decline in the numbers of skilled birth attendants. However, no evaluation of the actual impact that LHVs have with regard to MMR has been referred to. Moreover, there are a number of other underlying causes such as malnutrition, early marriages and abortion that have not been addressed.

Likewise, the role of two important actors - civil society and media - with regard to Safe Motherhood initiatives in the country has received no mention in the report. Finally, perhaps the most important of all factors that has not received due attention in the report deals with resource



that more students should be enrolled, he told. Through community level we would provide Rs 250 to Rs 350 for each child monthly. Ghost schools: Minister said numbers of non-functional schools in Sindh were up to 4,000. He said steps were being taken to reduce such schools.

Instead of calling ghost schools, call them shelter less schools. We have directed revenue department/district administration department to

identify shelter less schools. Also we have sought public representative's to report such schools. We have asked them to identify at least 10 shelters less schools or closed school in their area.

**Endowment fund:** Providing the endowment fund to the lesser-privileged areas, we are taking every step. My efforts are to support students of less privileged areas for higher education. Generally endowment fund is kept for students to get quality

and higher education. Bifurcation of endowment fund at district level would be made compulsory.

**Model schools:** He said at least one boy and one girl high school in every tehsil of Sindh out of 130 tehsils would be made a model school. They will be called 'Happy School'. These schools would be fully equipped with library, laboratory and sports facilities.

*Daily Times - April 11, 2014*

Beyond  
ICPD

and MDGs:

*NGOs Strategizing for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Asia-Pacific*

50♂/50♀



## Killing over poverty

Sir: I was deeply shattered after recently reading a news report about a couple that killed their children because of poverty. This is not the first incident of its kind in the history of Pakistan. Likewise, in 2013, a man shot himself dead after killing his two daughters due to poverty in the Islampura area of Lahore. According to a survey report, the poverty rate has jumped from 23.9 percent to 37.5 percent in three years.

This is one of the most severe problems in Pakistan and the government should take action. It is an unbelievably sad situation wherein poor parents kill their own innocent children. In a country well-governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of but in a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of. Pakistan is the latter.

*Soha Jafry, Karachi*

*Daily Times - March 7, 2014*



**I AM  
SO  
HUNGRY**

it hurts.



# Battle Education begins

ASMA GHANI

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Education, Trainings and Standards in Higher Education in collaboration with provincial education ministries launched a three-day nationwide enrolment campaign on Monday to get 500,000 additional children admitted to formal and informal schools. All the area/provincial governments have been directed to participate in the campaign and make arrangements for enrolment of

would be enrolled into non-formal schools preferably where they could learn some vocational skills also and get back to formal schools

mitted on the spot without fulfilling legal formalities to facilitate the people.

He said in the FG set-up more students could be accommodated easily but model institutions are already overcrowded so the CADD is planning to start additional evening classes for such students.

But the officials fear that the initiative may not benefit the real students as many who were refused to give admissions in model colleges in the start of the academic session and enrolled themselves in F.G schools have geared up their efforts to get enrolled again in the

additional classes of the evening shifts.

And the newly enrolled students may be referred to FG schools. Besides, providing books to them would also be difficult for the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE). "Academic session started in April last but still students have not been provided complete set of books.

Under these circumstances, it seems difficult that new students would be provided books," maintained an official wishing anonymity.

*The Nation*  
September 10, 2013



Nationwide campaign to enrol 500,000 out of school kicks off.-APP

as well after improving their learning levels.

In the capital too, the government schools working under the Capital Administration and Development Division (CADD) kicked off the campaign that also marked the World Literacy Day that fell on September 8, Sunday, so the educational institutes could not observe it.

Rafique Tahir, CADD Education Advisor, claimed that on the first day the schools enrolled 3,127 children into various schools. He said teams have been sent to convince children and their parents in slums and other areas to get children back to schools and even children have been ad-

## Doctors promoting formula milk at expense of babies' lives

Deprivation of mother's milk leading to sharp rise in underweight and stunted infants

ISLAMABAD: Often referred to as saviours, medical practitioners are respected the world over, but this image is often shattered by people whose malpractices put the lives of their patients at risk.

Going against what they are taught at medical and nursing colleges, a majority of doctors and nurses recommend formula milk brands in return for a commission from the companies, instead of promoting breastfeeding.

Due to lack of information, most parents go for formula milk simply because the doctor recommended it and Sabeen, a resident of Rawat, is no different. Worried about her five-month-old baby's acute diarrhoea, she had brought him to the Children Hospital at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) for a check-up.

"I don't know why my baby is suffering from diarrhoea and getting weaker every day because I only give him formula milk as recommended by the doctor," she said, while comforting her crying baby. She added that due to her inability to afford formula milk, a pack of which costs Rs375 to Rs555 for local and foreign brands respectively, she mixes excess water in the powdered formula, decreasing the quantity of milk.

Most mothers aware of early initiation of breastfeeding

She seemed unaware of the fact that the water in the formula milk given to her baby could have caused diarrhoea.

Unethical promotion of formula milk and lack of awareness in the country have resulted in a sharp rise in the number of malnourished, underweight and stunted infants because it deprives them of the most nutritious diet there could be, mother's milk.

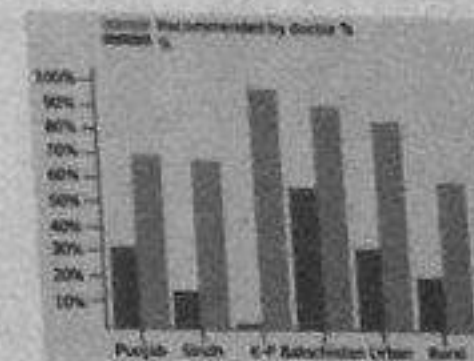
According to The Pakistan Demographic Health Survey 2012-13, there has been an increase of 0.6 per cent in the exclusive breastfeeding rate, while the rate of bottle-fed babies has risen by 8.9 per cent since 2006.

**Breastfeeding practices up to the age of six months**

Recently, a report titled, "Breastfeeding: A roadmap to promotion and protection," commissioned by Save the Children revealed that 84% of all mothers interviewed for the study were advised to give formula milk by health care providers.

"It's unfortunate that despite a law that promotes breastfeeding, the practice goes unpunished and doctors continue to play with the lives of infants and

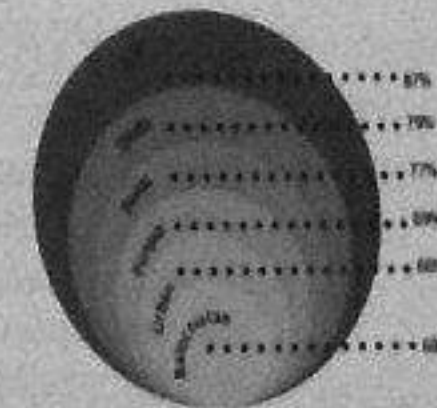
get paid for it due to the absence of a board to address the issue at the federal level and sub-committees at the provincial level," said Wing Director Dr Baseer Achakzai, who works under the Ministry of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination Nutri-



About 8.9% mothers were advised to exclusively breastfeed their babies till six months, but only 41% were given this advice by a doctor or nurse

**8.9%**

is the rate by which the number of bottle-fed babies has increased in 2012-13



tion. "Once the board and committees are constituted, practitioners can be jailed for six months, fined Rs.0.5 million and have their licenses cancelled."



# One baby dies every three minutes in Pakistan: Unicef

Distress signals

Report highlights inequalities in health, education in rural versus urban areas

● OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD

A baby dies every three minutes in Pakistan, a Unicef report has found, with more than 350,000 children in Pakistan dying before the age of five. Of these deaths, 20 per cent are caused by pneumonia, even though Pakistan was first among South Asian countries to introduce the pneumococcal vaccine.

The report, titled "Improving Children's Lives: Transforming the Future" and published by Unicef, marks 25 years since the General Assembly of the UN adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report explores rates of child health, welfare and education, highlighting the discrepancies between children from higher and lower income families, as well as those in rural versus urban areas. For instance, Unicef found that at least 24 per cent of women in Pakistan, aged 20 to 24, were married before turning 18, with girls from poor families more likely to get married before the age of 18 than those in richer families (46 per cent

UNDER AGE MARRIAGE

46%

women are likely to get married before age of 18 in poorer families as against

18%

in richer families

as compared to 18 per cent). Also, 29 per cent of women aged 20 to 24 living in rural areas of the country married before the age of 18 compared to 16 per cent of those living in urban areas.

**Child health**

Unless Pakistan and Afghanistan - two of the remaining three polio endemic countries in the world - stop transmission of the remaining polio

EDUCATION

57%

children in their fifth year of primary education cannot do two-digit division

reservoirs, the threat of the virus spreading to polio-free countries "remains real", Unicef states.

The neonatal mortality (death in the first 28 days in life) rate in Pakistan was 42 per 1,000 live births in 2012, with 202,000 neonatal deaths in the year. Another interesting fact that the report pointed out was that only about half of the births, or 49 per cent, were attended by skilled health staff during the period 2007-2012.

"Pakistan has the lowest birth registration rate in the region, with 73 per cent of its children under five not being registered," the report further stated.

The report reveals that while Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka have ratified the Optional Protocols on protecting children in armed conflicts, Pakistan has not.

**Stunting in children**

Unicef describes 'stunting' as a process of slow growth that starts before birth and is caused by poor maternal nutrition, poor feeding

Education

In Pakistan, one in three children between the ages of five and nine are not in school, Unicef says, with a gap of 50 per cent between the richest and the poorest children.

In Pakistan, armed conflict in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa in 2009 displaced an estimated three million people - some 600,000 children in three districts alone were reported to have missed at least a year of schooling in the three districts that saw the heaviest fighting, the report states.

Meanwhile, 51 per cent of children in Grade 5 cannot read Grade 2-level texts in their local language. Also, 57 per cent in their fifth year of primary education cannot do two-digit division. In rural areas, only 38 per cent of girls can do simple arithmetic compared with 45 per cent boys.

Only 43 per cent of the girls can read as compared to 48 per cent of the boys. In rich families, the gender gap does not exist when it comes to education. Just 15 per cent of girls from poorest families can read basic Urdu as compared to 21 per cent of boys and 42 per cent of girls from richest families.

The report draws correlations between mothers' level of formal education and stunted growth, stating 20 per cent of mothers who received secondary education and above have children with stunted growth, while the percentage rises to 50 per cent for mothers who had received no education. Additionally, around 50 per cent of children in rural areas had stunted growth as compared to 35 per cent in urban areas.

Express-Tribune, March 12, 2014

## Pakistan unlikely to meet MDG on health by 2015

Research study reveals low caste women facing double disadvantages  
OUR STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD - Of five of the six maternal deaths in the past four years in the village field site had occurred amongst the lowest caste of the village. In other words, 23 per cent of all maternal deaths were concentrated in the 17 per cent of the village population. This high rate of maternal deaths occurred despite the availability of significant maternal health services in the region, says a research study.

The findings of the study were shared at a workshop here on Thursday. The University of Alberta, Canada, Punjab Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Programme and Real Medicine Foundation jointly conducted a Knowledge Dissemination Workshop to share findings of a 10-month ethnographic research titled 'Disparities in Access to Maternal Health Services in Punjab: Poverty, Gender and Exclusion' here in Islamabad.

The workshop commenced by Dr. Zafar Ikram, MNCH Programme Chief, through his welcome speech. Dr Zubia Mumtaz of the University of Alberta and principal investigator of the research gave a detailed presentation, where she explained that despite the Safe Motherhood and Millenni-

um Development Goal initiatives, Pakistan is unlikely to meet MDG goal No. 5 by 2015. A key reason for this failure, she suggested, was that strategies used to date have been failed to understand and address the key social and economic factors that restrict access to maternal healthcare for women living at the economic and social margins of society.

The research aimed to develop a detailed understanding of ultra-poor and socially excluded women are and specifically how their vulnerabilities and maternity experiences are structured by caste, economic class, and gendered power dynamics that serve the interests of the privileged. A major finding is that of five of the six maternal deaths in the past four years in the village field site had occurred amongst the lowest caste of the village. In other words, 23 percent of all maternal deaths were concentrated in the 17 percent of the village population. This high rate of maternal deaths occurred despite the availability of significant maternal health services in the region.

Dr Mumtaz described the ways in which the traditional South Asian caste system, based on occupational hierarchy, is the basis

for the systematic exclusion of the lower caste people (also known in Kammi and Mussalis in villages) from economic and social resources and opportunities of all kinds. They thus face a vicious cycle of chronic, intergenerational poverty. Low caste women are doubly disadvantaged, as gender values and norms ascribe a lower value to women's lives. The design and implementation of existing health and poverty programs are poorly equipped to address these underlying factors that are the key drivers of high maternal mortality rates in Pakistan.

During the presentation, different maternal death cases were shared with the audience in order to illustrate the subtle, complex ways in which caste, economic class and gender interact to exclude Kammi women from maternal healthcare.

Dr Nisar Ahmad Cheema, DG Health Punjab, concluded the workshop, acknowledging the importance of addressing the various factors that marginalize poor women from maternal health services and outlined some ways in which the program aims to address them.

The Nation  
November 16, 2012



## What Did the MDGs Mean for Pakistani Women? And Now the SDGs?

Tahira Abdullah

We have seen, and have ourselves also indulged in, a great deal of chest-beating, mourning and lamentation over Pakistan's missing the numeric indicators of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which was a challenge it so bravely accepted at the Millennium Summit in 2000.

Some might say "bravely" is the wrong word – "foolhardily", "rashly" or "recklessly" might better describe the MDGs promises of those in power then – a military regime, headed by the serving Chief of Army Staff, President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who had seized power through staging a coup d'état in October 1999, deposing, imprisoning and exiling the democratically elected Prime Minister, Mian M. Nawaz Sharif and his PML(N) government.

Promises that were not kept... Of the 15 years the world had been given (2000-2015) to achieve the not-so-ambitious goals, 'targets' (*sic*) and indicators set for the MDGs by the United Nations, Pakistan was under military rule for almost 9 of those years. Absolute rule, under absolute dictatorship is always a negative, by definition, but SOME good MIGHT or COULD or SHOULD have come out of it, provided the absolute ruler had had the wisdom, the vision, the commitment, and, above all, the political will. We now know – wisdom with hindsight – that, despite having the financial resources, absolute authority and *de facto* power, he did not have the above prerequisites.

Neither did his cobbled-together political entity, the 'King's Party' (PML-Q), which was in office during 2002-07.

But then, neither did his democratically elected successors: throughout the entire five-year tenure of the PPP, ANP and MQM coalition government (2008-13), as well as the incoming post-18<sup>th</sup> CA federal and provincial governments in 2013 – the PML(N), PPP, PTI, JI, NP and others – there has been no demonstration of the requisite commitment.

Consequently, we have missed the bus as far as the MDGs are concerned. Sadly, it appears that, where Poverty, Hunger and our most pressing socio-economic development needs in Health, Education and Environment are concerned, it is irrelevant whether the ruling dispensation in Pakistan is democratic or dictatorial. These fundamental issues are simply NOT a high priority for our ruling elite...

In fact, the biggest damage to Pakistan's economic development and to the MDGs programme was done by President Gen. Musharraf's imported PM, Shaukat Aziz (of Citibank/USA), through his cold, calculated, dishonest and arbitrary revision or "fixing" of the national poverty data, by unilaterally changing the technical and definitional goal-posts in FY2005-06. We are still suffering the negative consequences to date, and this *mala fide* action did incalculable harm to the policies on MDG # 1 in Pakistan: "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger", as well as to its reporting.

The Government of Pakistan's annual "progress" reports on the MDGs to the UN



# Highest infant mortality rate

According to the charity organization Save the Children, at least one million newborns die within 24 hours of birth throughout the world, of which 200,000 deaths occur in Pakistan putting us at the top of the list of newborn death rates globally. Child mortality rate in Pakistan is the highest followed by Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Afghanistan and several others. The Pakistani chapter of the organization urged the government to take necessary steps in order to address this medical dilemma. Shocking as the revelation is, it brings us back to an issue that has been raised on countless occasions: lack of basic medical facilities and healthcare for the mother and her child.

The most aggravating aspect of child mortality in Pakistan is the fact that these deaths are preventable. They can be easily stopped if the mother is placed within the proper care of a certified birth attendant. Although the government has initiated the deployment of health community midwives

and health workers for the assistance of mothers and their infants, the plight has gone from bad to worse with nearly 70,000 infants dying on the first day of birth. The reason here is abysmal: midwives sent to the rural populations – where these deaths occur most frequently – are under-trained and over-worked.

Furthermore, 18,000 children under five die in Pakistan annually despite the fact that the ailments these young ones suffer from are simply a matter of prevention and care (something that is glaringly absent from the agenda in the health ministry that rarely brings up the impasse to begin with). The need of the hour is to appoint qualified health workers, including midwives, to remote areas with little access to authentic medical care and to treat these lives – increasingly poverty-ridden – as lives are treated in wealthy metropolises and developed areas.

The Nation – February 27, 2014

## 111 children among 1,000 die before fifth birthday: Unicef

By Our Staff Correspondent

QUETTA: Unicef said on Monday that from among every 1,000 live births in Balochistan, 111 children died before their fifth birthday.

"In every 1,000 live births 111 children die before their fifth birthday in Balochistan and 97 of these children die within one year of their birth," said Dr Jawahir Habib, Unicef's Communication for Development Specialist in Balochistan.

Speaking at a programme, she said 60 per cent of those deaths were caused by communicable and vaccine preventable diseases, adding that a mere 16pc of children in the province were fully immunised and protected against eight diseases.

Over 52.2pc of the children were chronically malnourished, she pointed out.

Dr Ishaq Panezai, a representative of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation, said the Healthy Balochistan programme included an emergency plan for routine immunisation, accelerated action plan for polio eradication, anti-measles campaigns, Vitamin A supplements and mother and child weeks.

Masooma Qurban of Unicef stressed the role of the media to raise awareness about child health issues through accurate and timely information.

Dawn, April 8, 2014

## Every 4th out-of-school child belongs to Pakistan

MUQADDAM KHAN  
SWABI

SWABI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MNA, Asad Umer, has said that there is need of strong determination and restless efforts to enrol 25 million out of school children in the country.

Addressing the Optics Convention here at Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology on Sunday, Umer expressed sorrow over the fate and dark future of out of school children. The entire society should play its role in educating these children because they belong to Pakistan and future of the country depends upon them, he said.

"Every fourth out of school child across the world belongs to Pakistan,"

he remarked. However, he did not elaborate how many children were out of schools in each province, tribal belt and Islamabad. Similarly, he also did not explain how many children were out of school in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where PTI has a coalition government and recently launched an enrolment drive.

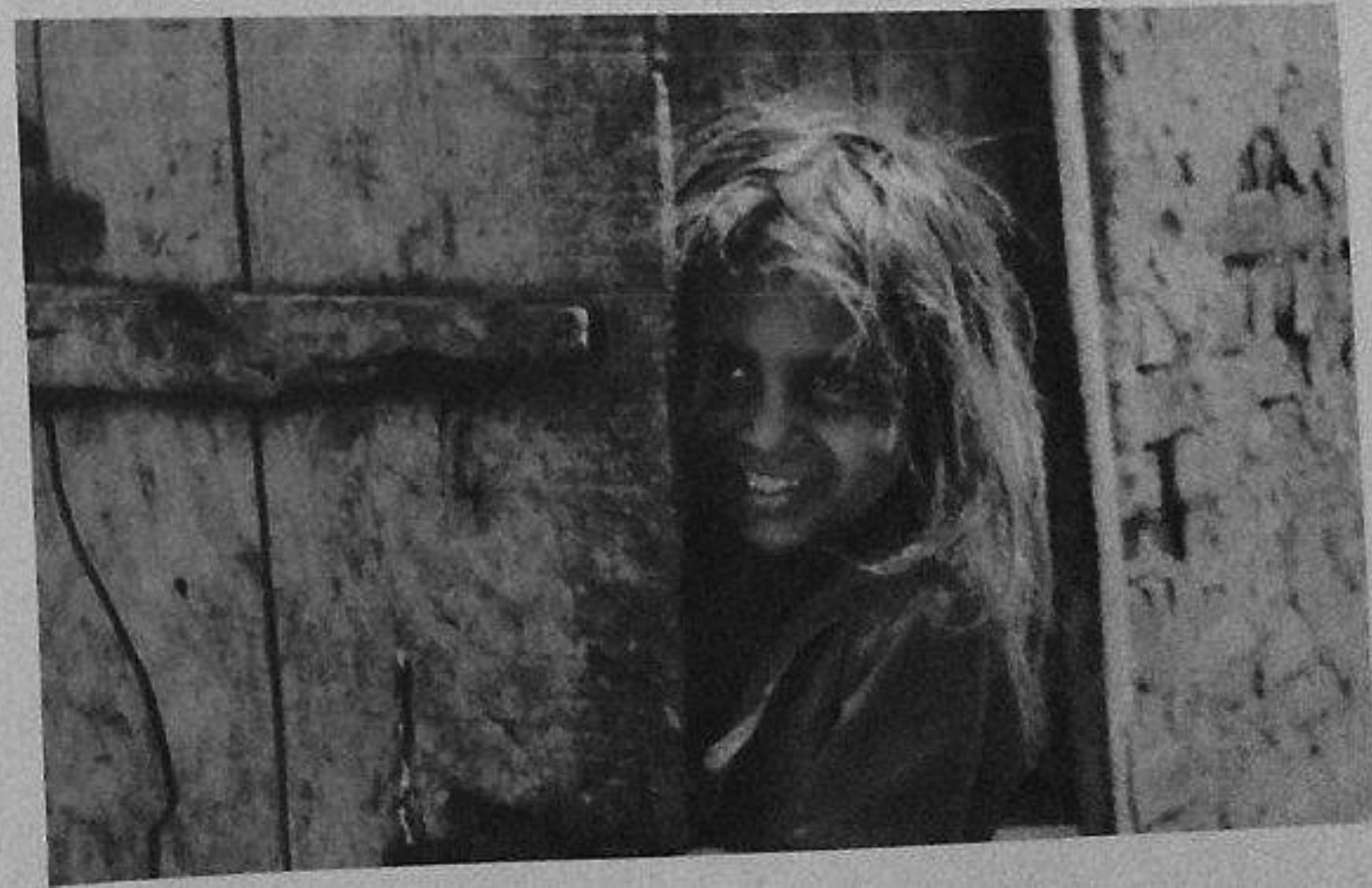
He called for introducing reforms in education sector and strongly opposed systems within the education system, citing the example of different kinds of schools for the children of elite class, and middle and poor section of the society. "This should be changed if we really want development and prosperity," he added. "We should provide an opportunity to the deprived children

to get education."

"The GIK Institute is run by academia and here the students receive quality education but there are universities where the education standard is nominal," he said.

In question answer session, he said all those who work abroad would be back home one day. "About \$14 billion remittance we get from the overseas employees each year. If you (Pakistani) are in Pakistan or abroad you are not only a Pakistani but a true asset of the country," he said. "No one can deny that there are different communities and groups in Pakistan," he said.

The Nation – April 28, 2014





ments first formulated in 2000 – identified targeting the poor and vulnerable, as one of the key pillars and focused on the MDG targets, have significantly influenced pro-poor policy-making and spending in Pakistan, it said.

“Part of the success can be attributed to the PRSP Monitoring Unit created in finance ministry with UNDP’s support,” the statement said, adding that a testament to the work of the PRSP secretariat had been the increase in pro-poor expenditure from 3.8% in 2001 to 9.86% in 2011. “There has been an unprecedented increase in funds allocation for Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), especially for health and education, in the recent budget, which reinforces the government’s resolve to achieve MDGs,” said Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms Ahsan Iqbal.

Iqbal said the government needed to invest in youth, technology and innovation to find quick-win solutions to some of the constraints hampering the achievement of MDGs.

The Express-Tribune - September 28, 2013

### **Lagging behind: Pakistan off-track on Millennium Development Goals**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is struggling to meet over 30 indicators under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and is on track to attain only nine out of the 41 aimed for 2015, the government admitted on Wednesday.

The MDGs are eight international development goals that were established in 2000 by UN and its member states for completion by 2015. These goals, comprising social and health issues, have been further divided into over 60 indicators, of which Pakistan had pledged to 41. However, Pakistan aims to achieve only nine, missing out on over 30 key indicators focusing on health, debt servicing, education and living standards.

Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal blamed economic conditions for the poor performance.

“Reasons for missing most of the indicators include internal and external economic and non-economic challenges,” Iqbal conceded in a written reply to the Senate.

The Minister pointed out natural disasters, conflicts, administrative and

political changes, weak commitments to economic reforms, lack of awareness, fading commitments by development partners due to global recession of 2007 and belated ownership of MDG agenda at the sub-national level, as reasons for failure.

“Impact of these challenges reflected in slow progress and hence non-achievement of many of the indicators,” he added.

Muttahida Qaumi Movement Senator Tahir Mashadi had expressed doubt over whether Pakistan will be able to achieve the targets pledged under the MDGs by the 2015 deadline.

The Government, in its reply, stated that it was working to enhance the capacity of the people through human resource development which involved better education, health, population welfare, skill development services, improved access to clean water and sanitation, and gender mainstreaming initiatives.

The Minister also counted steps like provision of productive assets, inclusion of micro-finance and transitioning toward social safety nets to protect those against natural and manmade disasters.

Iqbal also highlighted that the poverty headcount had declined significantly under the Pakistan Living Standards Measurement survey data – from 34.5% in 2001-02 to 12.4% in 2010-11.

Findings of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) revealed that Punjab, in lieu of its performance in most indicators, is far ahead in achieving the MDGs as compared to other provinces. The findings also stated that no MDG will be achieved in entirety in Sindh, but that the province had made significant progress in certain indicators such as ‘ensuring environmental sustainability’ (MDG7) and ‘promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment’ (MDG 3).

Meanwhile, according to the findings, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa had made significant progress in MDG 7 which reflected in its achievement of forest cover and protection of land area for conservation of wildlife. Progress in other MDG areas, however has suffered in part owing to the unprecedented natural as well as man-made calamities which have afflicted the province.

Balochistan is the worst performing province in most if not all areas of the MDGs. No MDG can be achieved in entirety in the province and in the aftermath of the floods, and the declining national economic growth, even the achievements made so far in a few indicators are at risk of being undone, the UNDP report stated.

The Express-Tribune - January 9, 2014.



# 'Millennium goals missed because of low savings'

Planning & development secretary says Pakistan lagging behind in healthcare, education; security expenditure forces country to seek IMF assistance

By Ikram Junaidi

ISLAMABAD: Planning and Development Secretary Hassan Nawaz Tarar has blamed Pakistan's failure to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on low savings and financial crises.

According to the secretary, Pakistan's savings were only at 13.2 per cent, almost 50 per cent less than its neighbours such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India and Indonesia. Mr Tarar said that the national savings of Bangladesh are currently at 29 per cent.

The planning secretary was briefing members of the Senate Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Reforms, chaired by Senator Rehman Malik, on Thursday.

He claimed that Pakistan is preferred to invest their money in property and automobiles rather than income-generating businesses, which was the cause of the problem. "Because of different lifestyles and nature of people, Pakistanis give less importance to business," he said, "However, in other countries people prefer to invest their savings in businesses."

Planning & development secretary says Pakistan lagging behind in healthcare, education; security expenditure

forces country to seek IMF assistance

"A large number of children are suffering from malnutrition. As per the MDGs, we have to bring down the under-five mortality rate to 52, but the current rate is 89 deaths per 1,000 children. The immunisation rate has to be 90 per cent, but it is actually 80 per cent," he said.

"Lady Health Workers' (LHWs) coverage should be 100 per cent in the country, but at the moment LHWs are only working in 80 per cent of the country. The literacy rate of the country should be 88 per cent, but right now, it is at 58 per cent," he said.

Mr Tarar said that the MDGs require that at least 55 per cent of all couples should be using contraceptives, but so far this figure has only reached 35 per cent.

The goals also state that forest cover should be six per cent, which at the moment is 5.2 per cent, he said.

Report sounds alarm bells over education crisis, calls for reform

Committee Chairman Rehman Malik said that almost 65 per cent of Pakistan's revenue is spent on security and foreign debts. We have no choice but to go for International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s programmes and follow its policies. We should aim for self reliance, Senator Malik said.

"At the moment, major businessmen are shifting their businesses out of the country. The money is also being shifted out through hawala and hundi. Our biggest issue is in-

come generation," he said.

The senator added that planning is considered the backbone of every country and lauded the 'Vision 2025' presented by planning ministry, but he said there is nothing in terms of practical work.

"A number of projects have been delayed and the cost of those projects has increased due to inflation. The government has announced that loans will be given to the students, but there are no criteria to ensure the recovery of those loans," he said.

He also pointed out the lack of an awareness programme regarding HIV/AIDS.

A member of the committee, Amar Jeet, diverted the attention of the committee towards Swat, where more than 30 cases of dengue have been reported. Resultantly, Rehman Malik instructed the committee secretary to write to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) chief minister and ask him to address the issue.

Nisar Muhammad, another member of the committee, said that some areas, such as communication, health, water and power, are not clear in the 18th amendment.

"Funds are being spent on unapproved projects in Lahore, but approved projects of KP, such as Munda Dam, are being ignored. KP is facing all the brunt of the war against terrorism, but only one per cent of the coalition support fund is being given to KP," he said.

*Dawn - July 25, 2014*



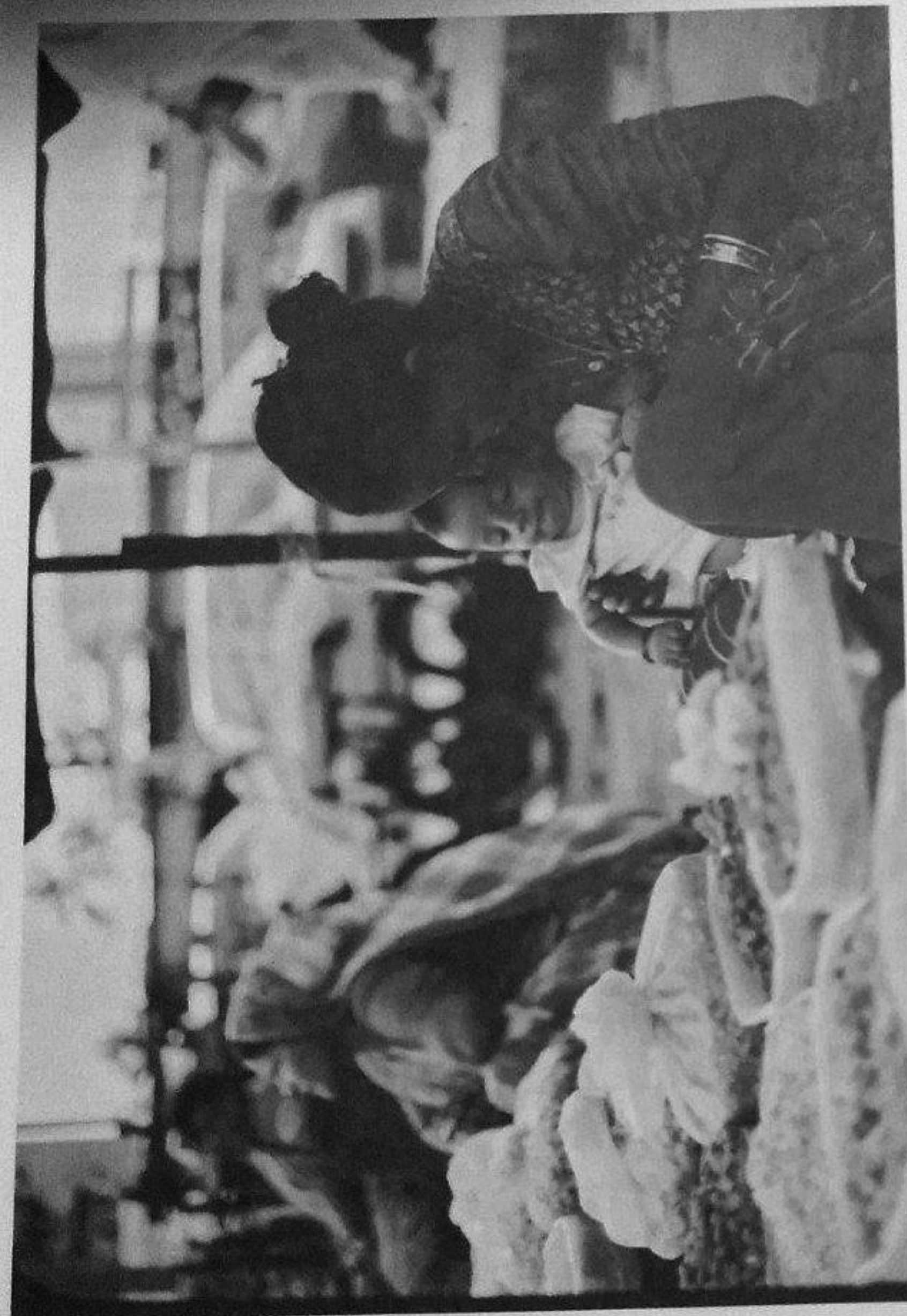


Photo credit: Paaras Abbas

This year's Uks annual desk diary focuses on Women and the Millennium Development Goals and beyond. Searching for related and relevant content (newspapers, magazines, the internet, etc.) was indeed a challenging task.

Firstly, there was very little MDGs-specific content, and secondly, most of it was not focused on the gender aspects of the Millennium Development Goals. Most of what was found was event-based reporting, with very few analytical articles, editorials or columns asking the right questions. Thus, one did not see the media critiquing the various governments on how the country performed and whether these governments were 'on track' to achieve the MDGs? Neither could we find any kind of comparative analyses on why some countries performed well and others not so well.

The media also did not report on the Human Face of the MDGs, exploring and seeking answers to questions such as: What do MDGs mean for people, especially the marginalised? What is the role of civil society? Are women equal partners as receivers and implementers? What are the success stories heading towards 2015? Who are the key players driving forward change and what are they doing? What changes are needed to meet the 2015 targets? Sadly though, not much was written or debated in the media and these questions remain unanswered and unexplored.

Where did the answers lie? In my observation as a media analyst and communications expert, the media needed to look at many areas of concern, including many 'gray' areas. No doubt a free, independent, and pluralistic media environment can have a profound influence on people's opportunities to access information and services, but if that information or content is gender-blind or biased then it excludes a large percentage of the population, namely women, from the process on how to understand and be able to exercise rights, to participate in decisions that affect their lives, and to hold to account those in positions of power and responsibility. The establishment and nurturing of a free and independent media is crucial across all sectors to achieve real and sustained overall development of society and it is equally crucial to include women in the process.

Case studies show that participatory approaches to media can empower communities by strengthening internal democratic processes and, especially for marginalized groups (again, women form a large chunk of this group), can enhance self-esteem, protect cultural values, and facilitate the integration of new elements like gender balance and women's empowerment. Beyond the idea of disseminating information, entertainment, or even education, the media's deeper cultural role must be explored and utilized as it has a strong influence on both individuals and society, be it political, economic or social. Stories about corruption have led to legal and regulatory changes many times.

In the field of development, the media gives people access to information and provides platforms where development issues can be discussed. For instance, market-building strategies of the World Bank prioritize linking communities of people in networks of information and trade. The social impact of media includes improving the quality of education, informing the public about health threats and safe practices to avoid them, serving local communities by bringing attention to their needs, and in times



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Talking to The Express Tribune, he said the schemes such as Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) were introduced to eradicate poverty but were not dedicated to achieve these goals.

"Pakistani authorities are always very quick to sign on these indicators and vow to achieve them, but later on fail to show political will into accomplishing them."

In their report, the civil society organisations assess that Pakistan will have to establish new internal resource mobilisation efforts, and divert additional resources to meet MDG goals.

Institutional weakness in its response to the MDGs, financing shortfalls and the international community's failure to fulfill its commitments led to the failure of achieving the targets, the report says.

Organisations feel that the country's progress has been halted due to food and fuel crisis, natural disasters, militancy.

### **Poverty and hunger**

The civil society organisations believe that significant progress has been made to eradicate poverty but the target is unlikely to be achieved. Social activists feel that food inflation is reversing steps taken to eradicate poverty, and the poverty headcount ratio which was 17.2 in 2007-08 according to the national poverty survey, might have increased.

### **Education**

According to the civil society, there has been regression and there is no possibility to achieve the target which was to enable girls and boys to complete a course of their primary schooling by 2015.

According to the government, literacy rate has risen from 35% in 1990/1991 to 58% in 2008/9, but this falls short of MDG target of 88% by 2015.

### **Gender equality**

The Gender Parity Index for primary and secondary education stands at 0.84 and 0.80 respectively showing little change from rates of 0.82 and 0.75 in 2001/02. The civil society feels that the target of meeting gender parity in primary and secondary education could not be met by 2015.

### **Child mortality**

The mortality rate of under-five year children has declined from 124 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990s to 87 deaths per 1,000 live births

in 2010. Commenting on this target, social activists feel that they have mixed opinions but the goal is not on track for achievement.

### **Maternal health**

The maternal mortality ratio has continued to decline from 533 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990-91 to 260 deaths in 2010; however the civil society organisations feel it is higher than the target, stating that there has been progress but it is not sufficient.

### **HIV-AIDS, other diseases**

The report points to a limited progress and says that some groups are vulnerable, and infections in injecting drug users have doubled from 10.8% in 2005-06 to 20.8% in 2008-09. Malaria is the second most prevalent disease in the country.

### **Environment sustainability**

The reviewers feel that lack of data made analysis difficult but there has been some progress. According to them, there is conflicting data whether forest cover is increasing or decreasing. Pakistan still lags behind in providing clean drinking water and sanitation.

### **Global partnership for development**

The civil society organisations say that this goal is not on track for achievement. Aid in Pakistan has increased sharply US\$ 1.4 billion in 2010. Meanwhile, its share in the global market has declined by more than a third to 0.13% in 2009 as compared to 0.21% in 1999.

The Express-Tribune - September 11, 2013

## **Meeting 2015 deadline: Stakeholders review status of MDGs**

ISLAMABAD: The Task Group for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) met on Thursday to ascertain how far the country will be able to meet the targets it has set to achieve.

Parliamentarians, representatives of the federal ministries, attached government departments, donors and civil society met at the National Assembly to initiate a consultation process at the federal and provincial level on the status of MDGs 2015 and the post MDGs scenario.

According to a statement issued by National Assembly secretariat, the objective of the Task Group is to review progress in respect to MDGs



## MDGs goals: President calls for steps to achieving education targets



ISLAMABAD: President Mamnoon Hussain on Friday called for taking steps to achieve targets in the education sector under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

While chairing a meeting of the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, he said that the government accorded top priority to education.

The President was given a presentation on the mandate, functions, activities, achievements and other NCHD projects.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Education, Trainings and Standards in Higher Education Balighur Rehman, Secretary Education Muhammad Ahsan Raja and Additional Education Secretary Dr Allah Bakhsh Malik and the NCHD Director-General.

The President, while highlighting the role of the NCHD in improving the human development indicators said that Pakistan was committed to achieving the goals of universal primary education, adult literacy and women's empowerment.

He urged provincial governments to cooperate with the NCHD in successful implementation of the projects aimed at achieving literacy rate targets.

Hussain was also presented the NCHD's 2013 annual report.

The President assured the Ministry of Education and the NCHD of every possible support in their endeavour to achieving education targets in the country.

<http://www.pktimes.co/2014/08/23/mdgs-goals-President-calls-for-steps-to-achieving-education-targets>

The Express-Tribune - August 23, 2014

## Sindh government striving hard to achieve MDG 2: Nisar Khuhro

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: The Sindh government is striving hard to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2 – achieve universal primary education – sending each and every child to school by 2017.

Sindh Senior Education and Literacy Minister Nisar Ahmed Khuhro talking to journalists on Thursday said, "We are striving hard to achieve MDG 2017 so that 'education for all' programme could be succeeded. And for that we are taking a number of steps," he added.

**Female education:** Encourage female education, the education department Sindh has decided providing annual stipend to every female student, a practice that was not carried out in the recent years.

Although the amount for annual stipend is not that big, but again for remote areas stipend would be Rs 3,500 and for other students it would be Rs 2,500 per female student, he told. The stipend would start from May this year.

**Free books:** Khuhro said in around 49,000 schools in Sindh, every child would be provided with free books. Supply of 5 million books of class 6 to 10 has already been started from April 7 this year. In the provision of free books a formal procedure would be

adopted in this regard.

In every school a gathering would be made compulsory to disperse the books to the students. The distribution would be made under the supervision of supervisor and headmaster, said Khuhro.

Video of books distribution would be made compulsory. The headmasters and supervisors fail to submit videos would not remain at their jobs, he added.

We have revised the curriculum from class 1 to 4, therefore there are few problems in distribution of books of these classes as they carry some proofreading errors, he informed.

He made it clear some private schools purchased books of Sindh Text Book Board. Sometime confusion occurs because price is listed for only those books, which are suppose to be supplied to private schools only. I appeal to the non-private school kids parents' that do not pay while getting books. If anybody insists make a video from your mobile and send us. We would take the action, minister said.

**Libraries at primary schools:** Minister told reporters he wanted to introduce concept of library in every primary school.

To enhance the vocabulary of students, every child

of class 4 and 5 would be provided English to Sindhi and English to Urdu pictorial dictionaries. He said dictionaries would be school property. Apart from dictionaries every library would also be provided atlas.

**Evening shifts at schools:** Nisar Khuhro said he wanted to start evening shifts in schools, which were running morning shifts only. The purpose is to bring those poor children to schools that cannot go to schools, as most of them are child labours, he added. I appeal communities to come forward and play its role in sending those kids to schools, he said.

**Enhancing sports facilities at schools:** Education minister vowed to encourage sports facilities at schools. Children could play cricket, hockey, football, throw-ball and other games.

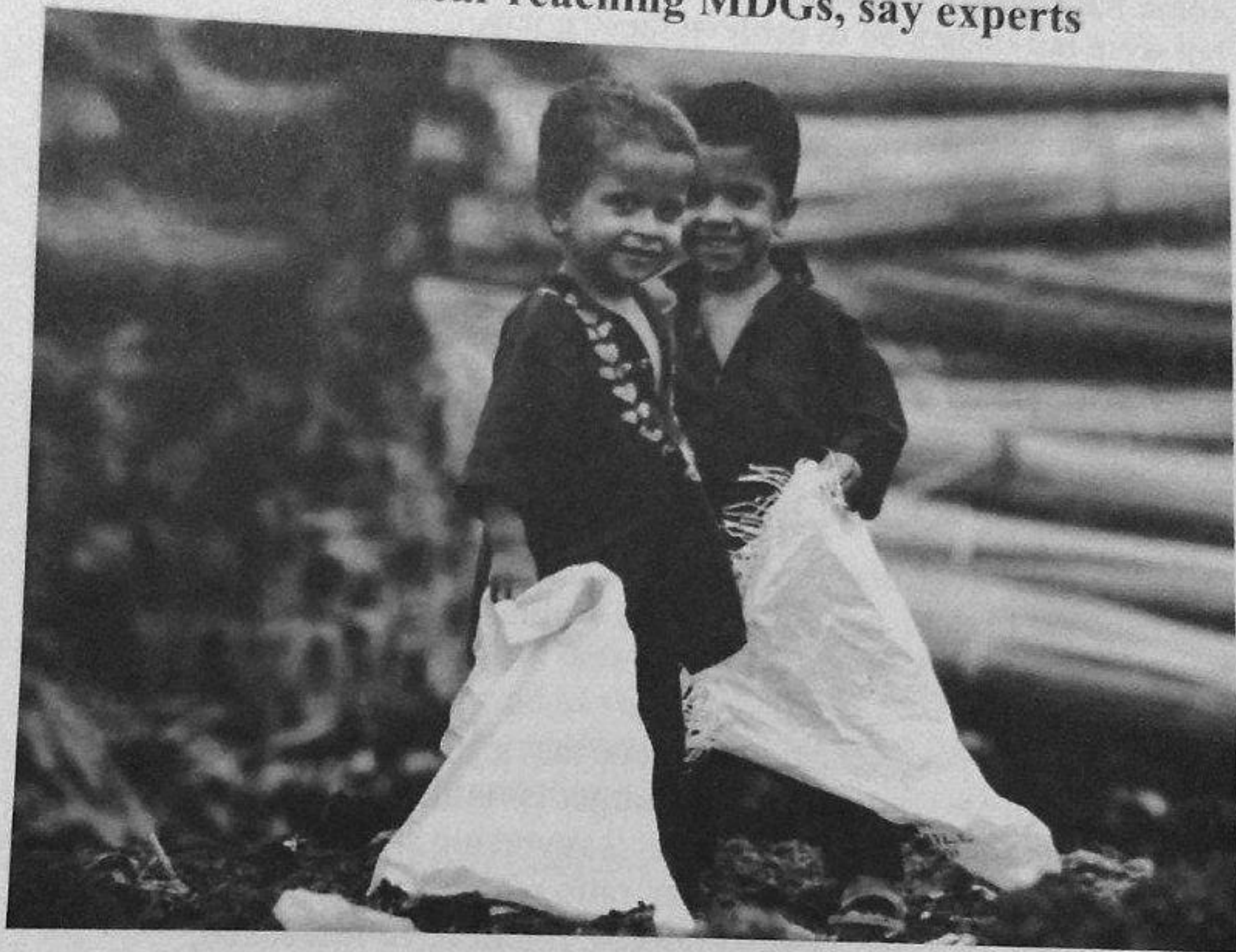
He said for pre-primary students eight thousand units would be made for the students in primary schools so that kids who are busy in playing in streets could be tilted towards schools.

**Sindh Education Foundation:** Minister said Sindh Education Foundation at the moment was running 1,500 schools from its fund through community-based system.

We want to enhance the enrolment of students so



## Millennium Development Goals: Pakistan nowhere near reaching MDGs, say experts



**KARACHI:** Pakistan is falling short of almost all its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), says a latest report of the Commonwealth Foundation.

The national report based on the assessment of 30 NGOs of Pakistan, reviews the progress of the country towards these targets.

Pakistan's civil society organisations have agreed that it is not possible to achieve the MDGs by the 2015 deadline.

The country has committed to 37 indicators out of 48, relating to eradication of poverty, maternal health, HIV, access to primary education, gender disparity and others. However, according to the report, only four of these goals are being followed.

“The government is not serious about achieving the goals,” said Pakistan NGO Forum's Professor Ismail, who was among those who gave their recommendations on the progress last December when all the NGOs had a national consultation.



*WE CAN*  
**END POVERTY**  
**2015**  
MILLENNIUM  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS



level ground realities: the focus needs to shift from a universal all-encompassing approach to specific measurement frameworks. Moreover, a system for check and balances is needed, in order to cogently measure the success and failures of various strategies. Finally, targets need to be disaggregated, so disparity across different population segments, e.g. gender, ethnicity, can be observed.

### **Monitoring of Progress**

Updates on targets must be made available on more regular intervals; moreover, reviewing mechanisms need to be set up via independent bodies. Roadmaps should be prepared by each country, for the execution of their policy frameworks, and such frameworks need to be synergized amongst the various relevant branches, i.e. fiscal, planning and so on. Indicators must take into account gender, and in particular other marginalized segments.

### **Responsibilities of Stakeholders**

Each country should be asked to prepare a clear implementation plan with roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders and partners. Political ownership, at the national level, will be the most important drivers of success for the future development agenda. Civil society should be involved in progress monitoring.

Investment in building the capacity of statistical institutions should be made to help trace the progress on development goals and collection of reliable data. The UN should play a more proactive role to monitor progress towards the global development agenda and to ensure the effectiveness of development interventions on the lives of poor and marginalized segments of the society. To make it binding, the developing countries should also commit their share of resources for the post-2015 development framework. There should be a more robust system of accountability for the developed countries.

In addition to fulfilling their financial and capacity/technical support commitments, developed countries should be held responsible for their policies and interventions affecting peace and security in developing countries.



# 5.1m kids to be brought to schools in 3 years

ASMA GHANI

ISLAMABAD - The Ministry of Education, Trainings and Standards in Higher Education has launched the National Plan of Action 2013-16 to enrol 5.1 million out of school children to get 76 per cent of them in schools.

With the objective of achieving universal primary education in Pakistan, a part of Millennium Development Goals, the National Plan of Action is based on eight provincial/area plans. Each plan would review the education situation in its respective area, identify the gap in primary enrolments, quantify the number of out-of-school children, analyze the reasons for low enrolments and high drop-out rates and suggest enhancement of existing options to attain maximum progress within the stipulated time frame.

The UNO has given 2015 as the deadline to get 100 per cent enrolment in primary schools but in Pakistan only Punjab is the province that expects to achieve 100 per cent enrolment by 2015, while Islamabad has set a target of 97 per cent and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of 95 per cent, Sindh 80 per cent, AJK 75 per cent, and Balochistan and FATA may not exceed 66 per cent. Primary net enrolment is estimated to increase by 6 to 7 per cent annually during the period of action plan. With over 5 million children to be additionally enrolled within three years while the figure of out-of-school children is estimated to decline from 6.7 million in 2011/12 to 2.1 million by 2015/16.

Under this plan, 80 per cent children will be enrolled in public sector school, 10 per cent will be enrolled in deeni madaras while it is estimated that the private sector will also absorb 10 per cent proportion. The

estimated cost of implementing the National Plan of Action 2013-16 is Rs.188,680 million while actual expenditure to be spent is Rs594,961 million. To increase access to education, awareness campaigns would be launched to promote the importance of education, community involvement in supervision of local education and use of media. This requires the cost of Rs. 69,574 million. Minister for Education Engineer Balighur Rehman on the launch said the government is striving hard to increase education expenditure up to 4 per cent of GDP by the year 2018. "We have to initiate key reforms in terms of improving service delivery and enrolling more children into schools", he added. Federal Secretary Ahmed Bakhsh Lehri on the occasion said education is important to address the issues of food security, climate change, poverty and terrorism etc. He appreciated the efforts of the provincial authorities in formulation of the Plan of Action.

Unesco Director Dr Kouze Kay Nagata said the Unesco has provided technical assistance to make sure enrolment of 25 million out of school children of primary and secondary age group. She emphasized on increasing spending on education up to four or five percent of GDP in upcoming years. Unicef representative Don Rohrmann said strong political will is needed to enrol the millions of out of school children in the schools. Officials from Department of Education, Ministry of Capital Administration and Development, different organisations and NGOs attended the launching ceremony.

*The Nation*  
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## FPAP held seminar on MDG-5B

Peshawar: Participants at a consultative seminar have highlighted the bottlenecks in achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDG-5B), relating to maternal health issues, under the global commitments, called the active participation of government, all relevant stakeholders and other indicators, to remove the financial and legislative implications for meeting the MDGs as per target year.

The consultative meeting of Provincial Chapter Alliance on MDG-5B held under auspices of Rahnuma-Family Planning Association of Pakistan (FPAP) at its regional office here on Tuesday. Haji Sattar Gul, Vice President Rahnuma-FPAP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region, was presided over the session, while the organization Regional Director, Gohar Zaman briefed the participants about the International Committees of provision of maternal healthcare facilities under MDGs-5B.

Representatives of civil society organizations, government departments, members from Non-governmental organisations, and media persons from print and electronic media attended the consultative session.

The participants stressed the need for better coordination and collective efforts of government departments, relevant stakeholders with involvement of civil society, religious scholars, and other key players, to meet the goals for provision of better maternal health issues under the international commitments of MDGs by 2015.

They further suggested the creation of parliamentary caucus, enhancement of budgetary allocations, specifically resolution of maternal health issues, and political parties should also include the health issues top in their manifesto and agenda.

Earlier, the Rahnuma-FPAP, Regional Director Gohar Zaman in his detail presentation said that the MDG-5B is specifically relating to improvement of maternal health issues, which has also two-targets, include 5-A is to reduce by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015, while 5B is to achieve universal access to Reproductive Health by 2015.

He said the two-thirds of disease for women of reproductive age is due to RH, it is critical that MDG-5B is included.

Otherwise, he said the issues of maternal morbidity and access to Family Planning, which could be reduced Maternal Mortality Ratio.

He highlighted the basic facilities to maternal healthcare and mothers,



countries face in reaching all women and children life-saving services such as under nutrition, equity as core component of all health strategies and levels of fertility and the unmet need for family planning.

The MDGs targets calculated by Countdown to 2015 which Pakistan should aim for is to reduce maternal mortality rate to 123 deaths per 100,000 live births and under-five mortality ratio to 41 deaths per 1,000 live births by 2015. According to the report, the demand for family planning is 54%, antenatal care is 28%, postnatal care is 39% and for exclusive breastfeeding practices is 37%. Around 32% children below five years of age are underweight and 44% are stunted.

The under-five mortality rate in 1990 was 122 deaths per 1,000 live births which declined to 72 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2011. The average annual rate of reduction of under-five mortality rate remained 2.5 %, while it was 3.0 % for the maternal mortality ratio from 1990 to 2010.

## **Recommendations**

To reduce maternal mortality the report recommends Pakistan continue efforts to increase coverage of high-quality services including family planning, antenatal and postnatal care, skilled delivery and emergency obstetric care.

To reduce under-five mortality rate, there is a need for huge investment in health services for pregnant women and the newborn baby, including the prevention of preterm births and stillbirths and scale-up of effective low-cost interventions, it stated.

Movements to integrate nutrition initiatives into national reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health programmes must continue to be prioritised in all these countries.

Talking to The Express Tribune, Rutgers World Population Fund Country Representative for Pakistan Qadeer Baig said the slow progress in achieving MDGs 4 and 5 was due to the inefficiency of the health system and extremely low investment in maternal and child health.

“Let’s see how the new government will tackle this issue and how a new framework would be developed to replace MDGs after 2015,” he said. Pathfinder International Director Programmes Dr. Haris Ahmed added that funding allocation was inconsistent with the national requirement of MDGs.



and the international donors and lenders (Q: why not to the Parliament and to the PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN?) comprised misleading distortions at best and outright lies at worst, but the UN (and most lenders and donors) did not seem to care, or even to heed the few lone voices in the wilderness – of some civil society activists, development practitioners, researchers, academicians and a few brave independent economists. Pakistan's final MDGs report (written with the technical and financial help of UNDP) reads like a masterpiece of fictional literature. The chapters on Women, Poverty and Environment are particular cases in point.

Not that the UN's conceptualization of the MDGs was above reproach, to start with. It had glaring gaps, e.g. there was a deafening silence and reneging on the AGREED agendas of the ICPD (Cairo, 1994) and FWCW (Beijing, 1995), especially on Reproductive Health (RH) and Rights, the Feminization of Poverty and Gender Justice. Such blatant omissions were music to the ears of the rulers of countries like Pakistan.

The 8 MDGs comprised bare-bones basic minimum needs in poverty, hunger, education, women's empowerment, child mortality, maternal health (*sic*) – (so what about non-pregnant, single, widowed, divorced, abandoned, trafficked, raped women's RH rights and services? what happened to WOMEN'S HEALTH???) , HIV/AIDS, malaria, environmental sustainability (*sic*), and developing a global partnership for development.

In contrast, the UN and the global community have conceptualized a much broader, more nuanced, in-depth and thoughtful set of goals and objectives for the forthcoming Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) era. The following SDGs are the UN's newly-instituted successor to the unachieved MDGs:

- Goal 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- Goal 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Goal 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- Goal 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Goal 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Goal 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- Goal 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- Goal 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- Goal 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

- Goal 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- Goal 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- Goal 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

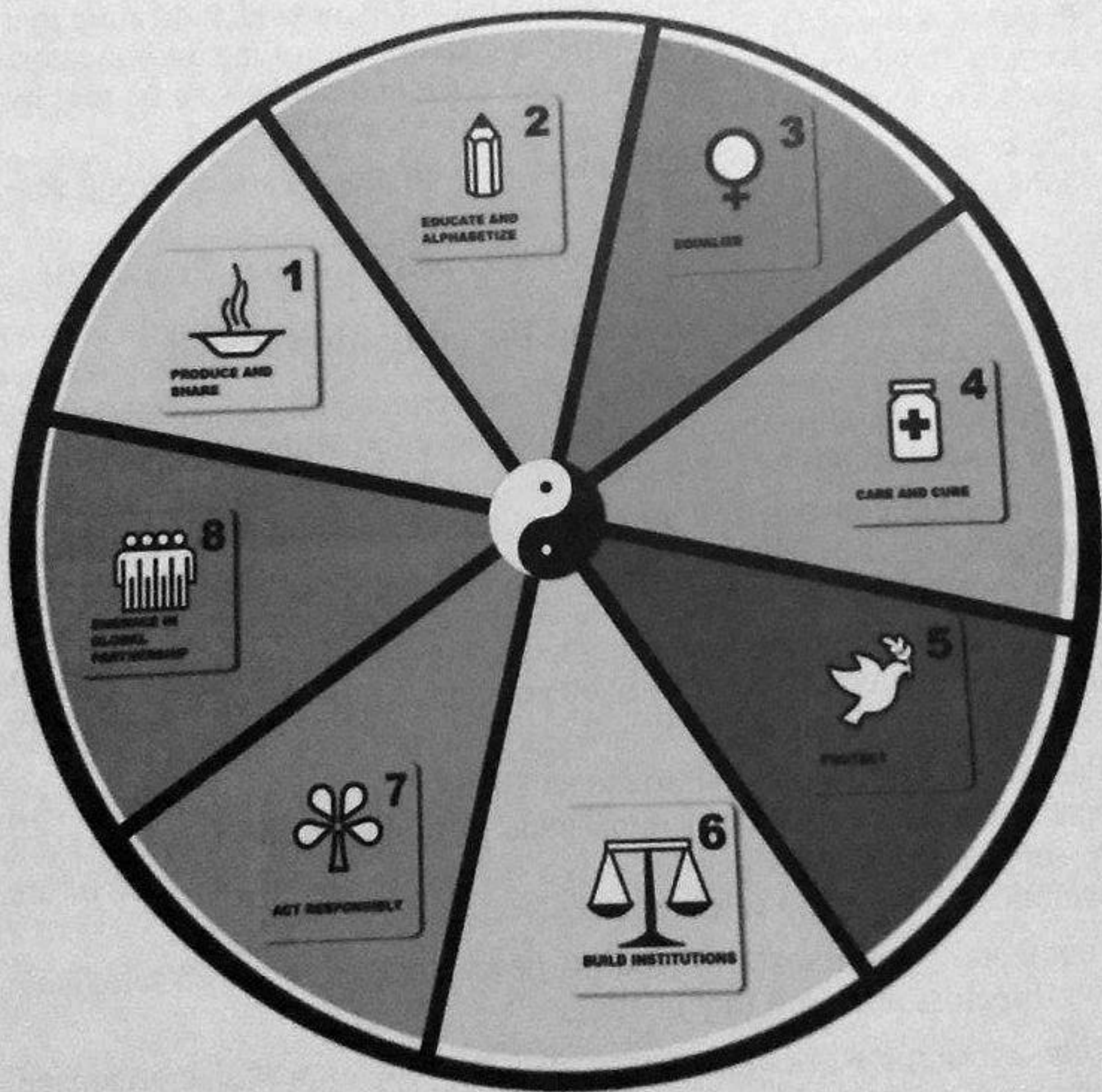
It appears that lessons from the MDGs HAVE been learned globally. The big question is: have they been learned in Pakistan too? Other vital questions: Why do the SDGs not have an 18<sup>th</sup> Goal: "Ensure that national/country reports contain accurate, honest, verifiable data and information"? Have the SDGs addressed women's concerns arising from the MDGs? Or is there again a reneging on agreed agendas, and will we need to re-open, re-debate and re-negotiate closed issues yet again? Has gender mainstreaming and integration into each of the 17 Goals been carried out right at the start, instead of being inserted as add-ons later, once we begin to speak out against segregating girls and women into Goal # 5 (the *Zanana Dabba*).

We sincerely hope so. The starving Hindu and Muslim babies dying of hunger in Tharparkar hope so. The traumatized children and identityless women IDPs of North Waziristan/FATA, currently sheltering in the Frontier Regions and western Pakhtunkhwa districts hope so too.

We did not remain silent over the MDGs; likewise, we cannot and we must not stand by passively watching successive governments' sins of omission and commission regarding the forthcoming SDGs. We must remain ever vigilant and watchful. We must take a stand. WE MUST SPEAK UP.









## **'Pakistan boosting efforts to achieve anti-poverty Millennium Development Goals'**

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan is stepping up efforts to achieve the anti-poverty Millennium Development Goals — a set of time-bound targets agreed on by heads of state in 2000 — despite being hampered by security concerns, the fight against terrorism and natural disasters, a high-level UN panel was told on Wednesday.

Maryum Aurangzeb, a member of the National Assembly, said that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government was focusing on transition from MDGs to an inclusive agenda for sustainable development by adopting a strategy aimed at improving the people's lives, especially in health, education, socio-economic sectors. In this regard, Maryum, who is also the National Convener of the Parliamentary Task Force on MDGs, said a wide-ranging dialogue has been initiated at national and provincial levels as well as with civil society, media, policy experts and corporate sector to accomplish the objectives.

She said the Parliamentary Task force on MDGs was constituted at national and provincial levels, with 94 legislators representing all Pakistani political parties and regions to play a role in producing the necessary legislation and to oversee MDGs acceleration, transitioning from MDGs to Sustainable Development Goals and their implementation in Pakistan.

Maryum said the present government's emphasis was on prioritizing investment in data measurement and management, institutional capacities, and for distribution of resources to provinces as it works towards ushering in economic prosperity.

The News - July 15, 2014

### **How and why the MDGs remain elusive**

Much of the developing world, including our own country, remains caught up in a seemingly endless cycle of political instability, internal strife, and growing external debt. Despite spurts of economic growth, the vast majority of citizens in developing countries continue to be deprived of basic amenities such as the opportunity to obtain an education, availability of health facilities, and even access to clean drinking water and sanitation.

Back in 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration had tried to put forth a collective goal with tangible targets for improving the lives of the deprived multitudes across the globe. With the 2015 deadline for achieving the MDGs fast approaching, progress on achieving these goals remains mixed at best, according to the latest UNDP report on the MDGs, which was prepared this year.

The world has reduced extreme poverty since 1990s, when almost half of the population in the developing world used to live on less than \$1.25 a day. This rate has dropped to 22 per cent by 2010. Between 2000 and 2012, an estimated 3.3 million deaths from malaria were averted. Over 2.3 billion people have gained access to an improved source of drinking water between 1990 and 2012. Similar progress has been made in education, including that of girls, and other MDG goals such as improving sanitation facilities for the poor.

Nonetheless, ensuring that poor people across the world have access to the basic facilities, which was the underlying objective of the MDGs, still remains elusive. While a quarter of the world's population has gained access to improved sanitation since 1990, a billion people were estimated in 2012 to still be resorting to open defecation due to lack of toilet facilities.

There are other growing threats which the MDGs have not been able to contend with effectively. Global emissions of carbon dioxide have continued their upward trend, and such emissions in 2011 were almost 50 per cent above their 1990 level. Millions of hectares of forest continue being lost every passing year, and many species are being driven closer to extinction. Renewable water resources are becoming scarcer by the day.

Progress on hunger is not sufficient. In countries like our own, hunger has become an increasingly serious concern over the past decade. Thus, meeting the target of halving the percentage of people suffering from hunger across the world by 2015 will certainly not be possible. One in four children is still affected by chronic malnutrition. Much more needs to be done to reduce maternal mortality given that almost 300,000 women died in 2013 from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. While maternal death is easily preventable, much more needs to be done to provide adequate care to pregnant women. The World Health Organisation last year estimated that the world needs another seven million skilled healthcare staff for improving access to basic health services. How this human resource investment will be achieved remains uncertain, especially when international donor agencies like the World Bank are in favour of curbing rather than enhancing public funding.

Moreover, while International development assistance had nearly reached \$135 billion in 2013, the highest level ever recorded, aid is actually shifting away from the poorest countries towards those which are more capable of servicing their debts. UN development agencies need to assertively engage with other multilateral and bilateral development aid agencies to more effectively channel aid to achieve internationally endorsed human development goals like the MDGs, otherwise they will continue to remain mere aspirations for the foreseeable future.

Syed Mohammad Ali, The Express-Tribune - August 22, 2014.



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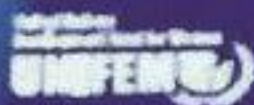
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# MAKING THE MDGs WORK BETTER FOR WOMEN

Implementing Gender-Responsive  
National Development Plans  
and Programmes



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