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Pakistan: Gender Overview

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Pakistan Gender Overview

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KSC Research Series

ABSTRACT:

The Key Issues section starting on page 5 provides a snapshot of the main topics highlighted in this report.

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Gender Equality Profile for Pakistan

	1999	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Population and Health¹										
Population, total (millions)	141.26	153.14	155.86	158.65	161.51	164.44	167.44	170.49	173.59	176.74
Population, female (% of total)	48.70	48.87	48.92	48.96	49.01	49.06	49.11	49.14	49.17	49.19
Fertility rate, total (births per woman)	4.7	4	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.5	.	.
Births attended by skilled health staff (% of total)	.	.	.	31.0	.	.	38.8	.	.	.
Life expectancy at birth, female (years)	63.7	64.5	64.7	64.9	65.1	65.3	65.6	65.8	.	.
Life expectancy at birth, male (years)	62.2	63	63.2	63.3	63.5	63.7	63.9	64.1	.	.
Contraceptive prevalence (% of women age 15-49)	17.0	32.1	.	.	26	29.6	27	.	.	.
Pregnant women receiving prenatal care (%)	24.8	.	.	36.0	.	60.9	.	.	.	.
Mortality rate, infant (per 1,000 live births)	.	76.6	75.7	74.7	73.8	72.7	71.9	70.7	69.7	.
Mortality rate, female child (per 1,000 female children age one)	36.5 (^)	.	.	.	.	22.0	.	.	.	.
Mortality rate, male child (per 1,000 male children age one)	22.0 (^)	.	.	.	.	14.0	.	.	.	.
Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate, per 100,000 live births)	440 (1995)	380 (2000)	.	310.0	.	.	260.0	.	.	.
Female adults with HIV (% of population ages 15+ with HIV)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	29.5	.	.
(^) - 1991 figures										
Education¹										
Expected years of schooling, female	.	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	.	.
Expected years of schooling, male	.	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	.	.
Children out of school, primary, female (in thousands)	.	5,136	4,732	4,459	4,576	3,980	3,796	3,501	3,241	.
Children out of school, primary, male (in thousands)	.	3,372	2,779	2,699	3,044	2,623	2,470	2,209	1,884	.
Primary education, pupils (% female)	.	41	41	42	42	44	44	44	44	.
School enrollment, primary, female (% net)	.	48	53	56	55	61	62	64	67	.
School enrollment, primary, male (% net)	.	67	73	74	71	75	76	78	81	.
Primary education, teachers (% female)	.	44	45	46	45	46	47	46	48	.
Trained teachers in primary education, female (% of female teachers)			63	76	75	75	77	77	76	.
Trained teachers in primary education, male (% of male teachers)			90	94	92	92	92	93	91	.
Primary completion rate, female (% of relevant age group)	.	.	.	50.6	51.4	53.5	53.5	54.8	59.3	.
Primary completion rate, male (% of relevant age group)	.	.	.	71.6	69.1	67.5	67.9	70.1	74.5	.
Progression to secondary school, female (%)	.	73.7	72.0	75.2	75.8	71.4	71.9	74.4	.	.
Progression to secondary school, male (%)	.	73.8	67.0	69.3	75.4	73.4	72.5	73.1	.	.

	1999	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Education (cont'd)										
Secondary education, pupils (% female)	.	42.59	42.30	42.30	42.35	41.80	41.78	42.77	42.06	.
School enrollment, secondary, female (% net)	.	23.8	26.3	25.1	26.3	27.9	28.2	29.0	29.1	.
School enrollment, secondary, male (% net)	.	30.8	34.4	33.0	34.4	37.4	37.8	37.3	38.4	.
Secondary education, teachers (% female)	31.8 (**)	.	50.9	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
School enrollment, tertiary (female, % of gross)	.	2.3	2.8	4.3	4.3	4.9	4.9	.	.	.
School enrollment, tertiary (male, % of gross)	.	2.9	3.6	5.1	5.2	5.9	5.8	.	.	.
Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education (%)	.	73.37	73.39	75.5	76.84	78.69	79.05	80.67	79.64	.
Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio. Primary ²	.	.71	.72	.75	.77	.81	.81	.82	.82	.
Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio. Secondary. All programs ²	.	.77 (^^)	.77 (^^)	.77 (^^)	.77	.75	.75	.78	.76	.
Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio. Tertiary ²	.	.79	.77	.85	.83	.83 (^^)	.83 (^^)	.	.	.
Ratio of young literate females to males (% ages 15-24)	64.21 (*)	.	.	69.26	73.79	.	77.12	.	.	.
Literacy rate, adult female (% of females ages 15+) ³	.	.	.	35	40/38 ⁺	.	40/40 ⁺⁺	.	42 ⁺⁺⁺	.
Literacy rate, adult male (% of males ages 15+) ³	55.3 (*)	.	.	64.1	67.7	.	68.9	.	.	.
(*) - 1998 figures; (**) - 1990 figures; (^^) National estimation ; (^^^) UIS estimation										
Employment¹										
Labor force, female (% of total labor force)	14.90	16.31	17.03	18.04	19.2	19.56	19.99	20.31	20.75	.
Labor force participation rate, female (% of female population, ages 15+)	15.5	17.0	17.9	19.3	20.9	21.1	21.5	21.9	22.4	.
Labor force participation rate, male (% of male population, ages 15+)	83.4	83.4	83.5	84.1	84.7	83.9	83.3	83.3	83.3	.
Employees, female (% of female employment)	.	64.6	67.3	67.3	68.8	72.4	75	.	.	.
Agriculture	.	15.6	15	15	15	12.6	12.2	.	.	.
Industry	.	19.8	17.6	17.6	16.2	15	12.9	.	.	.
Services	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Self-employed, female (% of females employed)	75.1	62.9	68.8	68.8	74.3	75.4	77.9	.	.	.
Self-employed, male (% of males employed)	63.1	59.7	60.8	60.8	59.9	59.4	60.5	.	.	.
Vulnerable employment, female (% of female employment)	75.0	62.6	68.7	68.7	74.2	75.3	77.8	.	.	.
Vulnerable employment, male (% of male employment)	62.1	58.8	59.7	59.7	58.9	58.4	59.3	.	.	.
Economically active children, female (% of female children ages 7-14)	.	.	.	.	.	.	16.2	.	.	.
Economically active children, male (% of male children ages 7-14)	.	.	.	.	.	.	15.6	.	.	.
Unemployment, female (% of female labor force)	.	.	13	.	9.6	8.6	8.7	.	.	.
Unemployment, male (% of male labor force)	.	.	6.2	.	5.2	4.2	4.0	.	.	.

	1999	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Bangladesh										
Rankings and Ratings (cont'd)										
Gender Inequality Index: Pakistan ¹⁰										
GII Rank (out of 187 countries)	112	.	.	115
GII Index Value (0=equal, to 1=highest inequality between men and women)61	.	.	0.72	.	.	0.57
Gender Inequality Index: Other Countries for Comparison ¹⁰										
India	129
Bangladesh	112
Indonesia	100
Iran	92
State Fragility Index (0 to 25 – low to extreme fragility) ¹¹	16 "high"	15 "serious"	15 "serious"
Failed States Index (total score [out of a possible 120 points] and ranking out of 177 countries) ¹²	.	.	.	89.4 (34 th)	103.1 (9 th)	100.1 (12 th)	103.8 (9 th)	104.1 (10 th)	102.5 (10 th)	102.3 (12 th) 101.6 (2012) (13 th)
Vision of Humanity, Global Peace Index GPI comprises 23 indicators measuring the absence of violence or fear of violence. All scores for each indicator are "banded", either on a scale of 1-5 (for qualitative indicators) or 1-9 (for quantitative data). Lower overall score = more peaceful. ¹³	2.697	2.694	2.859	3.050	2.903 [145 th out of 153] 2.833 (2012) [149 th out of 158]
EIU Political Instability Index (0 to10 – low to very high risk) ¹⁴	5.8 Moderate Risk (2007-2008)	7.8 Very High Risk (2009-2010)	.	.	.

Sources:

¹ World Bank, World Development Indicators² UNESCO Institute for Statistics³ Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM) (2010-11) for years 2006-07;

**PSLM (2010-11) for years 2008-2009;

+++PSLM (2010-11) for years 2010-11.

⁴ Aurat Foundation (2012)⁵ GSMA and Vital Wave (2009)⁶ International Telecommunication Union, World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database⁷ UNDP, Asia-Pacific Report 2010⁸ Maplecroft⁹ World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report¹⁰ UNDP, International Human Development Indicators¹¹ George Mason University, State Fragility Index and Matrix¹² The Fund for Peace and Foreign Policy¹³ Vision of Humanity, Global Peace Index¹⁴ Economist Intelligence Unit, Political Instability Index

Key Issues

Cross-Cutting Themes

Democracy and Governance

- Pakistan has one of South Asia's highest levels of gender inequality. It only ranks ahead of Chad and Yemen on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, making it the worst country in Asia. On the UNDP Gender Inequality Index, Pakistan is slightly ahead of India, but still ranks below most South Asian and Middle Eastern countries.
- Female representation within Pakistan's National Assembly has varied since 1947, but has been driven primarily by a series of quota systems. An important feature of the Local Government Plan (2000) was the provision of a 33% quota for women at the district, municipality, and union council levels, and 17% quota for women in national and provincial assemblies. After the return of civilian rule in February 2008, however, the LGP was cancelled and the local level quotas disappeared. The national quotas are still in effect. Currently, of 342 total seats in the National Assembly (Pakistan's legislative body), 77 are filled by women (22.5%). The mandated number of seats is 60; an additional 17 women were freely elected. The majority of female National Assembly members are from Punjab Province.
- While barriers exist and Pakistani women are still thought to be less suited to politics than men, society as a whole is receptive to an increased role for women in politics. 75% of respondents of a nation-wide survey (2007-08) believe Pakistani women should be able to run for political office; however, 72% agree that men are better suited to politics than women. Surprisingly, 20% of female respondents do not support the idea that women should represent them in political office.
- Several women in Pakistan's history have led political parties, including three from one family: Nusrat Bhutto (Pakistan People's Party, or PPP) (1979-1983); Benazir Bhutto (PPP) (1984-2007); and Ghinwa Bhutto (PPP-SB) (1997-present). The Bhutto family's dynastic role in Pakistani politics is representative of a longstanding tradition in Pakistan, whereby the country's political landscape is dominated by influential families. Individual positions in government often are determined by familial ties. Other prominent female Pakistani politicians include:
 - Dr. Fahmida Mirza, elected as Pakistan's (and the Muslim world's) first female Speaker of the National Assembly in 2008 (PPP);
 - Hina Rabbani Khar, appointed as Pakistan's first female (and youngest) foreign minister in 2011 (PML Q);
 - Dr. Nafisa Shah, current member of Pakistan's National Assembly (PPP) and Chairperson of the National Commission for Human Development;
 - Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, who formed the Punjab Provincial Muslim Women's League in 1935. She was a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly from 1937-1942, and was re-elected in 1946.
- After General Musharraf's coup in 1999, women's rights were again brought to the fore – ostensibly more to improve Pakistan's reputation within the international community, than to advance the position of Pakistani women. Under the Local Government Plan 2000 (Devolution of Power), a 33% quota was established for women at the district, municipality (tehsil) and union councils, the local legislative bodies mandated to approve by-laws, taxes, long-term and short-term development plans and annual budgets.
- Despite being granted suffrage in 1947, Pakistani women's exclusion from the country's voting process remains a problem. The minimal or nonexistent participation of women as voters in some areas significantly undermines their participation in public life.
 - A computerized national identity card (CNIC) is required to vote in Pakistan. Currently 96% of the country's adult population is registered for a CNIC. According to a recent announcement by Pakistan's National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), however, only 85% of Pakistan's women are registered for CNICs. While this is up from four years ago, when less than 50% of women had a CNIC, it still can be used to explain women's lack of electoral participation. In general, Pakistani women remain under-enrolled and, in some cases, not permitted to vote. When they do vote, there is often coercion from male members of the household to vote for a certain candidate.
 - The country's latest electoral rolls (2012) comprise 47.8 million men and 36.6 million women. Despite constituting 49% of the country's population, the percentage of female registered voters is far less than men – 43% of the electorate, which indicates a discrepancy of roughly 10 million Pakistani women missing from the rolls. Recent informational campaigns to promote Pakistani women's participation in elections have increased turnout by 12%, as well as increased women's independence in choosing candidates.

Pakistani Women, Conflict and Fragility

- Pakistan is categorized as a fragile state. For the last decade, constrained levels of economic growth have not supported its rapidly growing population, nor lifted people out of poverty. High inflation, unemployment, and a youth bulge threaten future economic growth. In addition, conflict, chronic food insecurity, and patterns of social, political and economic exclusion affect the country's stability and governance.
- Of all the issues that fuel Pakistan's fragility, women's lack of access to resources, services and decision-making roles remains a significant driver of the country's instability.
- The continued exclusion of women from decision-making roles in the country's peace and stability further promotes gender disparity and systematic discrimination. Throughout the country's conflict-prone areas, women and girls face severe difficulties in accessing education and health care, as well as participation in public life.
- The Pakistani government will not sign UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
- Pakistan has seen an increase in attacks on civilians by militant groups. Since January 2012, unrest caused by security operations against militant insurgents in Khyber Agency, in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), has forced a quarter of a million people, primarily women and children, into Peshawar district near the Jalozai internally displaced persons (IDP) camp and surrounding areas. The camp is now the largest in Pakistan.

Gender-based Violence and Pakistan's "Missing Women"

Gender-based Violence

- The incidence of gender-based violence in Pakistan is significant. In one study (WPF, 2011), three-quarters of Pakistani women polled reported physical violence by an intimate partner, 66% sexual violence, and 84% psychological violence.
- Under the due diligence standard identified by the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) committee, Pakistan is obligated to introduce and enforce appropriate measures for the prevention, protection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of all forms of gender-based violence (GBV). Since ratifying CEDAW in 1996, Pakistan has focused much of its attention on the obligation of prevention and has enacted a series of new legislation focusing on the rights of women, specifically violence against women, including:
 - The *Acid and Burn Crime Bill 2012*, a comprehensive legal mechanism to complement the criminalization of acid throwing, is due to come before Parliament soon. If passed, it will provide for better police investigations, trials, and victim treatment. Note: the *Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act* was passed in 2010, with the insertion of Section 336-A and 336-B in the Pakistan Penal Code, which strengthens the penalty against acid attacks. These amendments institute harsh fines and life in prison for those convicted.
 - The *Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill*, which has only passed in Islamabad Capital Territory – supporters of the legislation have faced significant challenges, particularly because of the belief that the government should not legislate home life and that domestic violence is not criminal, rather household discipline;
 - *Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Act, 2011*;
 - *Protection Against Harassment of Women in the Workplace Bill, 2010*;
 - *Anti-Women Practices Criminal Law Amendment Bill 2008*;
 - *Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act of 2006*
- Violence against women in Pakistan, however, continues to be a substantial problem. Current data indicate that, because of the lack of implementation and enforcement by the government, legislation has largely failed to stop violence against Pakistani women.
 - In the first six months of 2012, 4,585 cases of violence against women were reported in the media across Pakistan, which is a 7% increase over the same period in 2011. For all of 2011, 8,539 cases of violence against women were reported, including 2,089 that pertained to abduction and kidnapping. A quarter of all reported GBV cases in 2011 were reported as murders or honor killings (1,988).

Pakistan's "Missing Women"

- Being born a girl, particularly in Pakistan, China and India can translate into an instant death sentence, stemming from a culturally embedded and widespread preference for boys. This has led to a phenomenon known as "missing women."
 - 'Missing women' is used to illustrate the shortfall in the number of women in Asia due to sex selective abortion or female infanticide as well as discriminatory treatment in access to health and nutrition.
- Between 100 and 160 million women are considered "missing" in Asia alone. The most current statistic for Pakistan's "missing women" is 6.1 million based upon Pakistan's population in 2007, assuming that the percentage of missing women (7.8%) has remained constant since 1998.
- Pakistan's higher mortality rate for girls stems from discrimination against girl children, who often are given less care, nourishment and access to family resources than their brothers. Other causes include sex-selective abortion, female infanticide, honor killing, and death resulting from GBV. Some experts maintain that early marriages are a contributing factor, because young Pakistani girls and women endure multiple childbirths but often are unable to physically or mentally cope with the demands of child-bearing and child-rearing.
- A consequence of higher female mortality rate is an imbalanced sex ratio. Overall, Pakistan's sex ratios have been slowly improving from 111 in 1981 to 108.5 in 2011.
 - Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have the lowest sex ratios (105 and 107.2, respectively), whereas Islamabad has the worst, with 117 men for every 100 women. Pakistan's rural sex ratios tend to be lower than urban -- 106.8 vs. 112.2.
 - A steady increase within age groups 0-4 and 5-9 years – from 97 in 1981 to 108 in 2011 – is a clear indication of the country's growing preference for male children.
- Implications of "missing women" include a perpetuation of the lower status of girls through son preference, and grave health consequences for women. A deficit of women leads to a surplus of marriage-age men. Many experts predict that this surplus of men may lead to amplified levels of antisocial behavior and violence, which ultimately poses a threat to the stability and security of society.

Water and Sanitation

- The 2010 floods in Pakistan caused significant damage to infrastructure supplying water and sanitation services throughout the country, resulting in the rapid re-location of 20 million people, affecting over 1.87 million households. Though the impacts of the flood damage continue, dislocated and vulnerable populations bear the greatest burden.
 - Devastation from flooding in 2011 left around 2 million children and 1.7 million women vulnerable to diseases, under-nutrition, abuse and exploitation. In northwestern Pakistan, nearly 950,000 people (126,224 families) remain displaced in 2012, residing either in displacement camps or in host communities.
- Pakistanis who reside in remote areas and internally displaced persons (IDP) and refugee camps are particularly susceptible to environmental health concerns due to waterborne parasitic and endemic diseases.
 - According to a 2011 national nutrition survey, 46.3% of children under age five in rural areas were stunted, and 33.3% were underweight, partially due to unsafe water and poor sanitation services that prevent children from absorbing the nutrients they need.
 - Throughout the world, an estimated 1.5 million children die before the age of 5 from diarrhea, which is the second most common cause of child deaths worldwide. According to UNICEF and WHO, Pakistan ranks 6th in child deaths due to diarrhea, totaling 53,300 in 2007. India ranks 1st (386,600); Afghanistan 4th (82,100); and Bangladesh 7th (50,800).
- The 2010 floods also produced widespread crop and environmental damage, exacerbating food insecurity.
- 82 districts in Pakistan were significantly impacted by the 2010 flooding. Though the effects varied, lower elevations experienced damage to tubewells, pumping machinery, pipe distribution networks, and sewerage and drainage systems. The majority of this infrastructure continues to require rehabilitation, cleaning and disinfection, and repair, thus posing continued health risks in the forms of waterborne and communicable diseases and infections.
 - Women and girls remain an at-risk and vulnerable group amidst such conditions given that they lose their privacy during humanitarian emergencies, are susceptible to potential sexual violence in camps, and their economic livelihood suffers when they divert resources to safe water collection.
- With the world's sixth largest population, and one of the world's largest displaced populations, including 1.8 million refugees mainly from Afghanistan, and a significant IDP population, women and children will likely

continue to face environmental health risks without further interventions focused on gendered access to water and sanitation services.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

- Traditional attitudes and norms regarding Pakistani women's interaction with technology, literacy, language skills, domestic responsibilities, etc. represent obstacles to their access to ICTs. This can be attributed to the country's patriarchal social structure, lack of women's disposable income, lack of cultural acceptability of female ownership, and lack of awareness of the benefits of ICTs.
- Pakistani women are 59% less likely to own a mobile phone than men constituting a 59% mobile gender gap.
- Significant disparities exist between rural and urban women in Pakistan. Internet access is largely limited to urban Pakistani men. Men and women in rural areas generally have little access to the Internet, meaning that rural women are the most isolated group in the country.
- In Pakistan where banking infrastructure is limited, mobile money (a.k.a. mobile banking) represents a potential solution for many individuals who remain unbanked. Mobile banking solutions, such as Telenor Pakistan's *Easypaisa*, have significantly increased women's access to financing, as well as reduced the inconvenience they experience paying back loans.
 - For poor Pakistani women, however, mobile banking has not gained significant traction, primarily due to cultural issues that often preclude access to mobile phones and other technologies.
 - A more successful approach has been to provide these women with financial services via traditional plastic debit cards. The cards make it easier to maintain confidentiality. PIN numbers allows women to make withdrawals and deposits at ATMs and kiosks.

Economic Growth

- Pakistan's employment picture for women, in both the formal and informal sectors, is bleak. They experience uneven socioeconomic development, as well as the impact of tribal, feudal, and capitalist social formations on their lives.
- In 2000, female labor force participation increased from nearly 16% in 2000 to 22.4% in 2010, but the gap remains one of the widest in the South Asia region. Access to formal work is very problematic for many women in Pakistan, primarily due to social barriers that limit their mobility and stifle activity in the public arena. Pakistani men's labor force participation rate (83.3%) is nearly four times greater than that of women.
- The labor force participation rate for young Pakistani women remains lower than for young men, reflecting cultural traditions and the lack of opportunities for women to combine work and family duties.
- Because poverty is rampant and unemployment on the rise, poor families push children into the work force to supplement household income. According to World Bank statistics, 16.2% of Pakistani girls (ages 7-14) are economically active, vs. 15.6% of boys. Estimates from Pakistani government sources report a total of between 3.3 million and 10 million economically active children.
- The majority of Pakistan's total workforce – 80% – is engaged in the informal sector. Many Pakistani women work in the informal sector – 77.7% to 79.0% in rural areas, and 63.1% to 68.4% in urban. Of Pakistan's estimated 20 million home-based workers (a subset of the informal sector), it is estimated that between 4 and 12 million are women working in jobs like garment- and bangle-making, shoe-stitching, embroidery, carpet weaving, etc.
- Roughly 75% of the country's female labor force works in agriculture, which is much higher than most other countries. Female agricultural workers in Pakistan are paid low wages, work long hours, lack basic property rights as individuals, lack access to and management of land and resources, and do not have access to agriculture extension training and/or credit.
- As is the case throughout much of Asia, Pakistan's textile sector absorbs a significant share of female employment. An estimated 30% of the sector's workforce (approx. 2.3 million workers) is comprised of women. Pakistani female textile workers are described as mostly young, unmarried, literate, with a large family, living in low-income settlements surrounding the manufacturing units and factories in the cities, working either as home-based piece rate workers or employed on contract basis in small or medium-sized enterprises producing for local markets or linked with global supply chain.
- Pakistani women earn less than their male counterparts. In general, female wages tend to increase less over time. In 2009-10, female monthly wages were 64.5% of men's; however, this actually dropped to 62.9% in 2010-11.

- Pakistani women make up 4.6% of board members in Pakistani firms, which is only marginally lower than emerging Asian markets' 4.7% average, but higher than India (4.1%), and Indonesia (4.2%). The question is the degree to which women board members are actively involved in decision-making.
- Equal opportunity employment is a new concept in Pakistan. While its Constitution bans discrimination based on sex, the majority of Pakistani employers do not adhere to the law. Despite Pakistan's ratification of both the core ILO Conventions on discrimination, these standards often are violated. There are widespread cases of discrimination on the basis of sex, religion, ethnicity, etc. Discrimination against women in the economic sphere continues to be a serious problem and limiter of economic growth.

Energy

- In Pakistan, the use of biomass fuels is a key cause of indoor air pollution (IAP). Biomass fuel usage accounts for an estimated 86% of total household energy consumption. It is used for cooking and heating, which predominantly affects women who are traditionally responsible for these tasks, as well as the infants and children who accompany them indoors. 90% of rural and 60% of urban households rely upon biomass fuels for their energy consumption and needs.
 - In Pakistan, the consumption of biomass fuels has contributed to respiratory diseases, especially among women.
- Pakistan has one of the highest rates of death and disease due to indoor air pollution. The World Bank estimates that indoor air pollution is a causal factor behind 280,000 deaths and 40 million cases of acute respiratory diseases in Pakistan per year.
- In the aftermath of the 2010 floods, approximately 3.5 million people were left without power. An indirect effect is that numerous small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those run by women from their households, were disrupted, which resulted in a loss of income.
 - Delays in repairing basic infrastructure and services cause vulnerable Pakistani populations, including women, to resort to increasing their reliance upon biomass fuels, which will continue unless alternative and sustainable sources of energy and power are provided, especially to poor rural areas.

Education

- While there have been substantial improvements in both boys' and girls' primary school net enrollment since 2003, girls' net enrollment at the primary level (grades 1-5) remains low: 67% of girls are enrolled in primary school compared to 81% of boys. (Note: Girls' primary net enrollment in 2010 is equivalent to boys' primary net enrollment in 2003.) There are few countries where enrollment is this low even at the primary level. This impacts girls' progression through school as their enrollment in secondary and tertiary education declines precipitously and lags behind boys' enrollment, yet the percentage of girls who progress to the next level of education is generally the same as boys.
- While literacy rates among females are improving overall (see Gender Equality Profile table above), a large gender gap in literacy persists.
- Pakistani children whose mothers have just one year of education spend one extra hour studying at home every day and receive higher test scores, demonstrating the importance of schooling from one generation to the next.
- In Pakistan, girls are often not permitted to attend school unless they have a female teacher, but there are fewer female teachers than male teachers, particularly in rural areas. In addition, absenteeism among female teachers is higher than among male teachers in Pakistan. As a result, in a government school system where schools for boys and girls are separate and where only women teach girls and men teach boys, the higher absence rate among female teachers may limit access to schooling for girls more so than for boys. This occurrence can exacerbate existing gender inequalities in primary school access. Moreover, the percentage of female primary teachers who are trained to teach is 76% compared to 91% of male primary teachers (see Gender Equality Profile table above), and female teachers in private schools are paid 30% less than their male counterparts.
- Traditional attitudes about gender and girls' education prevail in both rural and urban areas. While only 3% of boys in rural and urban areas cited their parents not allowing them to attend school as a reason for being out of school, this figure was much larger for girls—20% for girls in urban areas and 19% for girls in rural areas. Parents tend to invest more money in their sons' education, generally resulting in better quality education for boys.

- Girls' access to education is disproportionately affected by distance, poor sanitation facilities at schools, or lack of, and security issues in conflict-affected areas of the country. In Pakistan, a half-kilometer increase in the distance to school decreases female enrollment by 20%.

Health

- Females experience a gender disadvantage in terms of healthcare starting from birth—they generally receive less nutrition and access to healthcare than their male counterparts. This leads to a variety of poor health outcomes for Pakistani women, including anemia, vitamin deficiency, and a higher incidence of tuberculosis, which can be further exacerbated by early marriage and pregnancy.
- Women, especially poor and rural women, have more difficulty accessing healthcare in general and of quality because of traditional attitudes limiting their mobility. Women in Pakistan are particularly at risk for psychological illnesses for a number of reasons, including experiencing gender disadvantage from a young age and domestic violence.
- The maternal mortality rate is high due to preventable causes, largely because of subpar emergency obstetric and neonatal care services. Consequently, Pakistan accounts for nearly 20% of the regional maternal mortality. According to the World Bank's 2012 World Development Report, for every woman who dies during childbirth in Sweden, 122 women in Pakistan die.
- While infant mortality has been declining in Pakistan (see table above), child mortality overall and the child mortality gender gap in Pakistan is still much higher than other countries in the region.
- Overall, female adolescents and women are in much greater need of information regarding their reproductive health and ways to access healthcare, particularly in light of the finding that boys have more knowledge than girls about puberty, pregnancy, family planning and sexually transmitted diseases. At the same time, men are constrained in knowing much about reproductive health and pregnancy because of social taboos; greater use of contraception and better reproductive health could potentially be achieved if they faced less social barriers to this type of knowledge.

Cross-cutting Themes

Democracy and Governance

Table 1. Democracy and Governance Snapshot

	1990	2003	2008	2009	2010	2011
Seats in parliament held by women (% of total seats)	10	22	22.5	22.5	22.2	22.2
Global Gender Gap Index (rank out of 135 countries)	.	.	127	132	132	133
Iran	125
India	113
Indonesia	90
Bangladesh	69
Gender Inequality Index (rank of out 187 countries)	115
India	129
Bangladesh	112
Indonesia	100
Iran	92

Source: World Bank. World Development Indicators

Table 2. Final Electoral Rolls 2012

	Male	Female (% of total)	Total
TOTAL	47,773,692	36,591,359 (43.4%)	84,365,051
Balochistan	1,886,235	1,391,929 (42.5%)	3,278,164
FATA	1,120,736	555,231 (33.1%)	1,675,967
Federal Area	325,795	279,007 (46.1%)	604,802
Khyber Pakhtun Khwa	6,929,105	5,135,492 (42.6%)	12,062,597
Punjab	27,297,361	21,011,283 (43.5%)	48,308,644
Sindh	10,214,460	8,218,417 (44.6%)	18,432,877

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/>

Key Issues

- Pakistan has one of South Asia region's highest levels of gender inequality. It only ranks ahead of Chad and Yemen on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, making it the worst country in Asia. On the UNDP Gender Inequality Index, Pakistan is slightly ahead of India, but still ranks below most South Asian and Middle Eastern countries.
- Female representation within Pakistan's National Assembly has varied since 1947, but has been driven primarily by a series of quota systems. An important feature of the Local Government Plan (2000) was the provision of a 33% quota for women at the district, municipality, and union council levels, and 17% quota for women in national and provincial assemblies. After the return of civilian rule in February 2008, however, the LGP was cancelled and the local level quotas disappeared. The national quotas are still in effect. Currently, of 342 National Assembly members (Pakistan's legislative body), 77 are women (22.5%). The mandated number of seats is 60; an additional 17 women have been freely elected. The majority of female National Assembly members are from Punjab Province.
- While barriers exist and Pakistani women are still thought to be less suited to politics than men, society as a whole is receptive to an increased role for women in politics.
- Several women in Pakistan's history have led political parties, including three from the Bhutto family: Nusrat Bhutto (Pakistan People's Party, or PPP) (1979-1983); Benazir Bhutto (PPP) (1984-2007); and Ghinwa Bhutto (PPP-SB) (1997-present). The Bhutto family's dynastic role in Pakistani politics is representative of a longstanding tradition, whereby the country's political landscape has been dominated by influential families. Individual positions in government often are determined by familial ties. Other prominent female Pakistani politicians include:

- Dr. Fahmida Mirza, elected as Pakistan's (Muslim world's) first female Speaker of the National Assembly in 2008 (PPP);
- Hina Rabbani Khar, appointed as Pakistan's first female (and youngest) foreign minister in 2011 (PML Q);
- Dr. Nafisa Shah, current member of Pakistan's National Assembly (PPP) and Chairperson of the National Commission for Human Development;
- Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, who formed the Punjab Provincial Muslim Women's League in 1935. She was a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly from 1937-1942, and was re-elected in 1946.
- After Musharraf's coup in 1999, women's rights were again brought to the fore – ostensibly more to improve Pakistan's reputation within the international community, than to advance the position of Pakistani women. Under the Local Government Plan 2000 (Devolution of Power), a 33% quota was established for women at the district, municipality (tehsil) and union councils, the local legislative bodies mandated to approve by-laws, taxes, long-term and short-term development plans, and annual budgets.
- Despite being granted suffrage in 1947, Pakistani women's exclusion from the country's voting process remains a problem. The minimal or nonexistent participation of women as voters in some areas significantly undermines their participation in public life.
 - A computerized national identity card (CNIC) is required to vote in Pakistan. 96% of the country's adult population is registered for a CNIC. According to a recent announcement by Pakistan's National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), however, only 85% of Pakistan's women are registered for CNICs. While this is up from four years ago, when less than 50% of women had a CNIC, it could explain women's lack of electoral participation. In general, Pakistani women remain under-enrolled and, in some cases, not permitted to vote. When they do vote, there is often coercion from male members of the household to vote for a certain candidate.
 - The country's latest electoral rolls (2012) comprise 47.8 million men and 36.6 million women. Despite constituting 49% of the country's population, the percentage of female registered voters is far less than men -- 43% of the electorate, which indicates a discrepancy of roughly 10 million Pakistani women missing from the rolls. Recent informational campaigns to promote Pakistani women's participation in elections have increased turnout by 12%, as well as increased women's independence in choosing candidates.
- Three-quarters of respondents of a nation-wide survey (2007-08) believe Pakistani women should be able to run for political office; however, nearly that many (72%) agree that men are better suited to politics than women. Surprisingly, 20% of female respondents do not support the idea that women should represent them in political office.

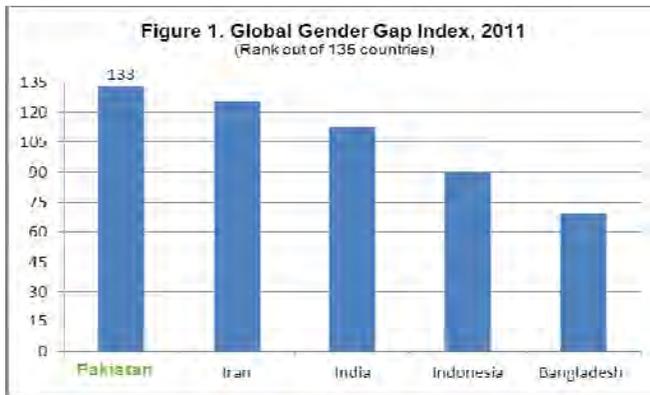
Introduction

Pakistan's democracy and governance framework continues to evolve. Since the 1980s, a range of governance reforms have been introduced, in the form of democratization, liberalization, and devolution in order to achieve economic growth, poverty reduction, greater participation from civil society, as well as more government transparency and accountability.

As shown in Figure 1 below, Pakistan has one of South Asia region's highest levels of gender inequality. It only ranks ahead of Chad and Yemen on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, making it the worst country in Asia. On the UNDP Gender Inequality Index, Figure 2 below, Pakistan is slightly ahead of India, but still ranks below most South Asian Middle Eastern countries.

"The most critical arenas impacting women's legal rights in Pakistan today lies in developing legislation affecting women's general rights as citizens and family members; women's economic rights and opportunities to earn an income; ensuring women's safety as they enter public domains; and establishing new laws to protect women from harmful and discriminatory traditional practices."

Weiss, Anita M. May 2012. Moving Forward with the Legal Empowerment of Women in Pakistan. USIP Special Report.



Sources: World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report; and UNDP, International Human Development Indicators

In recent years, however, the Government has made attempts to better women's positions within society. Over the past decade, greater emphasis has been placed on creating a gender balance by making Pakistani women economically and politically stronger. A suite of laws has been passed since Pakistan adopted the Convention to End Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1996:

- Pending: **Acid and Burn Crime Bill 2012**, due to come before Parliament soon, is a comprehensive legal mechanism to complement the criminalization of acid throwing (*Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act of 2010*). If passed, it will provide for better police investigations, trials, and victim treatment;¹
- February 2012: **Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill**,² which passed unanimously in the National Assembly in August 2009, was passed by Pakistan's Senate (upper house). Attempts to finalize this latest bill, however, have stalled. The Senate has only passed a version for Islamabad Capital Territory.³
- 2011: **Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Act, 2011**⁴ was passed.
- 2010: **Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act of 2010**, through the insertion of Section 336-A and 336-B in the Pakistan Penal Code, which strengthens the penalty against acid attacks.⁵ These amendments institute harsh fines and life in prison for those convicted.
- 2010: **Protection Against Harassment of Women in the Workplace Bill, 2010**⁶ was passed.
- 2010: **Constitutional amendment, Article 25-A**, guarantees free and compulsory education for all children ages 5 to 16.⁷
- 2008: **Anti-Women Practices Criminal Law Amendment Bill 2008**, which criminalizes practices such as forcing young girls to marry in order to settle tribal disputes and "marriage to the Holy Quran," which prevents women from inheriting property.⁸
- 2006: **Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act of 2006**, which reinstated the crime of rape into the penal code.⁹
- 2000: **National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW)**^a was established to address issues that adversely affect the lives of women, primarily by reviewing and analyzing Pakistan's laws and policies. NCSW formulates recommendations through dialogue and research to enable women to hold a position of equity.¹⁰ It is also mandated to support the implementation of the government's international commitments, as well as to recommend signing and ratifying other important conventions. In December 2012, Khawar Mumtaz was appointed NCSW chairperson.¹¹
 - February 2012: as part of devolution, the **National Commission on the Status of Women Bill 2012** was passed. This will ensure the financial and administrative autonomy of NCSW. As a result, NCSW has been further strengthened and will likely be more assertive and play a more meaningful role in highlighting Pakistani women rights. It is now attached with Ministry of Human Rights.¹²
- 2002: Implementation of a Gender Mainstreaming strategy through the **Gender Reform Action Plan (GRAP)**,^b in order to address the issue of gender disparities at the institutional level and to ensure integration of a gender perspective in government policy planning and practice. GRAP has stagnated significantly in the wake of devolution.
- 1996: Pakistan adopted the **Convention to End Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**. In October 2012, a five-year partnership agreement was signed between Pakistan's Ministry of Human Rights and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) to ensure effective implementation of Pakistan's national obligations under CEDAW and other human rights treaties.¹³

^a NCSW web site: <http://www.ncsw.gov.pk/>

^b See GRAP's web site, including the 2010-2013 Work Plan at: <http://www.grap.gop.pk/>

- Since 2005, Pakistan has made efforts to mainstream gender considerations at the Ministry of Finance vis-à-vis gender budgeting.
- Other initiatives include the 1998 **National Plan of Action (NPA) for Women**, which covered twelve critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing process;^c and introduction of the **National Policy for the Development and Empowerment of Women (NPDEW)**¹⁴ by the Ministry of Women Development in 2003. Implementation of the NPA for Women is the responsibility of the entire government, including all line ministries/departments/organizations at both the federal and provincial levels.
- Since 1947, female representation in Pakistan's political bodies has been legislatively mandated. Under the Local Government Plan 2000 (Devolution of Power) introduced by General Musharraf, for instance, a 33% quota for women was introduced in the district, municipality (tehsil) and union councils, the local legislative bodies mandated to approve by-laws, taxes, long-term and short-term development plans, and annual budgets.¹⁵ A 17% quota was also established for women in legislative assemblies. Since Musharraf's defeat in February 2008, however, this system is no longer in place. In mid-2011, following guidelines established under the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the federal government devolved the Ministry of Women Development to the provinces. According to a recent World Bank paper (2011), only the following political quotas remain:
 - Single/Lower House: Reserved seats - 17.5%; actual representation – 22.5%;
 - Upper House: Reserved seats – 4%; actual representation - 17%;
 - Sub-National Level: Reserved Seats (target %) - 17.6%.¹⁶

Overall, the Government of Pakistan's policy on gender^d focuses on better health for women, increased participation of women in planning and decision making in family, community, and politics, equal access to training and education, and improving women's access to credit for productive activities.¹⁷ Notwithstanding a small portion of elite Pakistani women occupying key public and private positions, however, the country's women – especially the poor living in rural areas – remain marginalized and unaware of their rights.

Women's Political Participation

A persistent gender gap in politics exists throughout the world, with an average of only 19.5% women holding seats in national parliaments. Female representation within Pakistan's National Assembly has varied since 1947, but has been driven primarily by a series of quota systems. Shortly after General Pervez Musharraf's regime took power in 1999, plans were announced for devolution of the government. By 2000, Pakistan's government was making a concerted effort to provide marginalized groups, including women, greater political representation, vis-à-vis the *Local Government Plan 2000*.^e The objective of this ordinance¹⁸ was to empower people at the grassroots level and to transfer power from the elite to the masses.

An important feature of the Local Government Plan (2000) was the provision of a 33% quota for women at the district, municipality, and union council levels, and 17% quota for women in national and provincial assemblies. After the return of civilian rule in February 2008, however, the LGP was cancelled and local level quotas disappeared. The national quota^f is still in effect. Currently, of 342 National Assembly members (Pakistan's legislative body), 77 are women (22.5%). The mandated number of seats is 60; an additional 17 women have

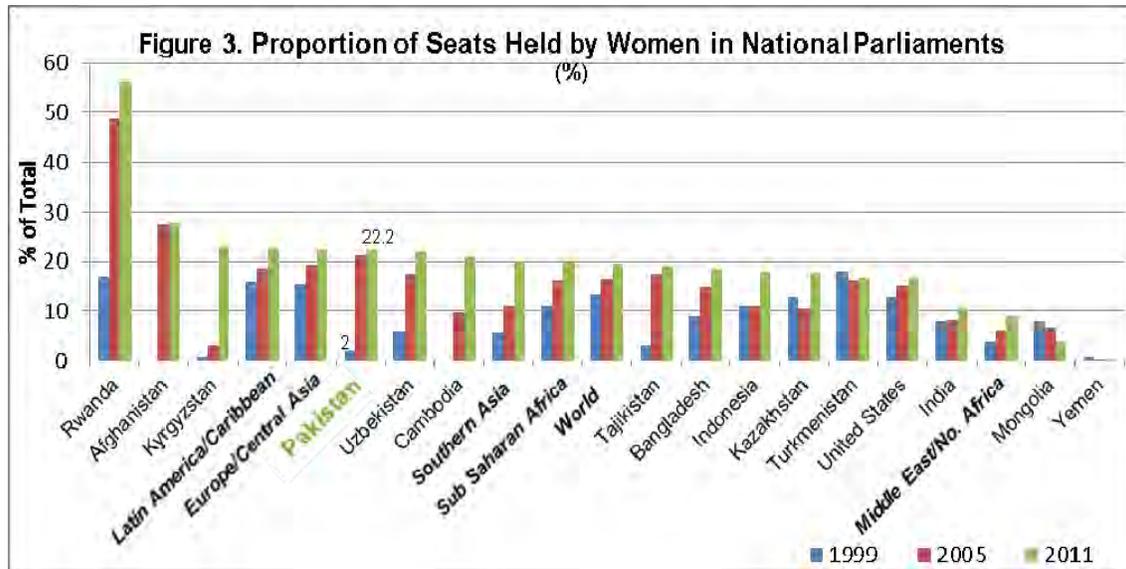
^c These include: Women and Poverty; Education and Training; Health; Violence Against Women; Women and Armed Conflict; Women and the Economy; Power and Decision Making; Institutional Mechanisms; Human Rights of Women; Media; Environment; and the Girl Child. The Pakistan NPA also has an additional chapter on Women and Girls with Disabilities. Source: <http://www.ncsw.gov.pk/about-ncsw.php>

^d See Pakistan's National Policy for Development and Empowerment of Women at: <http://sgdatabse.unwomen.org/uploads/National%20Policy%20for%20Development%20and%20Empowerment%20of%20Women.pdf>

^e Also called the Devolution Plan.

^f The type of quota Pakistan uses is called "reserved seats." According to Aurat Foundation, "Reserved seats regulate the number of women elected through party lists of nominations or direct constituency-based elections. Such quota provisions are provided for in the Constitution. They are generally in the form of reserved seats. Constitutional or legislative quotas normally try to reserve a number of places on electoral lists for female candidates or reserve a number of seats in an assembly for women. It is done through a clause in the constitution or by legislation which stipulates that a certain percentage or number among those elected must be women. Increasingly, gender quotas are being introduced using reserved seat systems." Source: Aurat Foundation. 2012. Legislative Quotas for Women - A Global & South Asian Overview of Types and Numbers.

<http://www.af.org.pk/Publication/Latest%20Publications/Book/Legislative%20Quotas%20for%20women.pdf> (page 22)



been freely elected. The majority of female National Assembly members are from Punjab Province.⁹ In addition, to encourage participation by women in the Central Superior Services (CSS), Pakistan announced that female candidates have been given a 10% quota over and above merit seats. Following this decree, out of 357 total candidates recommended by the Federal Public Service Commission in 2008, 57 were women – of those, 33 were selected on merit, and 24 as a result of the quota – which represents 16% of total successful candidates.¹⁹

Three-quarters of respondents of a nationwide survey (2007-08) believe Pakistani women should be able to run for political office; however, nearly as many (72%) agree that men are better suited to politics than women. Surprisingly, 20% of female respondents do not support the idea that women should represent them in political office.

Source: The Asia Foundation, 2007-08.
<http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/PKvoteredsurvey.pdf>

While barriers exist and Pakistani women are still thought to be less suited to politics than men, society as a whole is receptive to an increased role for women in politics. As seen in Figure 3, while the *Local Government Plan* has elevated the quantitative representation of women within Pakistan's political/governance structure – from 2% of seats in 1999 to 22.2% in 2011 – a 2010 study conducted by the country's *National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW)* finds that "it failed to create space for substantive representation."²⁰ In addition, increased participation of women within Pakistan's political parties has not yielded a significant number of women appointed to key positions within the parties.²¹ The ruling Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), for instance, has four female members^h versus 46 male members in its Central

Executive Committee.²² PPP's opposition party, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), does not list any female top leaders.²³

Several women in Pakistan's history have led political parties, including three from the Bhutto family: Nusrat Bhutto (Pakistan People's Party, or PPP) (1979-1983);²⁴ Benazir Bhutto (PPP) (1984-2007);²⁵ and Ghinwa Bhutto (PPP-SB) (1997-present).²⁶ Other prominent female Pakistani politicians include:

- Dr. Fahmida Mirza, elected as Pakistan's (Muslim world's) first female Speaker of the National Assembly in 2008 (PPP);²⁷
- Hina Rabbani Khar, appointed as Pakistan's first female (and youngest) foreign minister in 2011 (PML Q);²⁸
- Dr. Nafisa Shah, current member of Pakistan's National Assembly (PPP) and Chairperson of the National Commission for Human Development;²⁹
- Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, who formed the Punjab Provincial Muslim Women's League in 1935. She was a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly from 1937-1942,³⁰ and was re-elected in 1946.³¹

⁹ For a list of female members, see National Assembly of Pakistan – Reserved Seats for Women:

http://www.na.gov.pk/en/mna_list_w.php?list=women

^h Rukhsana Bangash – Secretary of Finance; Samina Khalid Ghurki – President PPP Lahore Division; Dr. Fahmida Mirza – Sindh; and Faryal Talpur – Sindh. Source: <http://www.ppp.org.pk/cec.html>

Political parties in Pakistan tend to allot reserved seats to family members, which is indicative of the ineffectiveness of attempts to bring Pakistani women into mainstream politics. The Bhutto family's dynastic role in Pakistani politics is representative of a longstanding tradition, whereby the country's political landscape has long been dominated by influential families. Individual positions in government often are determined by familial ties. Many of the women listed above appear to have inherited their political vocation from male family members, after which they became politicians in their own right. For instance, Nusrat and Benazir Bhutto are from a family with longstanding political connections. Nusrat's husband (Benazir's father) was former Prime Minister and President, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Fahmida Mirza comes from a powerful political family in Sindh. Nafisa Shah is the daughter of Syed Qaim Ali Shah, the Chief Minister of Sindh. Hina Rabbani Khar is the daughter of politician Malik Ghulam Noor Rabbani Khar and niece of former Governor of Punjab, Malik Ghulam Mustafa Khar.

While a number of Pakistani political parties have designated "women's wings,"³² female membership in the wings is significantly lower than male membership within the larger parties. The wings do not influence their parties' decision making processes and political programs.³³

Legal Reform and Women's Empowerment

In 1979, Pakistani women's rights were severely curtailed by General Zia-ul-Haq's Islamization project, as well as by the spread of *deeni madaris* (religious schools) throughout the country, which further excluded women from public life. Overall, Islamization consigned women to an unequal position politically. One measure used to convert Pakistan into an Islamic state was the *Offense of Zina (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance*. This statute governed sexual offenses, essentially criminalizing all forms of adultery and sexual relations outside of marriage, including rape when a burden of proof had not been met.

After Musharraf's coup in 1999, women's rights were again brought to the fore – ostensibly more to improve Pakistan's reputation within the international community, than to advance the position of Pakistani women. Nonetheless, Musharraf "formalized the National Commission on the Status of Women, sought national consensus on a National Policy on Women, and set in motion a series of reforms to promote women's rights consistent with the global norms articulated in the CEDAW Convention."³⁴ His government passed the *Criminal Law (Amendment) Act of 2004*, often referred to as the "honor killing law," which enhances punishment as a deterrent. In 2006, as a result of pressure from the country's women's rights movement to abolish or modify the Ordinance, Pakistan's National Assembly also approved the *Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act*,ⁱ which reinstated the crimes of rape and adultery to the country's penal code. This Act, viewed as a progressive piece of legislation, does not repeal the *Zina Ordinance*; rather, it nullifies the most abusive provisions, while at the same time preserving Islamic law.³⁵ The *Protection of Women Act* has succeeded in introducing significant reforms to the laws as they relate to Pakistani women. In 2010, however, the Federal Shariat Court (FSC) of Pakistan declared four sections of the *Act* unconstitutional, calling for reinstatement of the Hudood Ordinances.³⁶ The FSC decision has been challenged and an appeal was made to the Supreme Court (the Federal Shariat Appellate Bench) by a number of women's rights organizations. As of December 2012, the appeal is still pending.

Female Voting Rights

Despite extending suffrage to women in 1947, and reaffirming their right to vote in national elections in 1956 under the interim Constitution, Pakistani women's exclusion from the country's voting process remains a problem. The minimal or nonexistent participation of women as voters in some areas significantly undermines their participation in public life. The *5-year Strategic Plan (2010-2014)*³⁷ of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), which is constitutionally obligated to ensure that elections are fair and conducted according to law, contains eight guiding principles – one of which is the inclusion of marginalized groups. Pakistani women, however, remain under-enrolled, and in some cases not permitted to vote. Beyond that, when they do vote there is often coercion from male members of the household to vote for a certain candidate.³⁸

According to ECP, the country's latest electoral rolls (2012) comprise 47.8 million male voters and 36.6 million female voters,³⁹ which indicate a discrepancy. Despite constituting 49% of the country's population, the portion of female registered voters (43%) is far less than men, which indicates a discrepancy of roughly 10 million Pakistani missing women voters. Consequently, these women are not entitled to vote in the early 2013 General

ⁱ View this Act at: <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/2006/wpb.html>

Elections.^j One concern is that, with just a few months until the election in February 2013, it may not be possible to register the majority of these missing 10 million women in time.⁴⁰

In one recent case, Pakistani women were turned away from voting centers. According to the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), in January 2011 more than 59,000 women (out of 59,177 total registered female voters), were refused entry at polling stations in one district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. At one location, a written agreement among local party officials prohibited women from voting and instructed female polling officials to leave the polling station.⁴¹

Throughout the developing world, social norms often constrain female participation in elections. In Pakistan, lack of information reinforces these norms and further disengages women from public life. The World Bank (World Development Report 2012) reports, however, that recent informational campaigns to promote Pakistani women's participation in elections have increased turnout by 12%, as well as increased women's independence in choosing candidates.⁴²

To be eligible to vote in Pakistan, registering with the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) is required in order to obtain a Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC),^k which indicates that a person is a legal citizen. Women and girls in rural areas, however, often remain without identity cards, because registration can be an expensive and time-consuming task. According to a recent announcement from NADRA, over 86% of Pakistan's female population has been registered for CNICs, compared to less than 50% four years ago. As of August 2012, approximately 92 million CNICs were issued, of which 40 million were issued to women and 52 million to men.⁴³ In order to ensure that more women are eligible to vote in the upcoming elections (as well as entitled for government assistance programs), several groups such as the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Women's Wing in Punjab are encouraging and facilitating CNIC registration for women. In July 2011, for instance, PTI launched a CNIC registration drive in Lahore's rural precincts.⁴⁴

While legislative and regulatory changes can help to increase women's representation among the country's electorate, it is implementation of the law that creates the gap between principles and practice. Thus, the key issue is one of creating sufficient political will on the part of stakeholders who can influence the process, including the ECP, political parties, and domestic observer groups.

^j Pakistan's general elections are scheduled for February 2013, but could be moved up to October 2012, in order to subdue rising public anger at the country's on-going gas price crisis and floundering economy.

^k See http://www.nadra.gov.pk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6&Itemid=9

Pakistani Women, Fragility, and Conflict

Table 1. Women, Fragility, and Conflict Snapshot

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
State Fragility Index (0 to 25 – low to extreme fragility)	.	.	16 “high”	15 “serious”	15 “serious”
Vision of Humanity, Global Peace Index (GPI comprises 23 indicators measuring the absence of violence or fear of violence. All scores for each indicator are “banded”, either on a scale of 1-5 (for qualitative indicators) or 1-9 (for quantitative data). Lower score = more peaceful)	2.697	2.694	2.859	3.050	2.903 (2012 score: 2.833)
EIU Political Instability Index (0 to 10 – low to very high risk)	5.8 Moderate Risk (2007-2008)		7.8 Very High Risk (2009-2010)		.
Failed States Index (ranking out of 177 countries)	12 th	9 th	10 th	10 th	12 th (2012: 13 th)

Sources: George Mason University, State Fragility Index and Matrix; Vision of Humanity, Global Peace Index; Economist Intelligence Unit, Political Instability Index; and The Fund for Peace.

Key Issues

- Pakistan is categorized as a fragile state. For the last decade, constrained levels of economic growth have not supported the country’s rapidly growing population, nor lifted people out of poverty. High inflation, unemployment, and a youth bulge threaten future economic growth. In addition, conflict, chronic food insecurity, and patterns of social, political and economic exclusion affect its stability and governance.
- Of all the issues that fuel Pakistan’s fragility, women’s lack of access to resources, services and decision-making roles remains a significant driver of the country’s instability.
- The continued exclusion of women from decision-making roles in the country’s peace and stability further promotes gender disparity and systematic discrimination. Throughout the country’s conflict-prone areas, women and girls face severe difficulties in accessing education and health care, as well as participation in public life.
- The Pakistani government will not sign UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
- Pakistan has seen an increase in attacks on civilians by militant groups. Since January 2012, unrest caused by security operations against militant insurgents in Khyber Agency, in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), has forced a quarter of a million people, primarily women and children, into Peshawar district near the Jalozai internally displaced persons (IDP) camp and surrounding areas. The camp is now the largest in Pakistan.

Pakistan is categorized as a fragile state.¹ Over the years, Pakistan’s constrained level of economic growth has not supported its rapidly growing population, nor has it lifted people out of poverty. High inflation, unemployment, and a youth bulge threaten future economic growth. In addition, conflict, chronic food insecurity, and patterns of social, political and economic exclusion affect the country’s stability and governance.

The State Fragility Index, sponsored by researchers at George Mason University, measures “state fragility” for 164 countries including Pakistan. As their web site states, “A country’s fragility is closely associated with its state capacity to manage conflict; make and implement public policy; and deliver essential services and its systemic resilience in maintaining system coherence, cohesion, and quality of life; responding effectively to challenges and crises, and continuing progressive development.”^m Pakistan was assigned a score of 15 on the

¹ Based on George Mason University’s (Center for Systemic Peace) State Fragility Index and Matrix, Pakistan’s fragility is categorized as “serious.” <http://www.systemicpeace.org/>

^m The Index provides country rankings based upon two factors: 1) effectiveness and 2) legitimacy. These factors are assessed in relation to state performance socially, economically, politically, and in terms of state security, providing a total of 8 indicators, or 4 each to measure effectiveness and legitimacy. The Fragility Index assigns matrix scores to each country based upon state performance in the above areas, rating each indicator on a four-point fragility scale: 0 indicating “no

Fragility Index, where countries earning scores of 12-15 are marked by “serious fragility,” and 0 indicates “no fragility.” Pakistan in this respect is comparable to Bangladesh (12), Colombia (12), Kyrgyzstan (14), Nepal (15), and Yemen (16). According to The Fund for Peace 2012 Failed States Index, however, Pakistan ranks much lower -- 13th out of 177 countries, as compared to Bangladesh (29th), Colombia (52nd), Kyrgyzstan (41st), and Nepal (27th). This year, Pakistan only ranks higher than Afghanistan, Haiti, Yemen, Iraq, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, and Guinea. In 2005, Pakistan was positioned much higher at 34th, but fell to 9th in 2006. This was a result of the devastating October 2005 earthquake, as well as the country's subsequent economic downturn and an escalation in internal strife.⁴⁵ The top-five Failed States 2012 are all in Africa: Somalia (1st), D.R. Congo (2nd), Sudan (3rd), Chad (4th) and Zimbabwe (5th).⁴⁶

Of all the issues that fuel Pakistan's fragility,ⁿ exclusion of women from access to resources, services and decision-making remains a significant driver. As reported by the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, “The fact that both formal and informal institutions deny women fundamental rights, agency and a public voice means women are unable to make claims on these institutions and their interests are overlooked by decision makers. This situation contributes to Pakistan's elite and unaccountable governance. Addressing gender exclusion must therefore be an integral part of the response to Pakistan's fragility.”⁴⁷ At present, the Pakistani government will not sign UNSCR 1325, the first UN resolution targeting “the impact of conflict on women, and the role of women in peace, reconciliation, and reconstruction.”⁴⁸ By extension, Pakistan does not currently have a National Action Plan for women affected by conflict, a requirement of the resolution.⁴⁹

Throughout the world, the importance of women's involvement in peace building has been widely recognized.^o Despite Pakistani women's increased participation in economic and political life, however, their perspectives and decision-making role in the country's peace and stability have been ignored, which further promotes gender disparity and systematic discrimination against women. Throughout conflict-prone areas in the country's northwest and Balochistan province, for instance, women and girls have faced severe difficulties in accessing education and health care, as well as participation in public life – the result of imposed restrictions and violent threats by the Pakistani Taliban.

Pakistan has seen an increase in attacks on civilians by militant groups. Since January 2012, unrest caused by security operations against militant insurgents in Khyber Agency, in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), has forced a quarter of a million people, primarily women and children, into Peshawar district near the Jalozai internally displaced persons (IDP) camp and surrounding areas. As of April 2012, the camp is now the largest in Pakistan with 11,629 families registered as living in the camp. Save the Children reports that “it is unlikely the families will be able to safely return home in the near future, leaving them to face grim conditions in the camp and surrounding areas.”⁵⁰ Not surprisingly, as a result of conflict, women in FATA are more susceptible to violence and abuse. There are reports that an increase in sexual violence against women has led to a surge in honor killings, meaning that the familial shame associated with/derived from the rape of female family members is more consistently leading to the murder of these women.⁵¹

The decades-long conflict between Pakistan and its neighbor India, over the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir, also has had a devastating impact on families and, in particular, women. Throughout the conflict, militant groups have targeted civilians, including women and children, whom they consider to be either “traitors to the cause” or for expressing views contrary to those of one or another armed group. Some women have been punished for not adopting Islamic dress codes, as demanded by militant groups.⁵²

As a result of conflict between the Pakistani army and Taliban militants in 2009, many women in the Swat region of Pakistan lost their husbands and fathers. Due to traditions in the displacement area, female-headed

fragility,” 1 “low fragility,” 2 “medium fragility,” and 3 “high fragility,” the exception being the economic effectiveness indicator, which includes 4 for “extreme fragility.” The State Fragility Index combines scores for the above eight indicators to assess each state's fragility.

For full methodology notes and details, see *The State Fragility Index and Matrix 2010*, p. 7, GMU's Center for Systemic Peace: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/SFI/matrix2010c.pdf>

ⁿ Including political instability, degradation of security (internal violence), religious extremism, etc.

^o For more information on this topic, see:

- United States Institute of Peace. 2010. The Role of Women in Global Security. <http://www.usip.org/publications/the-role-women-in-global-security>
- United Nations. 2002. Women, Peace and Security. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/public/eWPS.pdf>
- Klot, Jennifer F. 2007. Women and Peacebuilding. http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pdf/doc/wgll/wgll_backgroundpaper_29_01_08.pdf

households (FHHs) often lack access to even the most basic services and supplies, which places them and their children at risk.⁵³ These FHHs face significant social and economic hardships, which have been exacerbated by the devastating floods in the region in 2010.⁵⁴ Since the fighting ended, many women have returned to work and girls to school, but people are still fearful that the Taliban will return.⁵⁵

In the remote southwest region of Balochistan, which has been the battleground for a 60-year-long insurgency by the Baloch ethnic minority (known as the “dirty” war), military action has claimed numerous civilian lives, including women and children.⁵⁶ Most recently, militants are threatening to throw acid on the faces of women who venture outside of their homes without a male guardian.⁵⁷

Gender-based Violence [and Pakistan's "Missing Women"]

Table 1. Gender-based Violence and "Missing Women" Snapshot

	2002	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reported cases of GBV	.	.	7,571	8,548	.	8,539
Estimated number of Pakistan's "Missing Women" (in millions)	4.9	6.1	.	.	.	.

Sources: Aurat Foundation; Stephen Klasen (2002); and UNDP (2010).

Note: both "Missing women" estimates based on Klasen (2002). 2007 figure (UNDP) reflects population growth.

Key Issues

Gender-based Violence

- The incidence of gender-based violence in Pakistan is significant. In one study (WPF, 2011), three-quarters of Pakistani women polled reported physical violence by an intimate partner, as well as 66% sexual violence, and 84% psychological violence.
- Under the due diligence standard identified by the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) committee, Pakistan is obligated to introduce and enforce appropriate measures for the prevention, protection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of all forms of gender-based violence (GBV). Since ratifying CEDAW in 1996, Pakistan has focused much of its attention on the obligation of prevention and has enacted a series of new legislation focusing on the rights of women, specifically violence against women, including:
 - The *Acid and Burn Crime Bill 2012*, a comprehensive legal mechanism to complement the criminalization of acid throwing, is due to come before Parliament soon. If passed, it will provide for better police investigations, trials, and victim treatment. Note: the *Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act* was passed in 2010, with the insertion of Section 336-A and 336-B in the Pakistan Penal Code, which strengthens the penalty against acid attacks.⁵⁸ These amendments institute harsh fines and life in prison for those convicted.
 - The *Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill*, which has only passed in Islamabad Capital Territory;
 - *Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Act, 2011*;
 - *Protection Against Harassment of Women in the Workplace Bill, 2010*;
 - *Anti-Women Practices Criminal Law Amendment Bill 2008*;
 - *Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act of 2006*; and
 - *Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929*.
- Violence against women in Pakistan, however, continues to be a substantial problem. Current data indicate that, because of lack of implementation and enforcement by the government, the legislation has largely failed to stop violence against Pakistani women.
 - In the first six months of 2012, 4,585 cases of violence against women were reported in the media across Pakistan, which is a 7% increase over the same period in 2011. For all of 2011, 8,539 cases of violence against women were reported, including 2,089 that pertained to abduction and kidnapping.⁵⁹ A quarter of all reported GBV cases in 2011 were reported as murders or honor killings (1,988).

Pakistan's "Missing Women"

- Being born a girl in a number of countries particularly Pakistan, China and India, can translate into an instant death sentence, stemming from a culturally embedded and widespread preference for boys that has led to a phenomenon known as "missing women."
 - Missing women is used to illustrate the shortfall in females who have died as a result of selective sex abortion and female infanticide, or if the newborn received discriminatory treatment in access to health and nutrition."
- Between 100 and 160 million women are considered "missing" in Asia alone. The most current statistic for Pakistan's "missing women" is 6.1 million based upon Pakistan's population in 2007, assuming that the percentage of mission women (7.8%) has remained constant since 1998.

- For those girls who survive infancy, life is a constant struggle: receiving less care, nourishment and access to family resources than their brothers; honor killing and death resulting from GBV; and some experts maintain that early marriages are a contributing factor, because young Pakistani girls and women endure multiple childbirths but often are unable to physically or mentally cope with the demands of child-bearing and child-rearing.
- A consequence of higher female mortality rate is an imbalanced sex ratio. Overall, Pakistan's sex ratios have been in decline since 1981, from 111 in 1981 to 108.5 in 2011.^P
 - Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have the lowest sex ratios (105 and 107.2, respectively), whereas Islamabad has the worst, with 117 men for every 100 women. Pakistan's rural sex ratios are lower than urban -- 106.8 vs. 112.2.
 - A steady increase within age groups 0-4 and 5-9 years – from 97 in 1981 to 108 in 2011 – is a clear indication of the country's growing preference for male children.
- Implications of “missing women” include a perpetuation of the lower status of girls through son preference, and grave health consequences for women. A deficit of women leads to a surplus of marriage-age men. Many experts predict that this surplus of men may lead to amplified levels of antisocial behavior and violence, which ultimately poses a threat to the stability and security of society. It could also lead to an increase in child marriage for Pakistani girls.⁶⁰

Violence Against Women

The current Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government has made noteworthy steps towards greater social, political and economic empowerment for Pakistani women. Under the due diligence standard identified by the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) committee as a tool to assess state action, Pakistan is obligated to introduce and enforce appropriate measures for the prevention, protection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of all forms of gender-based violence (GBV). Since ratifying CEDAW in 1996, Pakistan has focused much attention on the obligation of prevention and, as mentioned in the previous section, has enacted a series of new legislation that focuses on the rights of women, specifically concerning violence against women.

- February 2012: the *Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill*,⁶¹ which passed unanimously in the National Assembly in August 2009, was passed by Pakistan's Senate (upper house). Attempts to finalize this latest bill, however, have stalled. The Senate has only passed a version for Islamabad Capital Territory.⁶²
- February 2012: the *National Commission on the Status of Women Bill 2012* was passed, which ensures the financial and administrative autonomy of the Commission.
- 2011: *Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Act, 2011*.⁶³
- 2010: *Protection Against Harassment of Women in the Workplace Bill, 2010*.⁶⁴
- 2010: Constitutional amendment, Article 25-A, which guarantees free and compulsory education for all children five to sixteen years old.⁶⁵
- Recent parliamentary enactments also have been made to curtail customs like *vani* and *swara*,^q as well as crimes such as acid-throwing:
 - *Acid and Burn Crime Bill 2012*, due to come before Parliament soon, is a comprehensive legal mechanism to complement the criminalization of acid throwing (*Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act of 2010*). If passed, it will provide for better police investigations, trials, and victim treatment.⁶⁶
 - 2010: *Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act of 2010*, through the insertion of Section 336-A and 336-B in the Pakistan Penal Code, which strengthens the penalty against acid attacks.⁶⁷ These amendments institute harsh fines and life in prison for those convicted.
 - 2008: *Anti-Women Practices Criminal Law Amendment Bill 2008*, which criminalizes practices such as forcing young girls to marry in order to settle tribal disputes and "marriage to the Holy Quran," which prevents women from inheriting property.⁶⁸

^P Another source, the Federal Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Division, has quoted this figure as 107 for 2011.

^q As described in a 2009 UN report: "The practice of Swara and Vani is a common feature of tribal areas. During the reconciliation between two tribes in blood feud enmity settlement, girls are chosen to settle the scores. ... The fundamental logic behind this practice is to inflict humiliation on the girl's family. The main cause which gave birth to this practice was the local Jirgas providing justice to the deceased family with the concept of *badal* (revenge) ... Through an Amendment in the "Criminal Law Act, 2004, in Section 310 PPC this practice was banned ... but it is still continued and every day innocent girls fall prey." Source: Bokhari, Shahnaz. 2009. Good Practices in Legislation to Address Harmful Practices Against Women in Pakistan.

http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/vaw_legislation_2009/Expert%20Paper%20EGMGPLHP%20_Shahnaz%20Bokhari_.pdf (page 9)

- 2006: *Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act of 2006*, which reinstated the crime of rape into the penal code.⁶⁹
- 1929: *Child Marriage Restraint Act*,⁷⁰ attempts to discourage child marriage by stipulating the age of marriage as 18 years for males and 16 years for females. Provisions of the Act are simple, but it has failed to control the incidence of child marriage in Pakistan. A number of civil society organizations, as well as provincial governments such as Sindh, are trying to amend the Act, in order to raise the minimum age from 16 to 18 years for both girls and boys.⁷¹ According to UNFPA, most countries have declared 18 as the minimum legal age of marriage.⁷² The issue of child marriage is linked to maternal and infant morbidities (i.e., delivery complications, low birth weight) and mortality.

Current GBV statistics (see below), however, suggest that without additional, significant action taken by the government, this legislation has largely failed to stop violence against Pakistani women.⁷³ Regarding the criminalization of acid attacks, some victims say it is not enough. There is no rehabilitation mechanism in the Acid and Burn Crime Bill 2012, for instance.⁷⁴ Pakistan could glean lessons from Bangladesh's experience – specifically, its success in enacting legislation within a supporting legal framework that ensures effective and timely investigation, speedy trials and legal support to acid victims. Following the passage of its Acid Crime Control Act 2002, Bangladesh was able to reduce the incidence of acid attacks. The Acid Survivors Foundation reports that cases of acid violence in Bangladesh have fallen from 494 cases in 2002 to 84 cases in 2011 (and 9 cases January through May 2012).⁷⁵

Statistics collected by the Pakistan-based Aurat Foundation indicate that the rate of GBV in Pakistan continues to be a substantial problem. In the first six months of 2012, 4,585 cases of violence against women were reported in the media across Pakistan, which is a 7% increase as compared to the same period in 2011.⁷⁶ In 2011, a total of 8,539 cases of violence against women were reported, including 2,089 that pertained to abduction and kidnapping.⁷⁷ A quarter of all reported GBV cases in 2011 were reported as murders or honor killings (1,988).[†]

According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan's *State of Human Rights 2011*, "Incidents of domestic violence seemed to have increased in the Punjab province or perhaps were more adequately reported, while Sindh showed a downward trend and cases in Balochistan remained largely unmonitored and unreported. Parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remained under threat of religious militancy and the state of Afghan refugees, particularly the condition of women, was inadequately monitored."⁷⁸

[†] Despite the passage of Pakistan's *Criminal Law (Amendment) Act* in 2004, which is meant to provide women protection from honor crimes, such killings are still on the rise. See the *Criminal Law (Amendment) Act*: <http://www.af.org.pk/Important%20Courts'%20judgement/Important%20legislation/CRIMINAL%20LAW%20ACT%20I%20OF%202005.pdf>

Pakistan's "Missing Women"

"When a boy is born, it's a celebration. It's not like that with a girl."⁷⁹

As is the case in countries like India and China, being born a girl in Pakistan can translate into an instant death sentence. Qadir et al. (2011) and Abrejo et al. (2009) describe a culturally embedded and widespread preference for boys over girls in a number of countries.⁸⁰ From birth, many girls and women experience gendered disadvantages, including less access to scarce resources, poorer health care and nutrition, higher child mortality, limited education, less employment outside the home, and restricted independence. For instance, Nubé and Van Den Boom (2009) report that prevalence rates of under nutrition in India and Pakistan are observed as 1.5–2 times higher in women than in men.⁸¹

UN definition of "missing women":
 "females who have died as a result of discriminatory treatment in access to health and nutrition also due to selective abortion and information."
 Source: UNDP, 2010

The starkest indicator of this male preference has been labeled as the world's "missing women," first termed by Amartya Sen in 1990.⁸² Dr. Sen estimated that differential female mortality had resulted in roughly 100 million

Table 2. "Missing Women" Estimates in Select South-Asian Countries

Country	2002 No. of missing women, in millions	2007 No. of missing women, in millions	Total Female Population, in millions
Bangladesh	2.7	3.2	77.4
China	40.9	42.6	636.5
India	39.1	42.7	540.9
Iran	1.1	1.3	35.0
Korea	0.2	0.2	24.2
Nepal	0.1	0.1	14.2
Pakistan	4.9	6.1	78.7
Sri Lanka	0.0	0.0	10.1
Total	89.0	96.2	

Based on a graphic presented in: UNDP. 2010. Power, Voice and Rights - A Turning Point for Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific.
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/regional/asiathepacific/RHDR-2010-AsiaPacific.pdf> (pg. 42)

"missing" females across the developing world,⁵ which referred to the number of females who had died as a result of unequal access to resources. The United Nations defines "missing women" as: those females who have died as a result of discriminatory treatment in access to health and nutrition also due to selective abortion and information.⁸³

Between 100 and 160 million⁸⁴ women are considered "missing" in Asia alone – women who would be alive today, if not for sex-based discrimination in terms of excess female

mortality. As Table 2 indicates, the most current statistic for Pakistan's "missing women" is 6.1 million based upon Pakistan's population in 2007, up from 4.9 million in 2002. The issue appears to be more than just a preference for boys, but a societal disregard for females.⁸⁵

Sex Ratio and Higher Female Mortality

According to the World Bank, sex ratio^t is considered a summary measure of women's status because it reflects gender differences in survival rates: "a sex ratio greater than 100 signals low status of women."⁸⁶ Similarly, UNESCO maintains that high sex ratios indicate gender inequality in society "because it reflects either high rate of premature deaths of females compared to males, or a cultural preference for male children, or both."⁸⁷ Recent estimates (United Nations, 2005-2010) indicate a global sex ratio of 107 males per 100 females. Regional differences are evident: in Africa the sex ratio is 103, whereas in Asia it increases to 109 (in Eastern Asia, to 117). In Europe it is 106, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, 105 – the same as in Northern America and Oceania. According to United Nations Population Division statistics, in 2010 China's sex ratio was the highest in the world (120 males per females). The next highest was Azerbaijan (117), followed by Armenia (115), Federated States of Micronesia (111), and the Republic of Korea (110).

^s The first academic reference to "missing women" was in Amartya Sen (1986) which only focused on India, China, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, and reported a total of roughly 75 million missing women, based on the census returns from the early 1980s. Sen, Amartya. 1986. 'Africa and India: What Do We Have to Learn from Each Other? Proceedings of the Eighth World Congress of the International Economic Association. London: Macmillan.

^t Sex ratio is the number of males per 100 females in the population.

Administrative Unit	Sex Ratio
Pakistan	108.5 (*)
Rural	106.8
Urban	112.2
NWFP	105.0
Rural	103.4
Urban	113.2
FATA	108.4
Rural	108.1
Urban	119.2
Punjab	107.2
Rural	105.9
Urban	110.3
Sindh	112.2
Rural	110.6
Urban	114.0
Balochistan	114.6
Rural	113.5
Urban	118.1
Islamabad	117.0
Rural	108.0
Urban	122.0

Source: Government of Pakistan. Population Census Organization
(*) Another source, the Federal Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Division, reports 107 for 2011.

Table 3 reports on Pakistan's population by sex ratio, which was calculated as 108.5 males per 100 females slightly above the world average (see note ^u). Based on current data, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have the lowest sex ratios (105 and 107.2, respectively), whereas Islamabad has the worst, with 117 men for every 100 women. Pakistan's rural sex ratios tend to be lower than urban -- 106.8 vs. 112.2, countrywide.^v Such a difference could be attributed to a large male out-migration from rural to urban areas.

Table 4 below presents variances in Pakistan's sex ratio, by age group, comparing data from 1981, 1998 and 2011. Overall, sex ratios have been in decline since 1981, from 111 in 1981 to 107 in 2011. However, a steady increase within age groups 0-4 and 5-9 – from 97 in 1981 to 108 in 2011 – is a clear indication of the country's growing preference for male children. A number of age groups do show a *decrease* in the number of males to females, with a more pronounced downward trend in older groups. Sex ratios declined consistently in 2011, for instance, within age groups 30-34 and 35-39, as well as in those over age 50, to as low as 104 by age 65. This latter age group (65-69) holds the greatest preponderance of females, possibly due to higher male mortality at older ages.

Between 1998 and 2011, moderate increases in sex ratios occurred in four groups within the 0-44 age bracket (0-4, 20-24, 25-29, and 40-44). Within age groups 20-24

and 25-29 (peak childbearing years), the increase (to 107 and 108, respectively) could reflect higher female mortality associated with reproduction.

Increased sex ratios largely are the result of higher female mortality rates. Over the past two decades, the mortality rate for girls in Pakistan has been higher than for boys (36.5% vs. 22% in 1991, and 22% vs. 14% in 2007).^w Higher female mortality stems from discrimination against girl children.^x This preference for sons can lead to neglect in girls' health and/or nutrition As reported by Murthi et al. (1995) and Hill and Upchurch (1995), studies have shown that unequal access to health care is the most important contributing factor to a country's higher female mortality rate.⁸⁹ Pakistani girl babies often are given less care, nourishment and access to family

^u Two other sources provide different (but similar) figures for the country's overall 2011 sex ratio:

1. CIA World Factbook reports Pakistan's sex ratio as 106 males per 100 females (2011 estimate). Source: Central Intelligence Agency. July 2012. CIA World Factbook – Pakistan. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html>; and

2. Government of Pakistan's Federal Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Division presents this figure as 107 for 2011. Source: Government of Pakistan, Federal Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Division. 2011. Social Indicators of Pakistan 2011. 6th Edition.

http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/social_statistics/publications/social_indicators_2011/social_indicators_2011.pdf
^v Pakistan's rural sex ratio (106.8, or 106.8 boys for every 100 girls) is on par with the world average of 107 boys to 100 girls. Source: CIA World Fact Book. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2018.html>

^w Rate per 1,000 children age one. Source: World Bank. World Development Indicators.

^x In Pakistan, males often are considered more valuable than daughters, because they carry the family name, continue the family trade, perform certain religious rites, and are expected to support their parents in old age. Alternatively, parents incur the financial burden of raising a daughter, which includes paying a dowry to her husband's parents. Married women typically live with their in-laws and are expected to provide care and support to their *husband's* elderly parents. Thus, upon marriage, daughters are lost to their family of origin. Sons are viewed as preferable and, to a large degree, a necessity in countries like Pakistan, where there is no state pension or welfare support for the elderly. Source: Qadir, Farah et al. 2011. Male Gender Preference, Female Gender Disadvantage as Risk Factors for Psychological Morbidity in Pakistani Women of Childbearing Age - a Life Course Perspective. In *BMC Public Health*. 11:745. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/1471-2458-11-745.pdf>

resources than their brothers. Other causes of higher female mortality include offspring sex selection – often in the form of sex-selective abortion^y and female infanticide, honor killing, death resulting from violence against/abuse of women, and early marriages in which young Pakistani girls and women endure multiple childbirths but often are unable to physically or mentally cope with the demands of child-bearing and child-rearing.⁹¹

Implications of “Missing Women”

As reported by Saeed (2011): “Like the vicious poverty cycle, Pakistan’s inverse sex ratio is endemic and cyclical: gender inequality, subservience and gender based violence remain insufficiently addressed by current policies, programmes and legislation.”⁹² In addition, Pakistan has an inadequate education infrastructure and 3.2 million out-of-school girls.^z Saeed maintains that this “combination negatively impacts women’s empowerment and growth, which again promotes women’s secondary status.”

Cultural norms that pressure Pakistani families to engage in offspring sex selection, female infanticide, and girl child neglect and/or abandonment, in effect, force women to perpetuate the lower status of girls through son preference. It also can have grave implications on women and their health. As highlighted in an interagency statement from OHCHR, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and WHO (2011): “One notable consequence of the continued disproportionate importance given to boys is the huge pressure put upon women to produce sons. In a context of declining family size, restrictive policies on reproduction and access to unregulated health services, this pressure can have particularly debilitating effects on the mental and physical health of women.”⁹³

For instance, aborting a female fetus is likely to involve an unsafe procedure carrying high risks. Other health-related consequences include an increase in violence against women who give birth to unwanted girls. These women also may be forced to have successive pregnancies until a male child is born, thus putting their health and life at even greater risk. Some women are abandoned or divorced by their husbands, or forced to live with an additional wife who, presumably, will give the husband a son.⁹⁴

Countries in which the occurrence of “missing women” has translated into a skewed sex ratio, such as Pakistan, experience a deficit of marriage-age women. This greatly impacts the country’s marriage patterns. To begin, having less women indicates that a significant number of men must delay getting married. These delayed marriages also affect younger generations of men who, when they reach a marriageable age, are not only in surplus supply themselves, but also confront an accumulation of older, unmarried men, who are still on the “marriage market.” Having less women could also lead to an increase in child marriage for Pakistani girls.⁹⁵

^y Sex-selective abortion is a form of prenatal discrimination, in which a fetus is aborted after determination of its sex (usually by ultrasound). Abortion is illegal in Pakistan except in cases where the pregnancy puts the mother’s life in danger. But the law has done little to stop doctors and midwives from routinely performing abortions. As well, it is reported that educated Pakistani women and women from wealthy families, who likely have easier access to ultrasounds, are also more likely to give birth to sons. Sources: 1) Abrejo, Farina Gul, et al. February 2009. ‘And they kill me, only because I am a girl’ . . . a review of sex-selective abortions in South Asia. In the *European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Health Care*;14(1):10–16. <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=fedd609b-ecc1-45e0-a105-9faa08ce1a5e%40sessionmgr15&vid=2&hid=11>; and 2) Nosheen, Habiba and Hilke Schellmann. June 19, 2012. Abandoned, Aborted, or Left for Dead: These Are the Vanishing Girls of Pakistan. <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/06/abandoned-aborted-or-left-for-dead-these-are-the-vanishing-girls-of-pakistan/258648/#>

^z Pakistan has the world’s second largest number of out-of-school children (5.1 million), with the majority being girls (3.2 million). Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Age Group	1998*	2011
All ages	109	107**
0-4	106	108
5-9	110	108
10-14	114	107
15-19	106	106
20-24	101	107
25-29	105	108
30-34	111	107
35-39	112	106
40-44	104	106
45-49	107	106
50-54	113	106
55-59	119	106
60-64	116	105
65-69	121	104
70-74	123	105
75+	120	112

Source: Government of Pakistan, Statistics Division. Federal Bureau of Statistics.⁹⁰
 (*) Excludes FATA; 1998 figures from Population Census Organization.
 (**) there is a discrepancy between this ratio (from Federal Bureau of Statistics’ Planning & Development Division) and the 2011 figure in Table 2 (from the Population Census Organization).
 Note: 2011 figures are from FBS’s Planning & Development Division

While there is a dearth of research on the implications of sex imbalance (and “missing women”) in Pakistan, a plethora of resources are available on China, and to a lesser extent India. Through the years, many experts have predicted that skewed sex ratios in these (and other) countries will lead to amplified levels of antisocial behavior and violence, which ultimately poses a threat to the stability and security of society (see Park and Cho, 1995; Hudson and Den Boer, 2004; Hudson and Den Boer, 2002; Zeng et al., 1993; Zhang, 1990; and Li et al., 1995).⁹⁶ Hesketh and Xing (2011), for instance, report that, because China’s and India’s growing surplus of adult males is largely from the low socioeconomic class, there is a concern that their lack of “marriageability” and subsequent marginalization in society “may lead to antisocial behavior and violence, threatening societal stability and security.”⁹⁷ Further, with 40% of the world’s population living in China and India, Hudson and Den Boer (2002 and 2004) argue that the sex imbalance could impact regional and global security, especially because the surrounding countries of Pakistan, Taiwan, Nepal, and Bangladesh also have high sex ratios.⁹⁸ Similarly, a recent U.S. congressional report (2011) highlights a concern that China’s population imbalance will have adverse social and security implications. The report maintains that, while scarcity of women will increase their “value, it also increases their vulnerability. In some societies, it leads to an increase in forced marriages and the trade of kidnapped and trafficked women.” The report states that “[s]ome social and political scientists argue that large numbers of “surplus males” could create social conditions that the Chinese government may choose to address by expanding military enlistment.”⁹⁹ Finally, Nobuko Horibe, director of the United Nations Population Fund in Asia-Pacific, recently emphasized that the issue of “missing women,” in particular sex imbalance, “will impact on future generations and will have serious demographic implications.”¹⁰⁰

Alternatively, Wei and Zhang (2011) report that China’s skewed sex ratio can have constructive impacts. For example, it can trigger savings competition among households in order to improve their sons’ standing in the marriage market. The authors also report that a rise in the sex ratio may encourage more households with a son to take up entrepreneurial activities.¹⁰¹ No evidence is available, however, to suggest these outcomes are the same in Pakistan.

Water and Sanitation

Table 1. Water and Sanitation Snapshot

Improved sanitation facilities (% of population with access)	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Rural	27	28	30	31	32	34
Urban	72	72	72	72	72	72
Total	43	43	45	45	46	48
Improved water source (% of population with access)	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Rural	87	87	87	88	88	89
Urban	96	96	96	96	96	96
Total	90	90	90	91	91	92

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators 2012

Key Issues

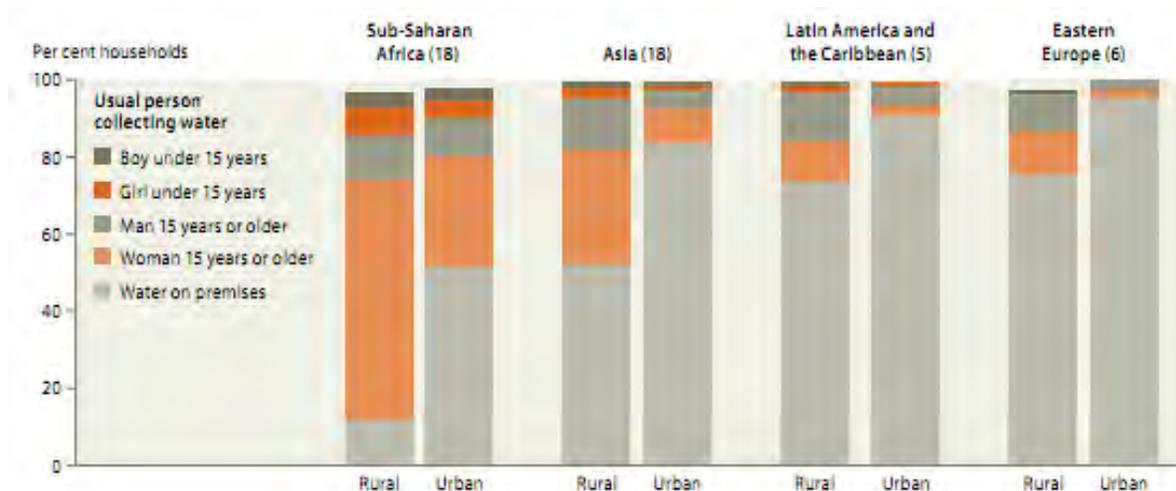
- The 2010 floods in Pakistan caused significant damage to infrastructure supplying water and sanitation services throughout the country. The impact of the flood damage continues to be felt particularly by dislocated and vulnerable populations: the flooding resulted in the rapid re-location of 20 million people, affecting over 1.87 million households.
 - Devastation from flooding in 2011 left around 2 million children and 1.7 million women vulnerable to diseases, under-nutrition, abuse and exploitation. In northwestern Pakistan, nearly 950,000 people (126,224 families) remain displaced in 2012, residing either in displacement camps or in host communities.^{aa}
- Pakistanis who reside in remote areas and in internal displaced persons (IDP) and refugee camps, are particularly susceptible to environmental health concerns due to waterborne parasitic and endemic diseases.
 - According to a 2011 national nutrition survey, 46.3% of children under age five in rural areas were stunted, and 33.3% were underweight, partially due to unsafe water and poor sanitation services that prevent children from absorbing the nutrients they need.
 - Throughout the world, an estimated 1.5 million children die before the age of 5 from diarrhea, which is the second most common cause of child deaths worldwide. According to UNICEF and WHO, Pakistan ranks 6th in child deaths due to diarrhea, totaling 53,300 in 2007. India ranks 1st (386,600); Afghanistan 4th (82,100); and Bangladesh 7th (50,800).
- The 2010 floods also produced widespread crop and environmental damage, exacerbating food insecurity.
- 82 districts in Pakistan were significantly impacted by the 2010 flooding. The effects varied per region. Lower elevations experienced damage to tubewells, pumping machinery, pipe distribution networks, and sewerage and drainage systems. The majority of this infrastructure continues to require rehabilitation, cleaning and disinfection, and repair, thus posing continued health risks in the forms of waterborne and communicable diseases and infections.
 - Women and girls remain an at-risk and vulnerable group amidst such conditions given that: they lose their privacy during humanitarian emergencies, are susceptible to potential sexual violence in camps, and their economic livelihood suffers when they divert resources to safe water collection.
- With the world's sixth largest population, and one of the world's largest displaced populations, including 1.8 million refugees mainly from Afghanistan, and a significant IDP population, women and children will likely continue to face environmental health risks without further interventions focused on gendered access to water and sanitation services.

^{aa} According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's *Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*, a host community is defined as a "community that hosts large populations of refugees or internally displaced persons, typically in camps or directly integrated into households" (p. 505). Available at: [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CFA06/\(httpKeyDocumentsByCategory\)/956C4A672F19038C125779F00292390/\\$file/GPC_WG_Handbook-Protection-IDPs_jun2010.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CFA06/(httpKeyDocumentsByCategory)/956C4A672F19038C125779F00292390/$file/GPC_WG_Handbook-Protection-IDPs_jun2010.pdf)

The 2010 floods in Pakistan caused significant damage to infrastructure supplying water and sanitation services throughout the country, increasing potential health risks, especially among women and children. In addition to destroying forest nurseries, wetlands, wildlife resources, and other natural systems, the floods also resulted in increased contamination of drinking water, the proliferation of disease vectors engendered by stagnant water ponds, and an increase in material waste.¹⁰² Devastation from flooding in 2011 left around 2 million children and 1.7 million women vulnerable to diseases, under-nutrition, abuse and exploitation.¹⁰³

The impact of the flood damage continues to be felt by millions of dislocated and vulnerable populations. In northwestern Pakistan, nearly 950,000 people (126,224 families) remain displaced, residing either in displacement camps or in host communities.¹⁰⁴ A large number of women and children continue to live in temporary housing, and/or roadside camps which do not offer potable water or adequate sanitation services. This has created a persistent human security crisis in light of unmet sanitation, hygiene, and nutrition needs among displaced women and children, the former who have experienced disruptions to their economic livelihood amidst environmental disasters.¹⁰⁵

Figure 1: Distribution of Households by Person Responsible for Water collection, by Region and Urban/Rural Areas, 2005-2007



Source: United Nations Statistics Division, based on data from Macro International, Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) reports (2009) and UNICEF, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) reports (2009).

Access to Water and Sanitation Services

Nearly two years after the flood, Pakistan's water supply and sanitation services continue to fail in three areas: quality, access, and sustainability. The piped water supply is not potable and services are at best intermittent. Approximately 35% of the population has access to such water for 3-6 hours at most per day. Ilahi and Grimard (2000) report that as Pakistani women's access to potable water deteriorates, their time spent collecting water increases.¹⁰⁶ Most households are not connected to a working sewer system or service, and it is estimated that 33% of rural inhabitants do not have household lavatories. Moreover, the water supply and sanitation service sector continues to be marked by poor local governance: although a national devolution of services in the 1990s transferred service delivery to local government institutions, such institutions were not provided with skilled staff, resources, management capacity, or sufficient funds to perform their duties.¹⁰⁷ The combined effects of such social and political dynamics have been the proliferation of environmental damage and potential health risks, especially for women and children and particularly among vulnerable displaced and refugee populations in particular.

Women and children who live in remote areas, and those who are vulnerable at-risk populations residing in internal displaced persons (IDP) and/or refugee camps, are particularly susceptible to environmental health concerns due to waterborne parasitic and endemic diseases. In fact, conflicts along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border have contributed to further social dislocation, and since August 2008, over 320,000 individuals have been displaced, a significant number of them being women and children.¹⁰⁸ According to a 2011 national nutrition survey, 46.3% of children under age five in rural areas were stunted, and 33.3% were underweight, partially due to unsafe water and poor sanitation services that prevent children from absorbing the nutrients they

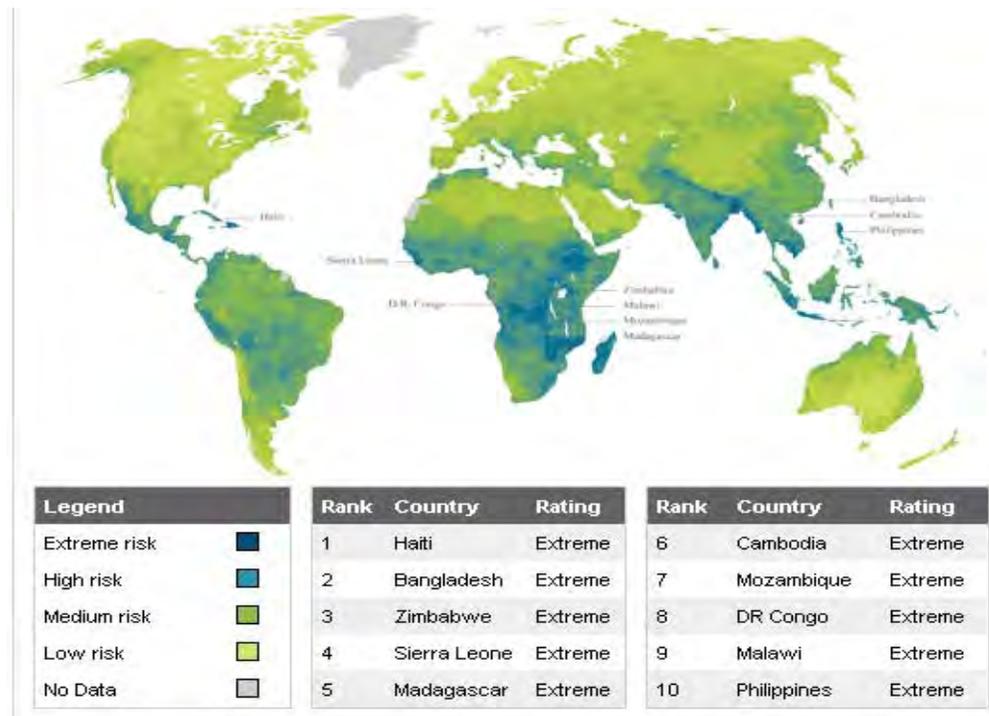
	Score	Rank (out of 193 countries)
Haiti	0.16	1
Bangladesh	0.20	2
Indonesia	2.25	27
India	2.27	28
Southern Asia	2.81	--
Pakistan	2.98	35
Afghanistan	3.20	38
Southeastern Asia	3.49	--
Latin America/Caribbean	5.61	--
Central Asia/ Eastern Europe	8.43	--
Europe	8.68	--
Kazakhstan	9.00	152
United States of America	9.11	160
Northern America	9.22	--
Iceland	9.96	193

Note: Values closer to 0 represent higher risk and values closer to 10 represent lower risk. Source: Maplecroft.

per day.¹¹¹

Throughout the world, an estimated 1.5 million children die before the age of 5 from diarrhea, which is the second most common cause of child deaths worldwide. According to UNICEF and WHO, Pakistan ranks 6th in child deaths due to diarrhea, totaling 53,300 in 2007. India ranks 1st (386,600); Afghanistan 4th (82,100); and Bangladesh 7th (50,800).¹¹² A separate study also found that poor water and sanitation contributed to child mortality rates in remote areas, namely the Karakoram-Himalaya region of northern Pakistan, where 25-50% of mortality in children under the age of five was caused by diarrhea and dysentery, conditions attributable to unsafe water, inadequate sanitation, and poor hygiene practices.¹¹³

Figure 2. Map of Climate Change Vulnerability Index 2012



© Maplecroft, 2011

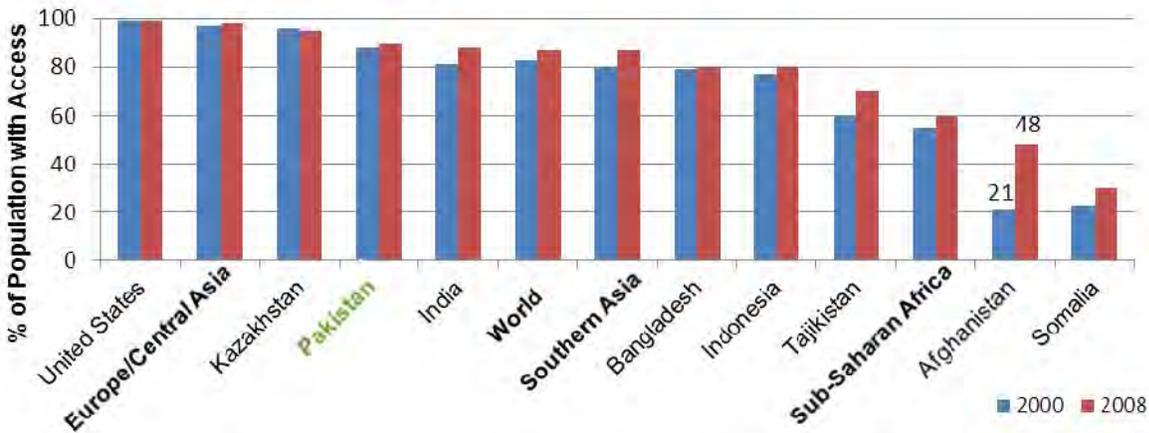
In terms of long term effects of environmental disasters in Pakistan, a total of 82 districts in Pakistan comprising 10 in Punjab, 17 in Sindh, 13 in Balochistan, and areas of FATA were significantly impacted by the 2010 floods.

^{bb} Maplecroft's CCVI combines the risk of exposure to extreme events, with the degree of current sensitivity to that exposure and the ability of the country to adjust to, or take advantage of stresses resulting from climate change. Source: *Climate Change and Environmental Risk Atlas 2012*. <http://www.maplecroft.com>

The effects varied per region, especially impacting mountainous areas. Lower elevations experienced damage to tubewells, pumping machinery, pipe distribution networks, and sewerage and drainage systems. The majority of this infrastructure continues to require rehabilitation, cleaning and disinfection, and repair, thus posing continued health risks in the forms of waterborne and communicable diseases and infections. Women in particular are at-risk amidst such conditions given that they lose their privacy during humanitarian emergencies, are susceptible to potential sexual violence in camp conditions, and/or have their economic livelihood impacted given that they divert resources to safe water collection.¹¹⁴

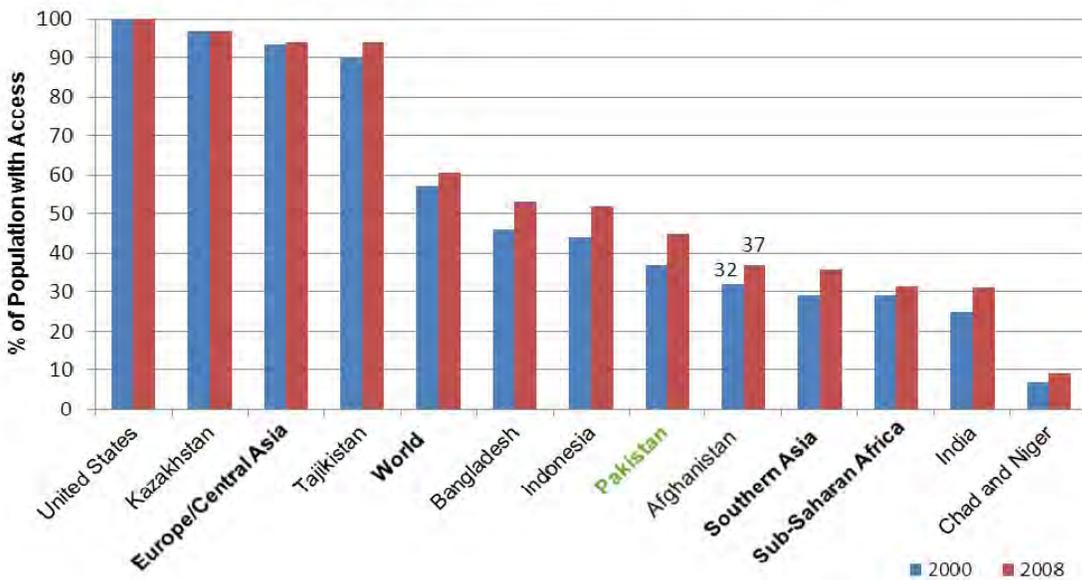
With the world's sixth largest population, and one of the world's largest displaced populations, including 1.8 million refugees mainly from Afghanistan, and a significant IDP population, women and children will likely continue to face environmental health risks without further interventions pertaining to water and sanitation services.¹¹⁵

Figure 3. Improved Water Source



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

Figure 4. Improved Sanitation Facilities



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

Table 3. Percentage of Water Pollution by Industry	2006
Water pollution, chemical industry (% of total BOD emissions)	9.1
Water pollution, clay and glass industry (% of total BOD emissions)	4.3
Water pollution, food industry (% of total BOD emissions)	15.1
Water pollution, metal industry (% of total BOD emissions)	2.2
Water pollution, other industry (% of total BOD emissions)	11.2
Water pollution, paper and pulp industry (% of total BOD emissions)	1.9
Water pollution, textile industry (% of total BOD emissions)	55.6
Water pollution, wood industry (% of total BOD emissions)	0.4

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

BOD: refers to emissions from manufacturing activities as defined by two-digit divisions of the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC), revision 2: other (38 and 39). Emissions of organic water pollutants are measured by biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), which refers to the amount of oxygen that bacteria will consume in breaking down waste. This is a standard water-treatment test for the presence of organic pollutants.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Table 1. Gender and ICT Snapshot

	2000	2005	2008	2009	2010
Mobile Gender Gap (%)	.	.	.	59%	.
Cellular mobile subscribers per 100 inhabitants	.25	8.3	49.74	56.96	59.21
Female Mobile Phone Subscribers (in thousands)	.	.	.	22,320	.
Male Mobile Phone Subscribers (in thousands)	.	.	.	57,155	.
Female Mobile Phone Penetration (%)	.	.	.	25%	.
Male Mobile Phone Penetration (%)	.	.	.	61%	.
Main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants	2.16	3.43	2.50	2.24	1.97
Personal computers per 100 population	.42	.	.	.	.
Internet subscribers per 100 inhabitants	.	.	2.1	2.1	.
Internet users per 100 inhabitants	.21	6.82	10.45	11.26	16.78

Sources: International Telecommunication Union, World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database; GSMA and Vital Wave (2009)

Key Issues

- Traditional attitudes and norms regarding Pakistani women's interaction with technology, literacy, language skills, domestic responsibilities, etc. represent obstacles to their access to ICTs. This can be attributed to the country's patriarchal social structure, lack of women's disposable income, lack of cultural acceptability of female ownership, and lack of awareness of the benefits of ICTs.
- Pakistani women are 59% less likely to own a mobile phone than men.
- In terms of access to ICTs, significant disparities exist between rural and urban women in Pakistan. Internet access is largely limited to urban Pakistani men. Men and women in rural areas generally have little access to the Internet.
- In Pakistan where banking infrastructure is limited, mobile money (a.k.a. mobile banking) represents a potential solution for many individuals who remain unbanked. Mobile banking solutions, such as Telenor Pakistan's *Easypais*, have significantly increased women's access to financing, as well as reduced the inconvenience they experience paying back loans.
 - For poor Pakistani women, however, mobile banking has not gained significant traction, primarily as a result of cultural issues that often preclude access to mobile phones and other technologies.
 - A more successful approach has been to provide these women with financial services via traditional plastic debit cards. The cards make it easier to maintain confidentiality. PIN numbers allows women to make withdrawals and deposits at ATMs and kiosks.

Throughout the world, ICTs have improved our way of life—for the better. In developing countries, in particular rural areas, women empowered with ICTs can enhance their capacity to cope in diverse situations. In Pakistan, however, traditional cultural norms regarding women's involvement with technology, as well as attitudes about female literacy, language skills, domestic responsibilities and the like, represent obstacles to their access to ICTs.¹¹⁶ This can be attributed to the country's patriarchal social structure, lack of women's disposable income, lack of cultural acceptability of female ownership, and lack of awareness of the benefits of ICTs.¹¹⁷

Mobile Phones

The mobile gender gap is extreme in Pakistan, where traditional female roles are firmly rooted, leaving women with little control over the purchase of a mobile phone. Even when a mobile phone is registered to a woman, however, it does not mean she is in charge of it and is a primary user.¹¹⁸ As both Table 2 and Figure 1 below indicate, Pakistani women are 59% less likely to own a mobile phone, much less any technology, than men. The mobile phone penetration rate for Pakistani women is less than half of their male counterparts – 25% versus 61%.

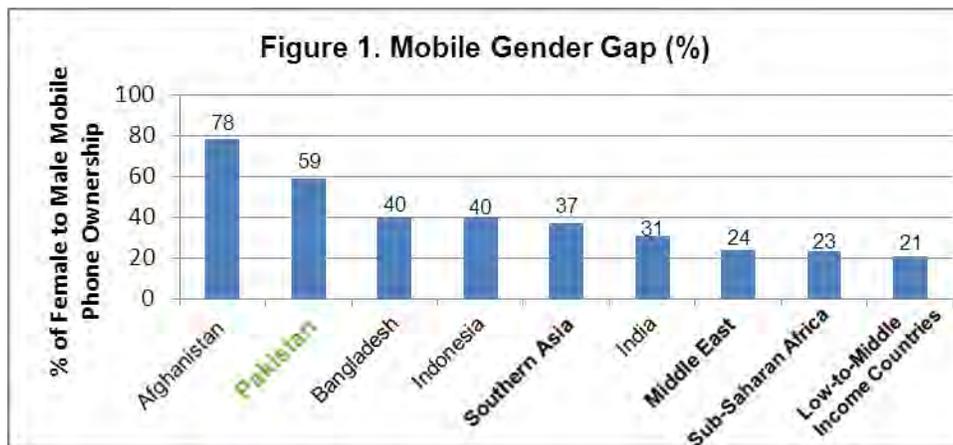
Table 2. Women and Mobile Technology

	Mobile Gender Gap (%)	Female Mobile Phone Subscribers	Male Mobile Phone Subscribers	Female Mobile Phone Penetration (%)	Male Mobile Phone Penetration (%)
Afghanistan	78	1,329,008	6,488,686	10	45
Pakistan	59	22,320,087	57,155,007	25	61
Bangladesh	40	16,720,696	28,522,937	21	35
Indonesia	40	47,308,450	78,213,392	41	68
Southern Asia	37	.	.	.	.
India	31	161,265,651	249,463,614	28	40
Middle East	24	.	.	.	.
Sub-Saharan Africa	23	.	.	.	.
Low-to-Middle Income Countries *	21	.	.	.	.

Source: GSMA and Vital Wave (2009).

Notes:

- Mobile Gender Gap is calculated by looking at the rate of female mobile phone ownership relative to that of males.
- Mobile Phone Penetration rate describes the number of active mobile phone numbers (as a percentage) within a specific population.
- * There are 300 million fewer female subscribers than male subscribers in low and middle-income countries.



Source: GSMA and Vital Wave (2009)

Mobile Banking

In countries like Pakistan where banking infrastructure is limited, mobile money (a.k.a. mobile banking) represents a potential solution for many individuals who remain unbanked, by providing financial services such as digital payments, transfers and remittances, savings, credit, and insurance. For example, mobile banking solutions like Telenor Pakistan's *Easypaisa*^{cc} have significantly increased women's access to financing, as well as reduced the inconvenience they experience paying back loans. While strides in mobile banking are being made, efforts to increase women's access to financial services vis-à-vis technology should ensure the gender gap is not unintentionally further exacerbated.

For poor Pakistani women, mobile banking has not gained significant traction, primarily due to cultural issues that often preclude access to mobile phones and other technologies. In poor households, for instance, the only phone often belongs to a man who might not want to support a woman's efforts to save. A more successful approach has been to provide poor Pakistani women with financial services via traditional plastic debit cards.

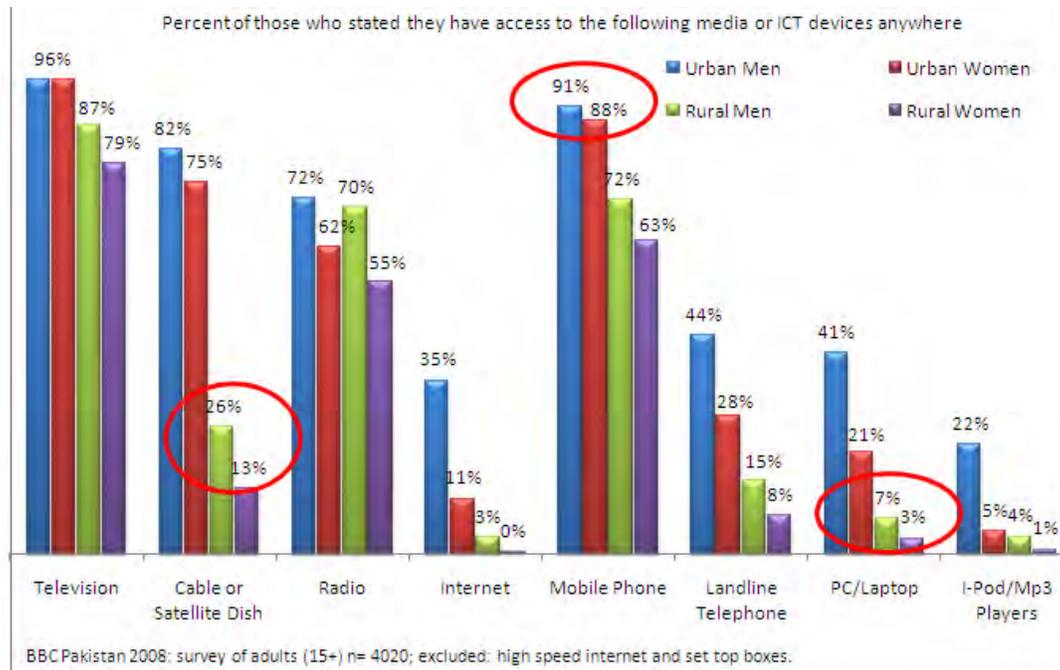
^{cc} For more information about Easypaisa, go to: <http://www.easypaisa.com.pk/>

The cards make it easier to maintain confidentiality. PIN numbers allows women to make withdrawals and deposits at ATMs and kiosks.¹¹⁹

Internet Usage

As seen in Figure 2 below, a survey of 4,020 Pakistani adults conducted in 2008 by the BBC shows significant disparities between rural and urban women in Pakistan, in terms of access to ICTs, such as cable and satellite TV, mobile phones, and personal computers/laptops. Additionally, Internet access is largely limited to urban Pakistani men. Men and women in rural areas generally have very little access to the Internet.

Figure 2. Pakistan: Access Anywhere



Source: AudienceScapes. 2010. Country Profile: Pakistan. Communication Habits by Demographic Groups - Gender. The InterMedia Knowledge Center. <http://www.audiencescapes.org/country-profiles-pakistan-communication-habits-demographic-groups-gender-media-divide-women-men-habits-access-use>

Table 3. Pakistan's Telecoms Sector – Internet – Historical Data and Forecasts

	2009	2010	2011	2012 ^f	2013 ^f	2014 ^f	2015 ^f	2016 ^f
No. of Internet Users ('000s)	27,904	28,750	31,913	34,785	37,568	40,198	42,609	44,740
No. of Internet Users, Per 100 Inhabitants	16.4	16.6	18.1	19.3	20.5	21.6	22.5	23.2
No. of Broadband Internet Subscribers ('000s)	644	1,141	1,794	2,602	3,643	4,553	5,464	6,120
No. of Broadband Internet Subscribers, Per 100 Inhabitants	.4	.7	1	1.4	2	2.4	2.9	3.2

^f = BMI forecast. Source: ITU, PTA, BMI¹²⁰
Source: Business Monitor International

Economic Growth and Agriculture

Table 1. Women, Economy and Agriculture Snapshot

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Labor force, female (% of total labor force)	13.5			16.1	16.8	17.9	18.9	19.3	19.4	19.7	.
Labor force, male (% of total labor force)	79.3									81.3	
Labor Force Participation, Female (% of female population 15+)	16	15.9	16.1	17	17.9	19.3	20.9	21.1	21.5	21.9	22.4
Labor Force Participation, Male (% of male population 15+)	83.7	83.5	83.3	83.4	83.5	84.1	84.7	83.9	83.3	83.3	83.3
[See Regional Breakdowns in Table 2 below]											
Female Employees, Agriculture (% of female employment)	.	.	.	64.6	67.3	67.3	68.8	72.4	75	.	74.2*
Female Employees, Industry (% of female employment)	.	.	.	15.6	15	15	15	12.6	12.2	.	.
Female Employees, Services (% of female employment)	.	.	.	19.8	17.6	17.6	16.2	15	12.9	.	.
Unemployment, total	7.2	.	7.8	.	7.4	.	6.1	5.1	5.0	.	.
Unemployment, female (% of female labor force)	.	.	.	.	13	.	9.6	8.6	8.7	.	.
Unemployment, male (% of male labor force)	5.5	.	6.2	.	6.2	.	5.2	4.2	4.0	.	.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators; * - Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2010-11.

Table 2. Pakistan's Labor Force Participation, by Gender and Province, 2007-08 (%)¹²¹

	Men	Women	Total
Rural, overall	71	26	49
Urban, overall	67	8	39
Punjab	70	23	47
Rural	71	29	50
Urban	68	10	40
Sindh	71	15	45
Rural	77	26	50
Urban	65	5	40
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	65	16	40
Rural	65	18	41
Urban	65	7	36
Balochistan	67	10	42
Rural	70	12	44
Urban	60	6	35

Source: Brookings, *Pakistan Index, Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security* (December 8th, 2010) derived from the Government of KPK Finance Department (June 2009).

Key Issues

- Pakistan's employment picture for women, in both the formal and informal sectors, is bleak. They experience uneven socioeconomic development, as well as the impact of tribal, feudal, and capitalist social formations on their lives.
- Female labor force participation has increased, from 16% in 2000 to 22.4% in 2010, but the gap remains one of the widest in the South Asia region. Female unemployment is sliding, from 13% in 2004 to 8.7% in 2008. However, formal work is still problematic for many women in Pakistan, primarily due to social barriers that limit mobility and stifle activity in the public arena. The labor force participation rate for young Pakistani women remains lower than for young men, which reflects cultural traditions and the lack of opportunities for women to combine work and family duties.
- Because poverty is rampant and unemployment on the rise, poor families push children into the work force to supplement household income. According to World Bank statistics, 16.2% of Pakistani girls (ages 7-14) are economically active, vs. 15.6% of boys. Estimates from Pakistani government sources report a total of between 3.3 million and 10 million economically active children.
- The majority of Pakistan's total workforce – 80% – is engaged in the informal sector. Many Pakistani women work in the informal sector – 77.7% to 79.0% in rural areas, and 68.4% to 63.1% in urban. Of Pakistan's estimated 20 million home-based workers (a subset of the informal sector), it is estimated that between 4 and 12 million are women working in jobs like garment- and bangle-making, shoe-stitching, embroidery, carpet weaving, etc.
- Roughly 75% of the country's female labor force works in agriculture, which is much higher than most other countries. Female agricultural workers in Pakistan are paid low wages, work long hours, lack basic property rights as individuals, lack access to and management of land and resources, and do not have access to agriculture extension training and/or credit.
- Pakistan's textile sector absorbs a disproportionate share of female employment. An estimated 30% of the sector's workforce (approx. 2.3 million workers) is comprised of women. Pakistani female textile workers are described as mostly young, unmarried, literate, with a large family, living in low-income settlements surrounding the manufacturing units and factories in the cities, working either as home-based piece rate workers or employed on contract basis in small or medium-sized enterprises producing for local markets or linked with global supply chain.
- Pakistani women earn less than their male counterparts, and their rate of increase is less than men's over time. Female monthly wages as a percentage of men's has actually decreased from 64.5% in 2009-10 to 62.9% in 2010-11.
- Women make up 4.6% of board members in Pakistani firms, only marginally lower than emerging Asian markets' 4.7% average, but higher than India (4.1%), and Indonesia (4.2%). Women have minimal representation as decision-makers in Pakistani firms.
- Equal employment is a new concept in Pakistan. Its Constitution bans discrimination based on sex, but most Pakistani employers do not offer equal opportunities. Despite ratification of both core ILO Conventions on discrimination, they often are violated. Discrimination against women in the economic sphere continues to be a serious problem.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Central Asia	3.2	6.6	6.2	6.1	6.2
Kazakhstan	1.2	7.0	7.5	6.0	6.5
South Asia	7.5	7.8	6.4	6.6	7.1
Bangladesh	5.7	6.1	6.7	6.2	6.0
India	8.4	8.4	6.9	7.0	7.5
Pakistan	1.7	3.8	2.4	3.6	4.0
Sri Lanka	3.5	8.0	8.3	7.0	8.0
Southeast Asia	1.4	7.9	4.6	5.2	5.7
Indonesia	4.6	6.2	6.5	6.4	6.7
Malaysia	-1.6	7.2	5.1	4.0	5.0
Developing Asia (*)	6.0	9.1	7.2	6.9	7.3

Table 4. Pakistan's Inflation (% per year)					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Central Asia	5.9	7.0	9.0	7.2	7.3
Kazakhstan	7.3	7.1	8.3	6.5	6.8
South Asia	5.2	9.4	9.4	7.7	6.9
Bangladesh	6.7	7.3	8.8	11.0	8.5
India	3.8	9.6	9.0	7.0	6.5
Pakistan	17.0	10.1	13.7	12.0	10.0
Sri Lanka	3.5	6.2	6.7	8.0	7.0
Southeast Asia	2.7	4.1	5.5	4.4	4.4
Indonesia	4.8	5.1	5.4	5.5	5.0
Malaysia	0.6	1.7	3.2	2.4	2.8
Developing Asia (*)	1.4	4.4	5.9	4.6	4.4

(*) Developing Asia refers to 44 member countries of ADB and Brunei Darussalam, an unclassified regional member.

Source for Tables 3 and 4: Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2012. Asian Development Outlook 2012: Confronting Rising Inequality in Asia.

<http://www.adb.org/publications/asian-development-outlook-2012-confronting-rising-inequality-asia>

In terms of economic growth, Pakistan under-performs as compared to other countries at similar levels of per capita income. As seen in Table 3 above, the Asian Development Bank reports that Pakistan has the lowest GDP growth and highest inflation rate in Asia. Its GDP growth fell between 2010 and 2011, which was the case for many Asian countries', but is expected to rise again over the next two years. The IMF, however, projects a continued decline in Pakistan's real GDP growth – to 3.2% in 2012/13, which is down from an estimated 3.7% in 2011/2012.¹²² Both projections are reportedly insufficient for Pakistan to achieve a significant improvement in living standards and to absorb the rising labor force.¹²³ The IMF also expects a deceleration in Pakistan's inflation, similar to ADB figures in Table 4 – down to 10% by 2013.¹²⁴

Pakistan's social and human development also continues to be constrained by a lack of reliable and sustainable livelihood opportunities. Three main challenges in safeguarding Pakistan's future economic growth are: limited access to education and vocational training, the low quality of education and training, and a shortage of skilled labor.¹²⁵ The low socio-economic status^{dd} of women in Pakistan is recognized as a significant drag on the country's growth.¹²⁶ This is due to low literacy rates (only 42% of Pakistani women ages 15+ are literate, versus nearly 70% of men), lack of educational facilities, cultural constraints, poor economic conditions, and an insecure environment for working women.¹²⁷

Women's Status

Pakistani women contend with uneven socioeconomic development, as well as the impacts of tribal, feudal, and capitalist social formations on their lives. The status of a woman here can differ widely, based on class, the region in which she lives, and whether she lives in a rural or urban area. Women in Pakistan tend to be less visible vis-à-vis their work outside the home and contributions to household income, as well as participation in social and political life. Primarily, this is a result of social barriers to female mobility, which significantly stifle Pakistani women's activity in the public arena. As the accompanying overviews indicate, Pakistani women trail behind their male counterparts in schooling, they are limited in their use of public services, including health facilities, and have lower rates of political activity.

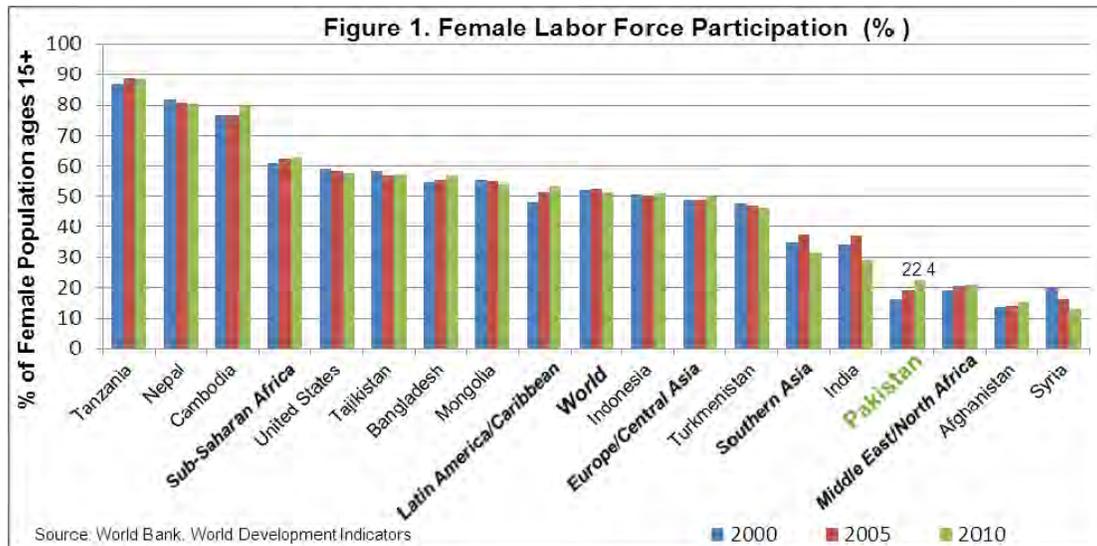
Pakistani women "do not enter the labour market on equal terms vis-à-vis men. Their occupational choices are limited due to social and cultural constraints, inherent gender bias in the labour market, and lack of supportive facilities such as child care, transport and accommodation in the formal sector of the labour market. Women's labour power is considered inferior because of employers' predetermined notion of women's primary role as homemakers. As a result of discrimination against female labour, women are concentrated in the secondary sector of labour market. Their work is low paid, low status, casual and lacks potential upward mobility."

Source: Sadaquat, M.B. and Sheikh, Q.A. 2010. Employment Situation of Women in Pakistan. In *International Journal of Social Economics*, Vol. 38 No. 2.

^{dd} Socio-economic status is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation.

Labor Force Participation

The gender gap in South Asia remains wide, and Pakistani women still face significant obstacles. A 2012 Asia Society survey estimates that limits on female employment cost the region, as a whole, \$89 billion a year in lost productivity. The gap is widest in Pakistan, Nepal, India, South Korea and Cambodia.¹²⁸ As noted in the country's *Labour Policy 2010*, "Women are Pakistan's least utilized human resource. [Women's] labour force participation depicts a gloomy picture."¹²⁹ Yet, cultural norms regarding Pakistani women in the workplace have changed over the last decade, with Internet usage expanding, global corporations entering the country,^{ee} and Pakistani women staying in school longer.¹³⁰ As indicated in Figure 1, Pakistan's female labor force participation, while still very low, is improving – up from 16% in 2000 to 22.4% in 2010, which is a 40% increase in 10 years. However, it remains worse than South Asia region as a whole (31.7%), is less than half the world average (51.1%), and comes in roughly four times below Tanzania (88.3%). Neighboring India (29%) is only slightly higher, but Pakistan is well below Indonesia (51%), Bangladesh (56.9%), and Cambodia (79.3%).



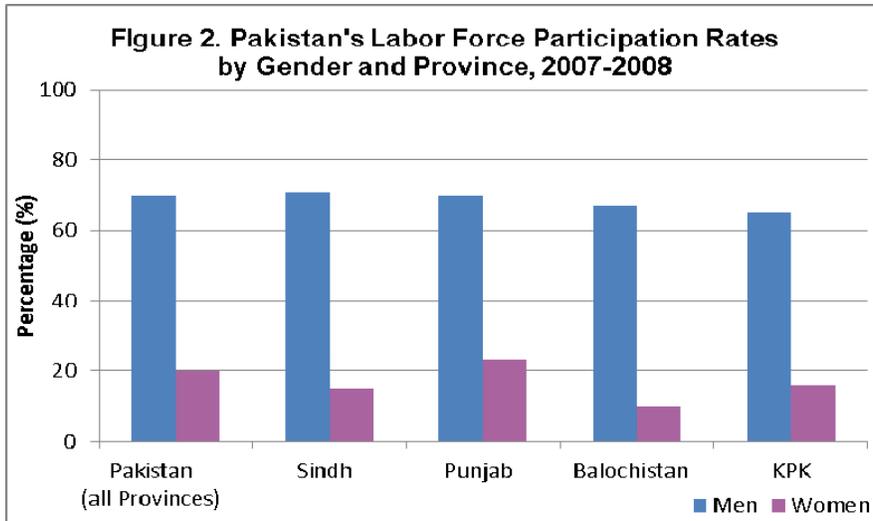
While this graphic indicates that more Pakistani women are now seeking and securing jobs, this may be based more on economic need, which is being fueled by the country's heightened inflation. Another interesting dynamic at play is Pakistan's class divide, which at times can override its gender divide. Despite the rising number of women with university degrees, some women drop out of the workforce after marriage, primarily because there is a positive status associated with adhering to the traditional role of homemaker, and that families can afford to not have an educated woman work. Lower class Pakistani women, however, must continue to work out of necessity.¹³¹

Despite women having greater employment opportunities, however, gender equality in terms of labor market access has not yet been achieved in Pakistan, due in large part to barriers that inhibit women's participation in employment and therefore employment-related skills development. These barriers include social and cultural attitudes about women's roles and suitable occupations for them, employers' attitudes, limited mobility of women and girls, reproductive responsibilities, and lack of access to information, career guidance and skills development opportunities.¹³² Women who do find work are often confined to the agricultural sector and face higher economic risk. They are less likely to find secure employment that would include social protection, basic rights and a voice at work. A report by the Government of Pakistan (2009) reports that "in 2008, almost 8 out of 10 employed women were working in vulnerable employment either as contributing family or own account workers; this is 10.3 percentage points more than in 2000. ... [Alternatively, for Pakistani] men, vulnerable employment is on the downward trend."¹³³ The employment rate for Pakistani men (83.3%) is more than three times higher than women's, on par with women in Tanzania (88.3%).

^{ee} Makers of Pakistani household products, such as Unilever Pakistan Foods, report that female workers help them better understand their market base, which is primarily female. "The buyers for almost all our product ranges are women," says Fariyha Subhani, CEO of Unilever Pakistan Foods, where 106 of the 872 employees are women. "Having women selling those products makes sense because they themselves are the consumers." Source: Businessweek. 2011. Now on the Job in Pakistan: Women. <http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/now-on-the-job-in-pakistan-women-09082011.html>

As shown in Figure 2 below, the gender gap in Pakistan's labor force participation rates is apparent throughout the country. Punjab's economy, comprised mostly of agriculture and industry,¹³⁴ retains the highest female labor force participation rate (23%), followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) (16%), Sindh (15%), and Balochistan (10%).

When examining the rural-urban breakdown of Pakistan's labor force participation (see Table 2 on page 29), it



can be seen that urban females are significantly less likely to be active in the labor force, as compared to their rural counterparts – 8% vs. 26% overall. This is perhaps a result of various cultural practices, such as *purdah*,^{ff} which constrain women from active involvement in the labor force. Ikram and Faizunnisa (2003) report that female labor force participation in Pakistan is often viewed as invisible due to the country's expanding informal economy and labor market, which is especially evident in urban areas.¹³⁵

Source: Brookings. 2009. Pakistan Index - Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security.

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Programs/foreign%20policy/pakistan%20index/index20091116.PDF>

Formal work continues to be problematic for many Pakistani women, primarily because their status as women often is viewed as second-class. This is reinforced by the narrow vocational opportunities available to them, due primarily to “social and cultural constraints, inherent gender bias in the labor market, and lack of supportive facilities such as child care, transport and accommodation in the formal sector of the labor market.”¹³⁶ Women's economic contributions remain somewhat invisible,⁹⁹ as most are compelled to work in the informal sector (see below). Many women are forbidden by their families to work outside the home. Furthermore, transport can be an obstacle, with few spaces for female passengers on buses and trains. Once at work, harassment is common (see below, under Labor Laws). Other practical matters, such as the lack of female bathrooms and the need for child care, prevent Pakistani women from joining the workforce. Pakistani women are the primary caregivers for their children, which constrains their economic activities. On average, they spend six times more time watching their children than Pakistani men. Forty percent of working mothers in Pakistan take their children to work, due to lack of child care, which further restricts the continuity of their participation in market work.¹³⁷

^{ff} *Purdah* literally means “curtain.” It is used to designate both the veil women use to cover their heads and the concept of sexual segregation and “seclusion” of women (Mumtaz and Shaheed 1987, xi). According to another definition given in *Les femmes pakistanaises, de l'indépendance à l'ère islamiste*, *purdah* is “a practice of the Indo-Muslim subcontinent which means keeping Muslim women of the bourgeois class out of the sight of men” (McDonough 1987, 113). Source: UNHCR. 1994. Human Rights Briefs: Women in Pakistan.

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,IRBC,COUNTRYREP,PAK,,3ae6a83c18,0.html>

⁹⁹ According to Chen (2002) “If the magnitude of women's invisible paid work, particularly home-based remunerative work, were to be fully counted, both the share of women and the share of informal workers in the work force would increase. Recognizing and, more importantly, counting women's invisible remunerative work would challenge our empirical understanding not only of the informal sector but also of the economy as a whole.” Source: Chen, Martha Alter. 2002. Women in the Informal Sector: A Global Picture, the Global Movement.

<http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/76309/dc2002/proceedings/pdfpaper/module6mc.pdf> (page 2)

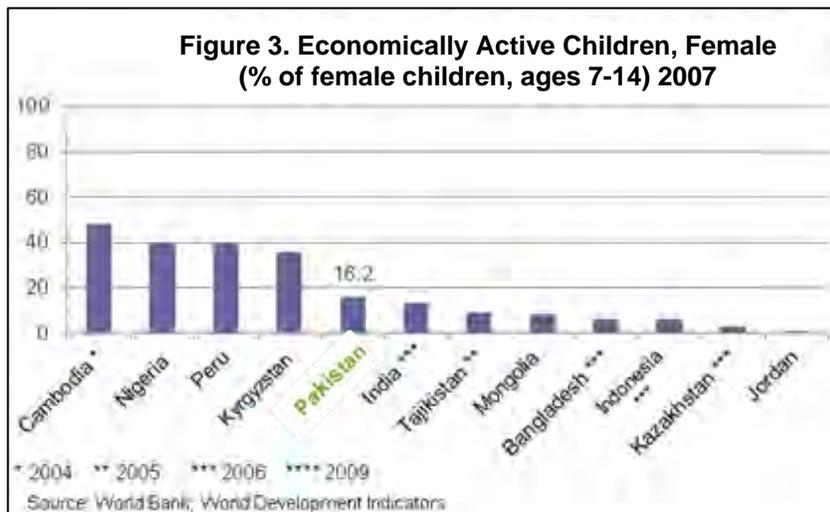
Youth Bulge

As reported in the Government of Pakistan Planning Commission's report, *Pakistan: Framework for Economic Growth* (2011), "With almost two-thirds of the population [68.4%] below the age of 30, Pakistan is going to experience a youth bulge in coming years, which is likely to change the age structure of labour force over the next couple of decades."¹³⁹ The report further asserts that, while the bulge in working age groups will likely increase Pakistan's economic potential and productive capacity over the next four decades, if the country's economic growth does not increase correspondingly, "the coming demographic changes will imply rising unemployment, shortage of assets, difficulties in competing with neighbouring South Asian countries—which will also be benefiting from younger populations during the same period. Pakistan's demography, instead of providing a dividend may well prove to be a nightmare."¹⁴⁰

	1999/ 2000	2003/ 2004	2006/ 2007	Change 1999/2000 to 2006/2007 (%)
Labor Force Participation Rate				
Both Sexes	40.5	43.6	44.2	+3.7
Male	69.3	70.5	69.2	- 0.2
Female	10.2	16.1	18.4	+8.2
Unemployment Rate				
Both sexes	35.1	38.5	40.9	+5.8
Male	61.6	62.7	64.2	+2.6
Female	7.2	13.7	16.8	+9.6

Source: Pakistan Labour Force Surveys, multiple years.¹³⁸

The IMF concludes that "empowering women is smart economics," whereby facilitating greater gender equality enhances a country's economic productivity, and improves development outcomes for the next generation.¹⁴¹ The labor force participation rate for young Pakistani women, however, remains lower than for young men, which reflects cultural traditions and the lack of opportunities for women to combine work and family duties. The gap between the participation of young men and women has decreased from 59.1 to 50.7% since 1999/2000, but remains far above the regional average gap in South Asia of 34.6% in 2006. The unemployment rate for young Pakistani women also has steadily increased, more so than for their male counterparts.



Child Labor

Because poverty is rampant and unemployment on the rise in Pakistan, poor families continue to push their children into the work force in order to supplement household income. Figure 3, using World Bank data, indicates that just over 16% of Pakistan girls aged 7-14 are economically active, vs. 15.6% of boys. This is more than India (13.1%), Tajikistan (9.1%), Mongolia (13.1%), Bangladesh (6.4%), and Indonesia (6.2%), but substantially lower than Kyrgyzstan (35.6%) and Cambodia (48.1%). Estimates from Pakistani government sources report a total of between 3.3 million and 10

million economically active children. The latest official government figure from a child labor survey conducted by Pakistan's Federal Bureau of Statistics (1996) estimated child labor at 3.3 million (8.3 %) of the country's total 40 million children.¹⁴² More recent unofficial figures, however, put the number much higher. Sindh Information Minister Sharmila Farooqui stated this year that as many as 10 million children are currently engaged in child labor in Pakistan – of which 300,000 are in Sindh.¹⁴³ The lack of official statistics underscores how little attention has been paid to documenting the overall problem, which is likely to get worse given the makeup of the country's fast-growing population.

Most Pakistani children work in the agricultural sector, but a large number also work in urban centers weaving carpets, manufacturing surgical instruments, and producing sporting goods for export.¹⁴⁴ A series of ILO surveys

published in 2004 report that Pakistani children continue to drop out of school in order to work in tanneries, coal mines, surgical instrument manufacturing, and the glass bangle industry.^{hh} In addition, Pakistan is a source, transit, and destination country for child trafficking victims.¹⁴⁵ Girls are trafficked into Pakistan, primarily from Afghanistan, India, and to a lesser extent, Bangladesh, for the purposes of forced labor and prostitution. Reportedly, there are markets in Pakistan where girls and women are bought and sold for sex and labor.¹⁴⁶

Informal Sector

It is estimated that the overwhelming majority of Pakistan's total workforce – 80% – is engaged in the informal sector.ⁱⁱ According to the country's 2010-2011 Labour Force Survey, this sector comprises nearly 74% of non-agricultural employment – more so in rural areas than in urban (76.5% versus 71.2%).¹⁴⁷ This figure has increased steadily since 1999-2000, when the informal economy made up 65% of non-agricultural employment. A significant number of Pakistani women work in the informal sector – ranging from 77.7% to 79.0% in rural areas, and 68.4% to 63.1% in urban areas.

Roughly 20 million Pakistani citizens are categorized as home-based workers (HBWs), a subsection of the informal sector. Among women doing informal work, 80% are thought to be HBWs, in sectors like garment- and bangle-making, shoe-stitching, embroidery, carpet weaving, and more. While no reliable statistics exist, several estimates put the number of women HBWs between 4 and 12 million. One from the ILO maintains that 4 to 7 million Pakistani women are HBWs.¹⁴⁸ Another from Working Women's Helpline^{jj} puts it at 12 million.¹⁴⁹ Figures released by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) estimate there are 8.52 million female HBWs.¹⁵⁰

One thing the literature does agree upon is that HBWs are among the poorest of the poor. According to a rough estimate from Home-net Pakistan,^{kk} HBWs contribute \$32 million to Pakistan's economy each year.¹⁵¹ Despite making large contributions to the country's economy, however, female HBWs in Pakistan are not afforded social and legal protections. Unlike other types of workers, they do not have access to social security benefits and often work long hours without safety and health standards. Additionally, Pakistan's labor laws do not include HBWs – this group is not covered by the country's definition of 'worker.'¹⁵²

Pakistani women also make up 57% of the country's informal manufacturing sector, but they tend to work more hours and receive lower pay than their male counterparts, according to the Pakistan Institute of Labour and Economic Research. In 2009, it was reported that women in light manufacturing earned an average of 2,912 rupees (\$34) monthly, about 40% lower than the average earnings for men.¹⁵³

Agriculture

In addition to the informal sector, Pakistan's economy is dominated by agriculture,¹⁵⁴ which accounts for roughly 21% of the country's GDP and employs almost half its workforce.¹⁵⁵ Pakistani women play a major role in all aspects related to crop production, livestock raising, and cottage industries. According to World Bank data, 75% of the female labor force works in agriculture. This is consistent with the *Pakistan Labour Force Survey* (2010-11) figure of 74.2%, which is up from 64.5% in 2001-02.¹⁵⁶ An older study from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (1997) reports that rural Pakistani women represent a slightly higher portion of agricultural workers (79.4%).¹⁵⁷ A recent trend, whereby more and more Pakistani men are migrating to urban areas and to Gulf states¹⁵⁸ in search of jobs, is placing an added burden on rural women and families, who are left with greater responsibilities, particularly the farm work.¹⁵⁹

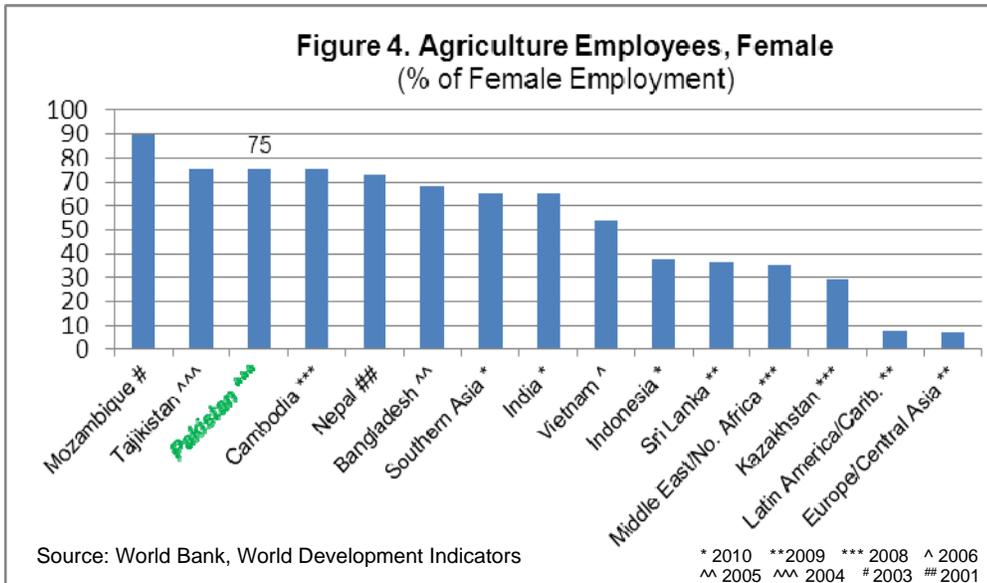
^{hh} Access ILO baseline survey reports at:

<http://www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/Questionnairesurveysandreports/lang--en/index.htm>

ⁱⁱ Pakistan's informal sector comprises: 1) All household enterprises owned and operated by own-account workers, irrespective of size (informal own-account enterprises); and 2) Enterprises owned and operated by employers with less than 10 employees. Excluded from this definition are all enterprises engaged in agricultural activities or wholly engaged in non-market production. Source: Government of Pakistan/Statistics Division. 2011. *Pakistan Employment Trends 2011*. http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/Labour%20Force/publications/Pakistan_Employment_2012.pdf (page 11)

^{jj} For more information on Working Women's Helpline, go to: <http://www.wwhl.org.pk/>

^{kk} For more information on Home-Net Pakistan, go to: <http://www.homenetpakistan.org/revised/index.php>



Despite being actively engaged, Pakistani women working in agriculture are paid low wages and work long hours. According to a recent study by the USAID-funded Gender Equity Program (GEP), women in rural areas of the country often engage in agricultural activity as unpaid family helpers, and may not be registered as workers.¹⁶⁰ Women also lack basic property rights as individuals, have limited access to agriculture extension training and/or

financing,¹⁶¹ or access and management of land and resources. As reported by the World Bank, this affects Pakistani “women’s capacity to access markets and take advantage of new economic opportunities. Female-headed households sell a lower fraction of their agricultural output in the market than male-headed households in 14 of the 16 countries in our database. Gender differences in market access are largest in Pakistan (25 percentage points) and lowest in Ghana and Tajikistan (2–3 percentage points)—two countries with the lowest overall market penetration. Gender differences in access to markets are even more marked for export agriculture.”¹⁶² A UNDP report (2010) states: “In rural Pakistan, where social norms restricted women’s participation in training outside their homes, female trainers visited rural women at home. This has increased the income of trainees by more than 90 per cent and has bolstered socio-economic empowerment and resilience.”¹⁶³

Agricultural tasks in Pakistan are primarily gender-specific, with Pakistani men contributing physical labor, such as threshing and land preparation, and other jobs remotely located (i.e., marketing and transport), in contrast to women, who take on the more repetitious and time-consuming tasks (i.e., livestock, planting, weeding, watering, seed cleaning, drying, storage and binding of crops). The literature reports that female-oriented tasks receive relatively little support from agricultural extension workers.¹⁶⁴ Further, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 3 million agricultural workers worldwide suffer from acute pesticide poisoning.¹⁶⁵ Because Pakistani women make up the bulk of workers in the country’s agricultural sector, they likely suffer more medical complications.¹⁶⁶ For instance, results from a recent study in Bhawalpur, a major cotton-growing area, indicate that occupational exposure to pesticide mixtures results in cytogenetic damage^{II} in exposed females.¹⁶⁷ This is the case for Pakistan’s child workers, as well, since many are engaged in agriculture.¹⁶⁸

As a final point, a 2011 study from Aurat Foundation’s USAID-funded Gender Equity Program (GEP) finds that, while Pakistan’s agricultural policies appear to encourage the inclusion of women in the sector, they do not recognize them as registered farmers. According to a USAID land tenure and property rights profile on Pakistan, “In general, there is little acceptance under customary and religious law for women’s ability to control and manage land.”¹⁶⁹ The country’s agricultural policies promote cash crop farming for export, with support to farmers who hold more than five acres of land. Because the majority of Pakistani women fall outside of this category, they are not recognized or registered as farmers. As well, the agricultural census does not consider women full-time agricultural workers, because they also work at home.¹⁷⁰

^{II} Cytogenetics is the study of chromosomes and their role in heredity. Cytogenetic damages, as a result of pesticide exposure, include chromosomal aberrations, micronuclei frequency, and sister-chromatid exchanges. Changes in chromosomes can lead to birth defects, mental retardation, miscarriage, infertility, and cancer. Sources: Scitable by Nature Education <http://www.nature.com/scitable/topic/chromosomes-and-cytogenetics-7>; and Kumar and Panneerselvam.2008. Toxic Effects of Pesticides: A Review on Cytogenetic Biomonitoring Studies. In *Medicine and Biology*, Vol.15, No 2. <http://facta.junis.ni.ac.rs/mab/mab200802/mab200802-02korigovan.pdf>

Textile Industry

Pakistan's textile industry provides jobs to over 10 million farm families, accounting for 40% of industrial employment. Despite a recent downturn in global demand, textiles and garments accounted for more than 50% of Pakistan's exports in 2008-09. Even though it is the 4th largest producer of cotton, Pakistan ranks 12th in international trade, since much of its advantage is lost in low value-added semi-manufactured exports.¹⁷¹ Consumption of cotton by textile mills in Pakistan is expected to rise following a February 2012 decision by the WTO to allow duty-free exports of 75 Pakistani items to European Union (EU) markets for a two-year period. The value of goods that are affected by the waiver is expected to be roughly \$1.2 billion, which equates to nearly 27% of Pakistan's total exports to the EU trading bloc.¹⁷² It is estimated that upwards of 90% of textile (apparel) manufacturing is sub-contracted, primarily to home-based workers (HBWs).¹⁷³

Throughout much of Asia, the textile sector absorbs a disproportionate share of female employment. This is true in Pakistan, where it is the largest employer of female workers in manufacturing – an estimated 30% of the sector's workforce (approx. 2.3 million workers) is female. However, this is below other South and Southeast Asian countries.¹⁷⁴ In Bangladesh, for instance, women comprise 70 to 80% of textile workers. Within the sector, Pakistani female workers are concentrated in low-paid, labor-intensive, down-stream production (i.e., readymade garments, linen, towels), whereas men dominate capital-intensive ginning, spinning and weaving processes.¹⁷⁵ Pakistani female textile workers are described as “mostly young, unmarried, literate (few years of formal schooling), with large family size, living in low-income settlements surrounding the manufacturing units and factories in the cities, working either as home-based piece rate workers or employed on contract basis in small or medium-sized enterprises producing for local markets or linked with global supply chain.”¹⁷⁶

A series of studies looking into conditions at textile factories in Lahore, Faisalabad, Sialkot, and Islamabad, found dismal circumstances. In 2002, a study learned that female workers were required to work overtime for low pay (less than Rs. 2,500 per month); 95% had no contract letters; 80% of factories did not offer health and safety equipment, and 70% of women experienced harassment.¹⁷⁷ An inquiry in 2005 found similar disorder – most factories did not allow unionization, women lacked separate toilet facilities, were forced to work night shifts, as well as overtime in late evening. By 2009, some improvements were made, but hardships remained – nearly 98% of female workers were provisional; 80% were not issued any identification card; 64% were paid less than the government's fixed minimum wage for unskilled workers (Rs. 6,000); 92% worked overtime; 73% were not given weekly holidays; less than half (47%) received maternity benefits and of them, only 21% received full three-months paid leave.¹⁷⁸ Anecdotal evidence indicates there are very limited, almost non-existent trade union activities in Pakistan's textile sector. Alternatively, in Bangladesh 30 trade unions within *The National Garments Workers Federation* have a membership base made up of 75% women.¹⁷⁹

Wage Gap and Leadership

Around the world, women earn upwards of 30% less than men for similar work. This wage gap reflects disadvantages in the work place, and is an obstacle to female leadership opportunities. Throughout Asia, policies that require equal pay for equal work are lacking. Where policies do exist, enforcement mechanisms often do not exist. The Government of Pakistan's *Labour Policy 2010* states:

“Women workers will benefit from the application of ILO Convention on Equal Remuneration, 1951 (No. 100), ratified by Pakistan in 2001. Minimum and above-minimum wages will be ensured on the basis of equal pay for equal work, and equal pay for work of equal value, as between men and women, in accordance with Pakistan's obligations under ILO Conventions 100 and 111 concerned with equality and non-discrimination respectively.”¹⁸⁰

Pakistani women, however, continue to earn less than their male counterparts. As well, it has been reported that female wages tend to increase less over time.¹⁸¹ Table 6 below, however, shows that the ratio of male vs. female monthly wages has recently decreased – the ratio was 64.5% of men's in 2009-10, and dropped to 62.9% in 2010-11. In Manufacturing, women earned 39.6% of men's average monthly wages in 2010-11. In Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing, 53.6%. Pakistani women fare slightly better in several industry divisions, including: Construction, 107%; Electricity, Gas and Water, 98%; Financing, Insurance, Real Estate & Business Services, 97.9%; and Wholesale & Retail Trade and Restaurants & Hotels, 97.4%.

Table 6. Average Monthly Wages of Pakistani Employees by Major Industry Divisions (Rupees)

Major Industry Divisions	2009-10			2010-11		
	Male	Female	ratio	Male	Female	ratio
TOTAL	9017	5821	64.5	10211	6422	62.9
Agriculture, forestry, hunting, and fishing	5730	3358	58.6	6673	3577	53.6
Mining & quarrying	6963	9600	137.8	12000	--	--
Manufacturing	8080	3437	42.5	9085	3600	39.6
Electricity, gas and water	14398	25325	175.9	17242	16896	98.0
Construction	7397	6207	83.9	8270	8869	107.2
Wholesale & retail trade, restaurants & hotels	6660	4013	60.3	6864	6684	97.4
Transport, storage and communication	9328	13685	146.7	10356	13838	133.6
Financing, insurance, real estate, business services	17897	31240	174.5	20705	20269	97.9
Community, social and personal services	11771	7761	65.9	14450	8912	61.7

Source: Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2010-11.

Based on a recent study, women reportedly make up 4.6% of board members in Pakistani firms, which is only marginally lower than emerging Asian markets' 4.7% average^{mm}, but higher than India's 4.1%, and Indonesia's 4.2%.¹⁸² This figure varies from another studyⁿⁿ conducted by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants Pakistan (ACCA-Pakistan), which surveyed 303 publicly listed companies on Karachi Stock Exchange, of which 31% (93 companies) reported having female board members (of these, 57 companies were family owned). A concern brought up by ACCA is that women board members in Pakistan may not be encouraged to actively participate in decision making.¹⁸³

Labor Laws^{oo}

Pakistan's *Labour Policy 2010* states:

- "Women workers will benefit from the application of ILO Convention on Equal Remuneration, 1951 (No. 100), ratified by Pakistan in 2001. Minimum and above-minimum wages will be ensured on the basis of equal pay for equal work, and equal pay for work of equal value, as between men and women, in accordance with Pakistan's obligations under ILO Conventions 100 and 111 concerned with equality and non-discrimination respectively.
- Women will also benefit from better information concerning their working conditions and arrangements in the informal economy, from improved maternity arrangements, codes of conduct relating to sexual harassment and, where possible, day care arrangements for their children.
- The Government is committed to providing women with equal opportunities for employment and will re-examine existing legislation to ensure that women are not denied access to suitable jobs that are arising due to Pakistan's changing labour markets."¹⁸⁴

Even with the above declarations, equal employment remains a new and underserved concept in Pakistan. While its Constitution bans discrimination based on sex (Article 25, clause 2),^{pp} the majority of Pakistani employers, in practice, do not ensure equal opportunities. And in spite of Pakistan's ratification of both the core ILO Conventions on discrimination,¹⁸⁵ these standards often are violated.¹⁸⁶ There are widespread cases of discrimination on the basis of sex, religion, ethnicity, etc. Discrimination against women in the economic sphere continues to be a serious problem.

A recent World Bank report, *Women Business and Law 2012*, points out that Pakistani women are barred from working in many industries. The report further stresses that there are no national laws mandating non-discrimination in hiring practices on the basis of gender. It is not illegal to ask a prospective employee about marital status during a job interview. Employees with minor children do not have any additional rights to flexible or part time work schedule. Even the payments made by working mothers for childcare are not tax-free.¹⁸⁷

^{mm} Emerging Markets in Asia include China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand.

ⁿⁿ ACCA. June 2010. Gender Diversity on Boards in Pakistan.

http://www2.accaglobal.com/pubs/pakistan/general/technical/IFC/gender_diversity.pdf

^{oo} Government of Pakistan Labour Policy 2010. <http://www.eobi.gov.pk/announcement/labour+poilcy+2010.pdf>

^{pp} National Assembly of Pakistan. 2004. The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

<http://www.mofa.gov.pk/Publications/constitution.pdf>

Further, the law in Pakistan denies women the right to the same working hours as those of men by not allowing them to work late night, according to *The Factories Act of 1934* (amended in 1997).¹⁸⁸

In 2010, Pakistan became the first South Asian country to declare sexual harassment a crime. The *Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Bill* aims at creating a working environment for women free from harassment and abuse. Punishment for the violators of a code of conduct ranges from censure to dismissal to an unspecified fine. Although legal and institutional mechanisms are present, implementing the laws has remained a challenge.¹⁸⁹ Similarly, Pakistan has ratified both the core ILO conventions on forced labor (Elimination of Forced and Compulsory Labour – Conv. 29 and 105), but forced labor, including trafficking of women and children, remains a serious problem.¹⁹⁰

Energy

Table 1. Women and Energy Snapshot

Electricity Consumption and Production	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Electric power consumption (kWh per capita)*	448	473	469	433	449
Electricity production from hydroelectric sources (% of total)*	32.9	32.5	30	30.3	29.4
Electricity production from natural gas sources (%of total)*	44	36.4	34.4	32.4	29.4
Electricity production from nuclear sources (% of total)*	2.6	2.3	3.2	1.8	3
Electricity production from oil sources (% of total)*	20.3	28.6	32.2	35.4	38
Total primary energy consumption, per dollar of GDP**	4,757.08	4,967.53	4,892.48	4,768.14	.
(btu per year 2005 US dollars using purchasing power parities)					

Sources: * World Bank World Development Indicators, ** Energy Information Administration, International Energy Statistics 2012

Key Issues

- In Pakistan, the use of biomass fuels is a key cause of indoor air pollution (IAP). Biomass fuel usage accounts for an estimated 86% of total household energy consumption. In particular, it is used for cooking and heating, and in this respect, predominantly affects women who traditionally take on these tasks and responsibilities, as well as infants and children who accompany them indoors.¹⁹¹ Ninety percent of rural and 60% of urban households rely upon biomass fuels for their energy consumption and needs.
- Women across regions are responsible for biomass collection, and by extension, are primarily exposed to its combustion and adverse health effects. In Pakistan, the consumption of biomass fuels has contributed to respiratory diseases, especially among women, who often spend most of their time indoors, utilize cook stoves, and serve as principal caregivers to infants and children.
- Pakistan has one of the highest burdens of death and disease due to indoor air pollution. The World Bank estimates that indoor air pollution is a causal factor behind 280,000 deaths and 40 million cases of acute respiratory diseases in Pakistan per year.
- In the aftermath of the 2010 floods, approximately 3.5 million people were left without power. An indirect effect is that numerous small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those run by women from their households, have been disrupted, which results in a loss of income.
 - With delays in repairing basic infrastructure and services, vulnerable Pakistani populations, including women, resort to increasing their reliance upon biomass fuels, unless alternative and sustainable sources of energy and power are provided, especially to poor rural areas.

Introduction

It is estimated that around half of the world's population continues to rely on solid fuels for household energy consumption. This figure includes 2.4 billion who utilize biomass fuels (deriving from wood, animal dung, and crop waste), and 0.5 billion who rely on coal.¹⁹² There are marked regional variations in biomass use, being as low as 20% in Europe and Central Asia and as high as 80% or more in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.¹⁹³

This pattern follows previous trends: energy consumption in Pakistan grew at an average annual rate of 4% between 1991 and 2003. Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) was the fastest growing energy source, increasing in usage at an annual rate of 8.4% during this period. Coal usage increased by 5.9% and natural gas by 5.6%. Oil consumption declined from 47-48% of total energy consumption in the 1990s to less than 40% by 2004, yet the natural gas share increased from 29 to 35%.¹⁹⁴

Women and Biomass Fuels

The usage of biomass fuels in particular closely corresponds with poverty, and such substances are often burned in open fires, regular cook stoves--especially indoors--engendering the emission of higher levels of air pollutants, and adversely affecting the environment in the process. In Pakistan, the use of biomass fuels is a key cause of indoor air pollution (IAP) – it is estimated that biomass fuel usage accounts for 86% of total household energy consumption. It is especially used for cooking and heating, and in this respect, predominantly affects women who traditionally take on these tasks and responsibilities, their infants, and their children who accompany them indoors.¹⁹⁵ 90% of rural and 60% of urban households rely upon biomass fuels for their energy consumption and needs. In this respect, wood accounts for 54%, dung 18%, and crop residues 14% of biomass household sources. Approximately 83% of biomass fuels are utilized for cooking purposes, and the remainder is used for water and space heating.¹⁹⁶

Regionally, Balochistan is the largest consumer of fuel wood per household, Punjab consumes the largest amount of crop residues, and Sindh consumes relatively less than other regions partially due to urbanization in the region. Women across regions are responsible for biomass collection, and by extension, are primarily exposed to its combustion and adverse health effects.¹⁹⁷ In Pakistan, the consumption of biomass fuels has contributed to respiratory diseases, especially among women, who often spend most of their time indoors, utilize cook stoves, and serve as principal caregivers to infants and children. Moreover, this usage of biofuels has also exacerbated infant and childhood acute respiratory infections (ALRI) and conditions, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), pneumonia, tuberculosis, and lung cancer. Indoor air pollution corresponding with the use of biomass fuels has also contributed to low birth weight, chronic bronchitis, and even cardiovascular disease in infants and adults, esp. among women.¹⁹⁸

Furthermore, the number of deaths in Pakistan attributed to acute respiratory infections among children under 5 was estimated to be 51,760 in 2010, contributing to infant and under-5 child mortality rates. The number of deaths attributed in Pakistan to solid fuels in 2010 was 70,700, and the percentage of diseases in the country attributed to solid fuel use was 4.6%, compared to a figure of less than 1% observed elsewhere in the developing world. This figure translates into Pakistan ranking among the 21 worst affected countries by indoor air pollution along with Afghanistan, Niger, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and others. On the other hand, the World Bank estimated that indoor air pollution is a causal factor behind 280,000 deaths and 40 million cases of acute respiratory diseases in Pakistan per year. In Pakistan, chronic bronchitis causes 22,000 DALYs (loss of disability adjusted life years) per 10,000 persons annually, and morbidity attributed to acute-respiratory infections among women over 30 years of age constitutes 8% of total DALYs. The same article contends that a 10% decrease in the share of biomass fuel energy consumption lowers child mortality by 7 deaths per 1,000 live births.¹⁹⁹

Other factors to consider include the impacts of climate change and floods in the past few years. In the aftermath of the 2010 floods, approximately 3.5 million people, or about 3.4% of the population with access to power, were without power due to distribution network outages.²⁰⁰ An indirect effect has been the fact that numerous small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those run by women from their households were disrupted, resulting in a loss of income. With delays in repairing basic infrastructure and services, vulnerable populations like women could potentially resort to increasing their reliance upon biomass fuels unless alternative, and sustainable, sources of energy and power are provided, especially to poor rural areas. In regards to the petroleum sector after the flood, oil and gas supplies to certain power generation facilities were disrupted: gas supplies to over 240,000 people were cut off in Balochistan and Sindh. Although services in certain areas have been restored, the social and economic impact of the flood continues to pose challenges to the government in the energy and infrastructure sectors.²⁰¹

Education

Table 1. Gender and Education Snapshot

Indicator	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Expected years of schooling, female	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	.
Expected years of schooling, male	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	.
Children out of school, primary, female	5,135,565	4,731,624	4,458,897	4,575,617	3,979,834	3,796,212	3,500,674	3,241,203
Children out of school, primary, male	3,372,146	,778,850	2,699,154	3,043,554	2,623,098	2,470,039	2,209,029	1,884,170
Primary education, pupils (% female)	41	41	42	42	44	44	44	44
School enrollment, primary, female (% net)	48	53	56	55	61	62	64	67
School enrollment, primary, male (% net)	67	73	74	71	75	76	78	81
Primary education, teachers (% female)	44	45	46	45	46	47	46	48
Trained teachers in primary education, female (% female teachers)	.	63	76	75	75	77	77	76
Trained teachers in primary education, male (% of male teachers)	.	90	94	92	92	92	93	91
Primary completion rate, female (% of relevant age group)	.	.	51	51	53	53	55	59
Primary completion rate, male (% of relevant age group)	.	.	72	69	68	68	70	75
Progression to secondary school, female (%)	74	72	75	76	71	72	74	.
Progression to secondary school, male (%)	74	67	69	75	73	73	73	.
Secondary education, pupils (% female)	43	42	42	42	42	42	43	42
School enrollment, secondary, female (% net)	24	26	25	26	28	28	29	29
School enrollment, secondary, male (% net)	31	34	33	34	37	38	37	38
Secondary education, teachers (% female)	.	51	.	.	.	.	.	.
School enrollment, tertiary, female (% gross)	2	3	4	4	5	5	.	.
School enrollment, tertiary, male (% gross)	3	4	5	5	6	6	.	.
Literacy rate, adult female (% of females ages 15+)	.	.	35	40/38*	.	40/40**	.	42***
Literacy rate, adult male (% of males ages 15+)	.	.	64	68/65*	.	69/67**	.	67***

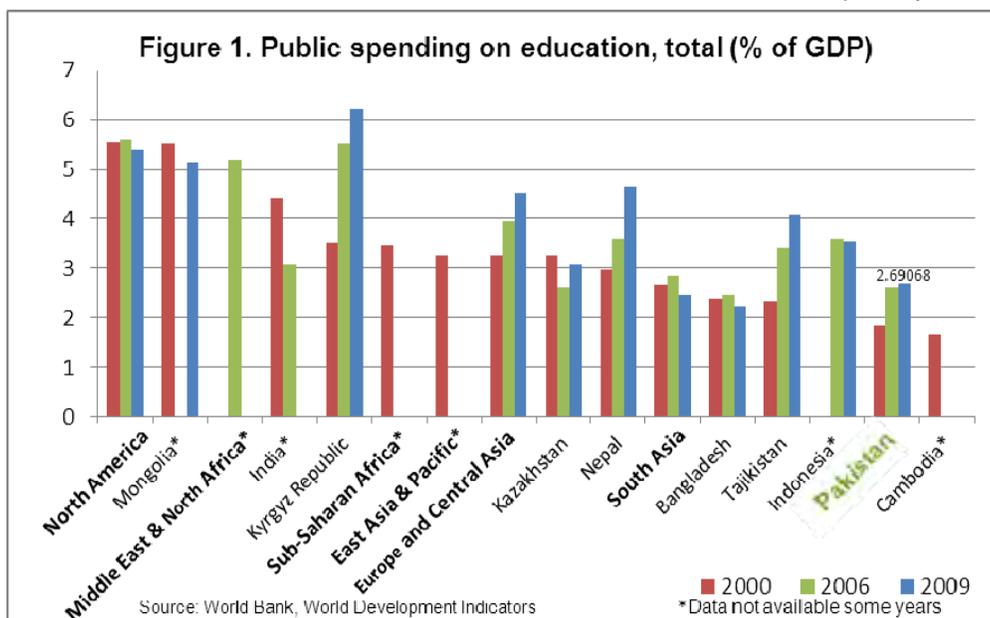
Sources: World Bank, World Development Indicators and Gender Statistics; * Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM) (2010-11) for years 2006-07; ** PSLM (2010-11) for years 2008-2009; *** PSLM (2010-11) for years 2010-11.

Key Issues

- While there have been substantial improvements in both boys' and girls' primary school net enrollment since 2003, girls' net enrollment at the primary level (grades 1-5) remains low: 67% of girls are enrolled in primary school compared to 81% of boys. (Note: Girls' primary net enrollment in 2010 is equivalent to boys' primary net enrollment in 2003.) There are few countries where enrollment is low even at the primary level. This impacts girls' progression through school as their enrollment in secondary and tertiary education declines precipitously and lags behind boys' enrollment.
- Even though literacy rates among females are improving (see table above), a large gender gap in literacy persists.
- Pakistani children whose mothers have just one year of education spend one extra hour studying at home every day and receive higher test scores,²⁰² demonstrating the importance of schooling from one generation to the next.
- In Pakistan, girls are often not permitted to attend school unless they have a female teacher,²⁰³ but there are fewer female teachers than male teachers, particularly in rural areas. In addition, absenteeism among female teachers is higher than among male teachers in Pakistan. As a result, in a government school system where schools for boys and girls are separate and where only women teach girls and men teach boys, the higher absence rate among female teachers may limit access to schooling for girls more so than for boys. This occurrence can further exacerbate existing gender inequalities in primary school access.²⁰⁴ Moreover, the percentage of female primary teachers who are trained to teach is 76% compared to 91% of male primary teachers (see table above), and female teachers in private schools are paid 30% less than their male counterparts.²⁰⁵
- Traditional attitudes about gender and girls' education prevail in both rural and urban areas. While only 3% of boys in rural and urban areas cited their parents not allowing them to attend school as a reason for being out of school, this figure was 20% and 19% respectively for girls in urban and rural areas.²⁰⁶
- Parents tend to invest more money in their sons' education, generally resulting in better quality education for boys.
- Girls' access to education is disproportionately affected by distance, poor sanitation facilities at schools – or lack of, and security issues in conflict-affected areas of the country. In Pakistan, a half-kilometer increase in the distance to school decreased female enrollment by 20%.²⁰⁷

General Overview

Pakistan has committed to a number of international conventions and agreements related to equal access to education for boys and girls, including the World Declaration on Education for All, the Dakar Framework for Action, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).²⁰⁸ In line with the goal to achieve education for all, Pakistan amended its constitution in 2010 to declare free and compulsory education for children between the



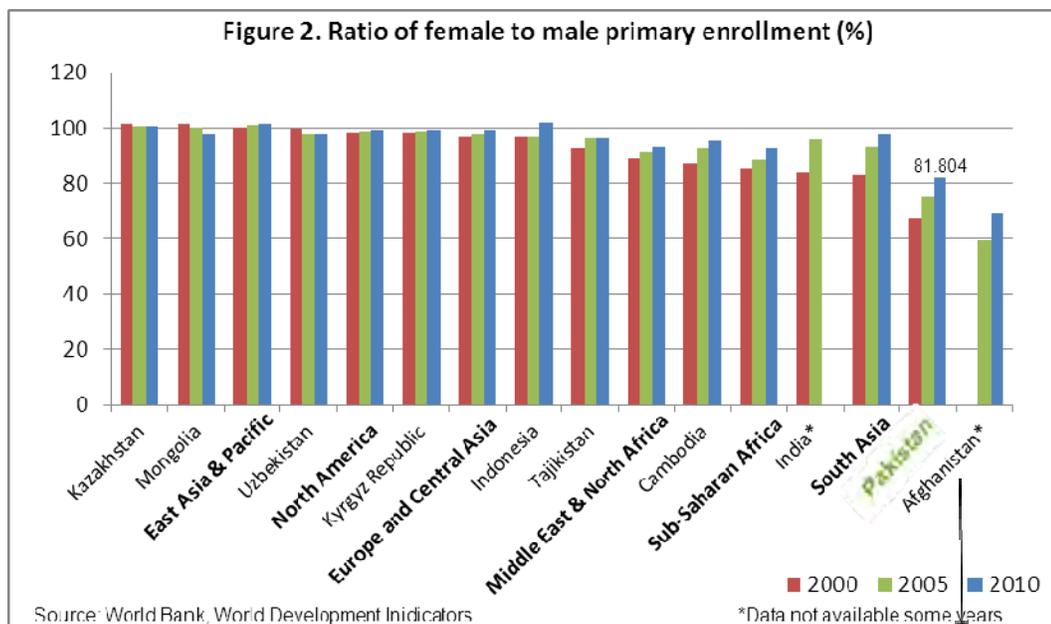
ages of 5 and 16 as a fundamental right.²⁰⁹ Despite these commitments, and the government's recognition of persistent gender and rural-urban disparities in access to education,²¹⁰ Pakistan is unlikely to meet the second MDG of universal primary education by 2015, as demonstrated in the primary school enrollment and completion rates for both boys and girls (see Table 1 above).

The lagging delivery on this commitment intersects with Pakistan's low public expenditure on education

as a percentage of its GDP. For example, according to World Bank data, in 2010 Pakistan spent only 2.4% of its GDP on education, compared to 4.7% in Nepal, and 4.6% in Indonesia. Girls face significantly more barriers than boys to enjoying access to a quality education, which is compounded by Pakistan's struggling education as a whole—as demonstrated in its dismally low literacy rates (55% of adults 15 years and over).²¹¹

Attitudes Towards Girls' Education

Pakistan is far from providing equality of education to girls and women. This is partly due to traditional views and attitudes towards women that are still prevalent throughout most parts of the country. Women's roles in society are viewed primarily as household managers and caregivers so their need for education is not considered a priority,²¹² particularly when a household is experiencing economic hardship and the costs of sending a child to school (supplies, tuition, transportation, etc.) are prohibitive. A nationwide survey conducted in 2007-08 finds that clearly 90% of respondents view university education more important for males than for females. In Pakistan, women spend six times more time on child care than men, 40% of working mothers take their children to work, and older female siblings usually serve as caretakers when mothers work outside the home.²¹³ The subservient perception of women is also reflected and perpetuated in textbooks—in a study of the content of Pakistani textbooks, it was found that 21.4% of textbook illustrations were female compared to 77.5% male; of everyday characters mentioned by name, 42.1% were female compared to 57.8% male; female icons mentioned in social studies textbooks were often portrayed as being virtuous because they completed domestic chores and were obedient wives and mothers; women in paid work appeared to be extremely rare based on textual and graphic representations; and all knowledge providers and decision makers (teachers, figures of authority) were men.²¹⁴



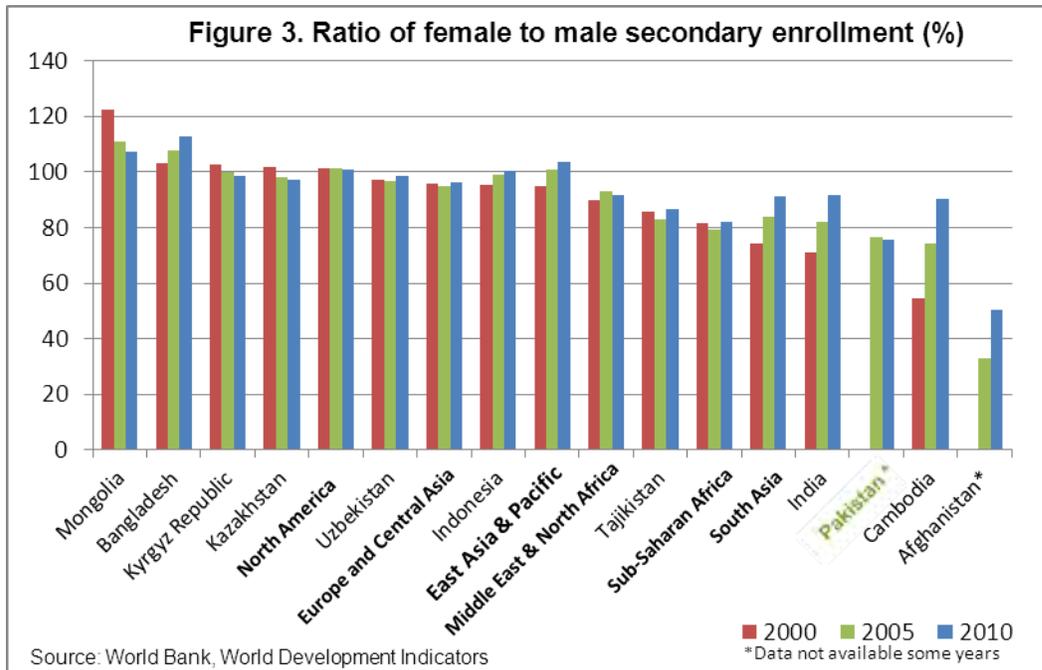
Access to Schools

In Pakistan, girls generally are not permitted to attend school unless they have a female teacher.²¹⁵ According to the Ministry of Education, 54% of teachers in Pakistan are male, and 47% are female, and in rural areas, there are even fewer female teachers compared to urban areas—61% of teachers in rural primary schools are male.²¹⁶

Parents tend to prefer sex-segregated schools, but there are 64,309 primary schools for boys compared to 46,270 primary schools for girls in Pakistan.²¹⁷ Even the distance to school is a limiting factor for girls, especially in rural areas, since girls are generally not permitted to travel long distances to school.²¹⁸ New evidence suggests that families are as eager to send their girls to school as boys when the school is close by, and in Pakistan, a half-kilometer increase in the distance to school decreased female enrollment by 20%.²¹⁹ In contrast, the expansion of rural road networks had a strong impact on female mobility and schooling, suggesting better infrastructure could aid in girls' access to education.²²⁰ Income poverty also results in fewer girls attending school, but in some cases cash transfers based on school attendance have been effective in getting girls from poor families to school (a 10% increase in primary school enrollment) and subsequently reducing educational attainment gaps for girls.²²¹ This is particularly relevant in Pakistan where boys and girls from the top income quintile participate in school at similar rates, but experience a gender gap of almost five years in the bottom income quintile.²²² In addition, when girls reach puberty, it is more difficult for them to remain in school since most schools in Pakistan do not have latrines and adequate sanitation-related

During the Taliban-era, girls in Afghanistan were not allowed to attend school. Therefore, they have only been back to school since 2002.

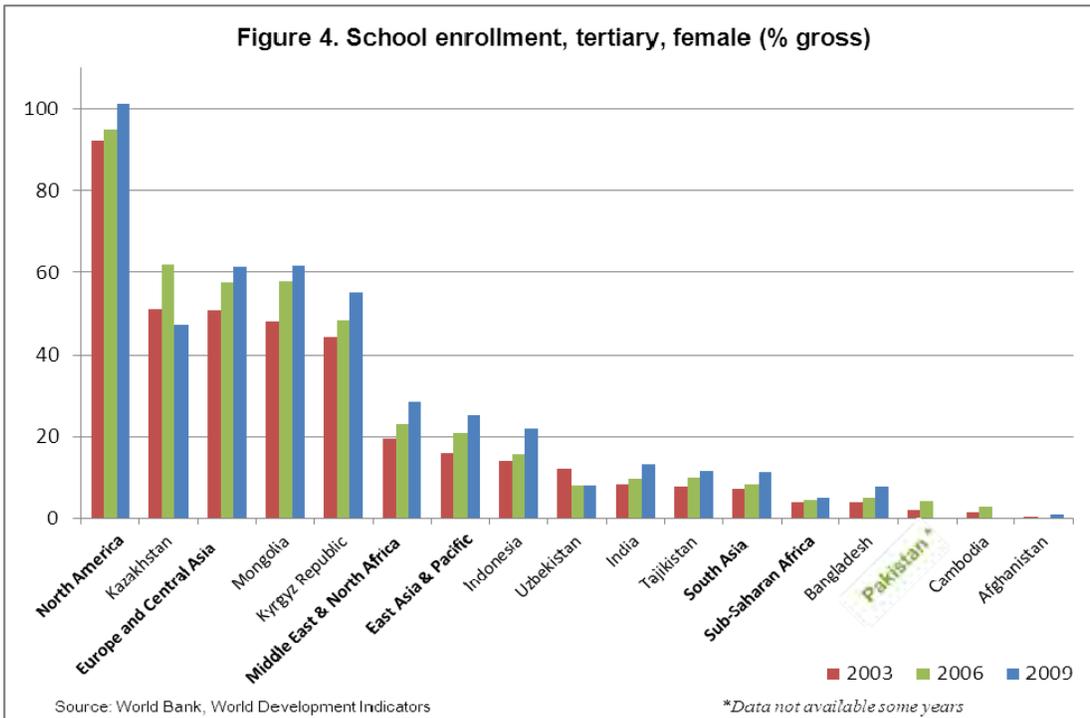
facilities—this usually results either in girls dropping out or higher rates of absenteeism when girls are menstruating.²²³ Ongoing conflict in various parts of Pakistan, particularly the Swat district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas has also compounded the issues affecting girls' access to education. When there is poor security, parents are even less willing to send their girls to



school, and in some areas, girls' schools are deliberately destroyed.²²⁴ Insecure areas are also less attractive to female teachers, thereby leading to less access to education for girls in these areas.²²⁵ To further illustrate the impact of conflict on girls' education, in 2009 in Swat district, temporary school closures due to conflict resulted in the closure of 21.59% of girls' schools compared to 1.66% of boys' schools in Swat.²²⁶

Quality of Education and Educational Attainment

The legacy of low investment in girls' education means fewer women with the appropriate teaching qualifications: in 2010, only 76% of female primary teachers were trained compared to 91% of male primary teachers (see table above). Female teachers are also underpaid—female teachers in private schools are paid 30% less than their male counterparts.²²⁷ As a result of the low investment in female teachers, girls are less likely to receive the same quality of education from as boys. Furthermore, a recent study in Pakistan found a large and statistically significant pro-male bias within household education expenditure allocations and that families are more likely to send boys to private schools than girls within the household.²²⁸ Studies also report that urban and rural private



significant pro-male bias within household education expenditure allocations and that families are more likely to send boys to private schools than girls within the household.²²⁸ Studies also report that urban and rural private

schools outperform public school counterparts, at least at the primary level, suggesting that girls are at a disadvantage both in terms of lower within-household educational expenditures spent on their education and in the quality of schooling they are able to access.²²⁹ The importance that schooling plays from one generation to the next is reflected in the finding that Pakistani children whose mothers have just one year of education spend one extra hour studying at home every day and receive higher test scores.²³⁰

Women's Retention in School and Higher Education

Given girls' low primary school completion rate of 59% and low secondary school net enrollment rate of 29% (see table above), it is not surprising that higher education enrollment in Pakistan is ranked amongst the lowest in the world—in 2008, the female tertiary gross enrollment rate was just 4.9%. Moreover, the women who do make it to college or university often report feelings of being treated differently—less equal—than men.²³¹ Women may also enter higher education with disadvantages to pursuing a male-dominated field of study, thereby perpetuating the cycle. For example, mathematics and computer science are less popular among females, not necessarily because women are not interested in these areas of study. Their pursuit of these subjects may be constrained by not having had appropriate facilities in their schools at lower levels, fewer female teachers in those subjects, and/or lack of encouragement from their families to study these subjects.²³² Despite persisting obstacles to gender equality, the social and economic importance of higher education for women is highlighted in a study wherein female respondents (students and faculty) from public universities cited economic independence and increased standing within the family and society as the main benefits of higher education. In turn, these impacts of higher education could initiate significant changes towards greater gender parity in Pakistan.²³³ It should be noted that even when women successfully complete tertiary education, some choose to stay out of the formal workforce as a means of demonstrating higher social status or income, meaning that their family does not need their salary to survive. This practice is not uncommon throughout the world, but is especially noteworthy in Pakistan because there are so few women with tertiary education.

Health

Table 1. Gender and Health Snapshot

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15-19)	39.3	37.4	35.5	33.6	31.6	30.9	30.2	29.5
Fertility rate, total (births per woman)	4	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.4
Wanted fertility rate (births per woman)	.	.	.	.	3.1	.	.	.
Births attended by skilled health staff (% of total)	.	.	31.0	.	38.8	.	.	.
Contraceptive prevalence (% of women ages 15-49)	32.1	.	.	26	29.6	27	.	.
Female adults with HIV (% of population ages 15+ with HIV)	.	.	.	.	.	.	29.5	.
Life expectancy at birth, female (years)	64.5	64.7	64.9	65.1	65.3	65.6	65.8	66.1
Life expectancy at birth, male (years)	63.0	63.2	63.3	63.5	63.7	63.9	64.1	64.3
Male-female (60+ years) sex ratio	.	.	.	1.25*	.	.	.	.
Mortality rate, infant (per 1,000 live births)	76.6	75.7	74.7	73.8	72.7	71.9	70.7	69.7
Mortality rate, female child (per 1,000 female children age one)	.	.	.	.	22	.	.	.
Mortality rate, male child (per 1,000 male children age one)	.	.	.	.	14	.	.	.
Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate, per 100,000 live births)	.	.	290	.	.	260	.	.
Pregnant women receiving prenatal care (%)	.	.	36	.	60.9	.	.	.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators, *2010 UNDP Asia-Pacific Human Development Report

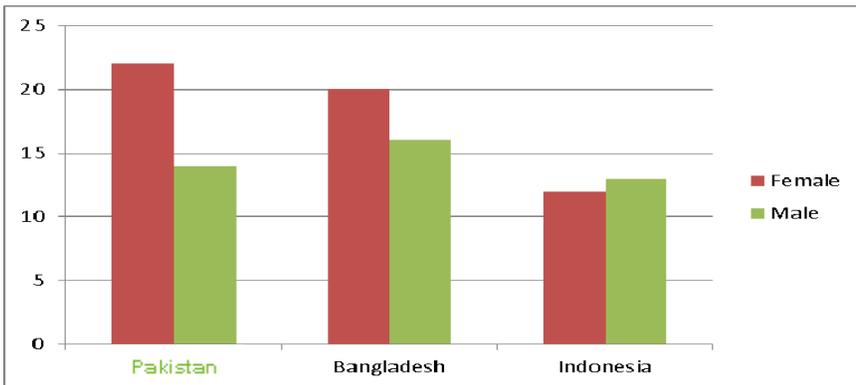
Key Issues

- Females experience a gender disadvantage in terms of healthcare starting from birth—they generally receive less nutrition and access to healthcare than their male counterparts. This leads to a variety of poorer health outcomes for Pakistani women, including anemia, vitamin deficiency, and a higher incidence of tuberculosis, which can be further exacerbated by early marriage and pregnancy.
- Women, especially poor and rural women, have more difficulty accessing healthcare in general and of quality because of traditional attitudes towards their mobility. Women in Pakistan are particularly at risk for psychological morbidity for a number of reasons, including experiencing gender disadvantage from a young age and domestic violence.
- The maternal mortality rate is high due to preventable causes, and emergency obstetric and neonatal care services are far below recommended levels. As a consequence, Pakistan accounts for almost 20% of the regional maternal mortality. According to the World Bank's 2012 World Development Report, for every woman who dies during childbirth in Sweden, 122 women in Pakistan die.
- While infant mortality has been declining in Pakistan (see Table 1 above), child mortality overall and the child mortality gender gap in Pakistan is still much higher than other countries in the region (see Figure 1 below).
- Overall, female adolescents and women are in much greater need of information regarding their reproductive health and ways to access healthcare, particularly in light of the finding that boys have more knowledge than girls about puberty, pregnancy, family planning and sexually transmitted diseases. At the same time, men are constrained in knowing much about reproductive health and pregnancy because of social taboos; greater use of contraception and better reproductive health could potentially be achieved if they faced less social barriers to this type of knowledge.

General Overview

As suggested in the previously described research on “missing women” in Pakistan,²³⁴ male preference in Pakistan starts early in life. Male infants enjoy more family resources, and better care and nutrition than females of the same age, therefore making girls more susceptible to poor health.²³⁵ In Pakistan, medical care for male children is sought more frequently than for daughters²³⁶, and a study showed that critically ill male children were twice as likely as girls to be treated at a hospital.²³⁷ Studies also show that girls were breastfed for a shorter time than boys.²³⁸ This preferential treatment²³⁹

Figure 1. Mortality rate, female and male child (per 1,000 female children age one) in 2007

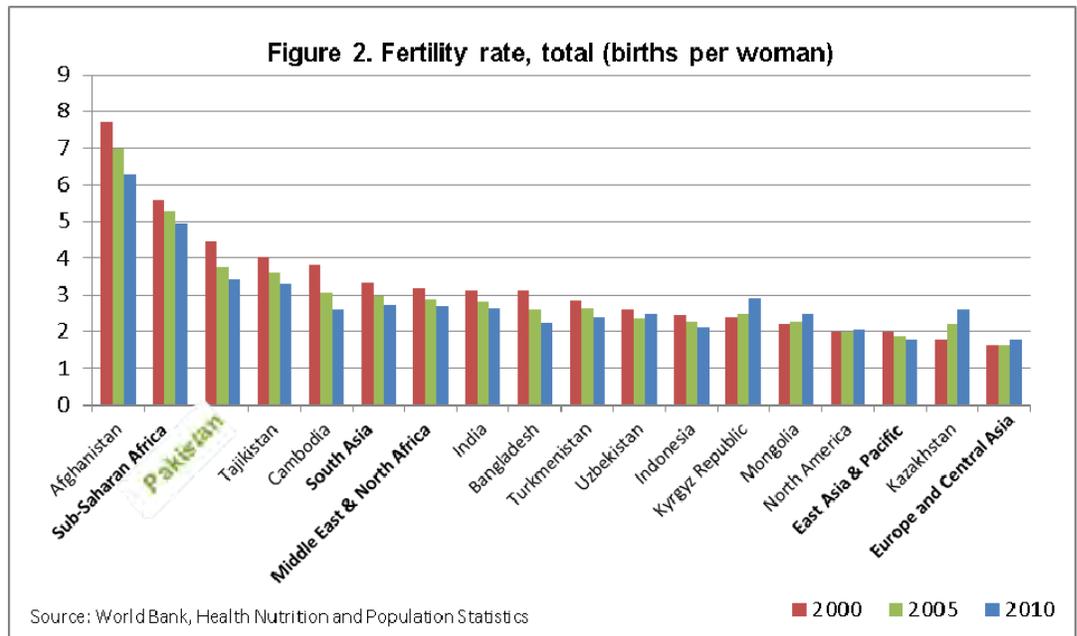


Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (data is disparate across time and countries)

for boys may explain why mortality among girls during infancy and early childhood is higher than among boys²³⁹ (see Figure 1).

In addition to this kind of preferential treatment for males, women’s health is made even more vulnerable by the custom of early marriage in Pakistan. Early marriage (58% rural females versus 27% urban females below the

age of 20),²⁴⁰ a common practice in Pakistan, also predisposes women to poorer health outcomes and high fertility rates (see Figure 2). While more research needs to be done in Pakistan, the intersection of early marriage and pregnancy is widely accepted as a risk factor for poor health outcomes such as anemia, hypertension, and premature and low-birth weight infants.²⁴¹ In addition, poor nutritional status



Source: World Bank, Health Nutrition and Population Statistics

and gender inequality issues may contribute to high rates of osteoporosis in Pakistani women and higher rates of tuberculosis than men, contradicting the accepted epidemiology of male predominance in TB worldwide.²⁴²

Access to Healthcare

Traditional attitudes towards women present a constraint to women’s healthcare and limit their mobility, preventing them from getting regular and easy access to healthcare. Poorer women are particularly constrained because they do not have the social and financial resources to have someone accompany them to a healthcare facility. Moreover, women’s access to healthcare is limited by the fewer number of female health providers, leading only 16% of women to seek proper antenatal care (ANC) and only 17% to deliver in health facilities. At the same time, another study found that attitudinal factors may actually serve as larger deterrents to ANC uptake. Further compounding the drawbacks to the fewer number of female health providers, male practitioners

are not gender-sensitized or well trained to handle women's health problems, making women less likely to seek health services. And while the Pakistan government has recognized the lack of female health providers as a problem and has made efforts to increase the cadre of community-based female health and family planning workers, the recruitment, training, and retention of such female workers has been difficult. These female health providers have identified problems that deter them from staying in the profession, including abusive hierarchical management structures; disrespect from male colleagues; lack of sensitivity to women's gender-based cultural constraints; conflict between domestic and work responsibilities; and poor infrastructural support.

Psychological Health

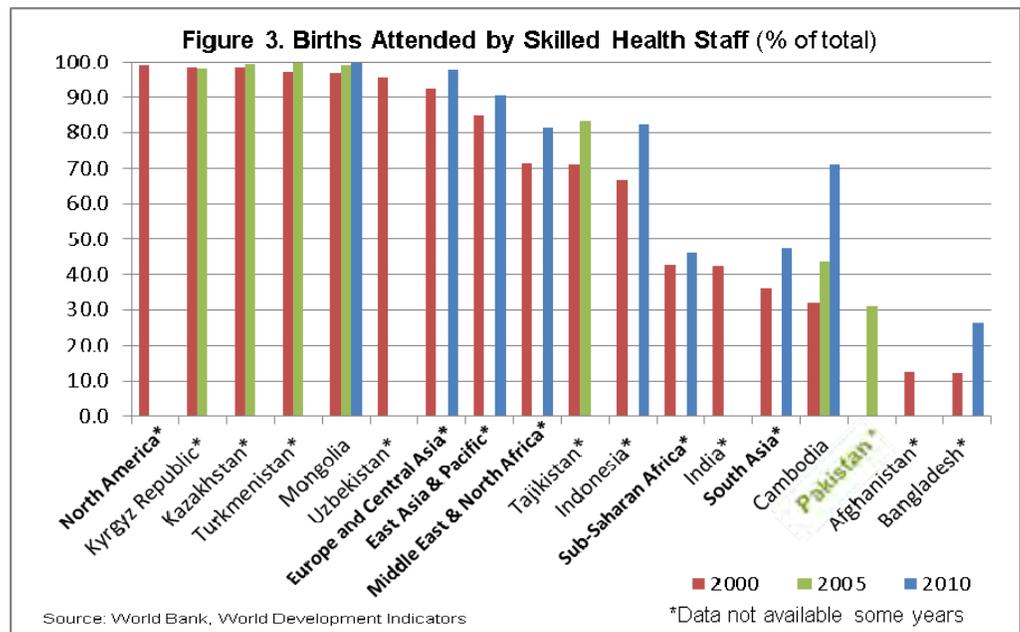
Women in Pakistan are two to three times likelier than men to suffer from common mental disorders compared to a typical female to male gender ratio of 1.5 to 2.0 elsewhere.²⁴³ Qadir et al. (2011) suggests this could be a result of the gender disadvantage that females experience beginning with birth—"a daughter who is little valued in her family...may internalize this into her cognitive schema, carrying this disadvantage throughout her life and making her vulnerable to continuing neglect or abuse",²⁴⁴ and there is empirical evidence that demonstrates a strong correlation between gender disadvantage and maternal depression.

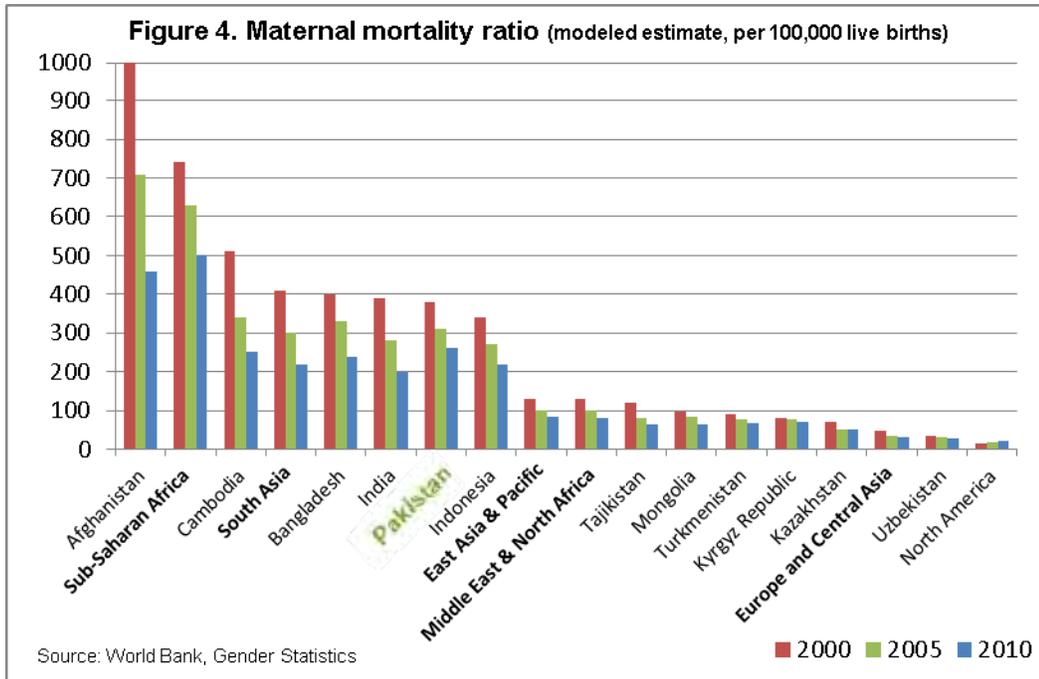
Another factor in the high rate of mental disorders among Pakistani women is the prevalence of domestic violence against women as there is link between intimate partner violence (IPV) and psychological morbidity among women in Pakistan.²⁴⁵ There are few studies on IPV against wives in Pakistan and they are usually based on small samples, but studies indicate a prevalence of 16-76% for physical violence and 12-16% for sexual violence.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, there is a rate of at least 23% for psychological violence, with a rising trend noted during the past 30 years for all three forms of violence.²⁴⁷

Other determinants of depression among Pakistani women of reproductive age include lack of reproductive and sexual rights, including freedom to choose one's partner, being forced to marry at a young age and marital rape,²⁴⁸ low levels of education, financial difficulties, and socio-economic adversity.²⁴⁹

Maternal Health

Mothers in Pakistan are at risk: Pakistan accounts for almost 20% of the regional maternal mortality.²⁵⁰ According to the World Bank's 2012 World Development Report, for every woman who dies during childbirth in Sweden, 122 women in Pakistan die,²⁵¹ and Pakistan scores low on the number of births attended by skilled health staff. (See Figure 3). High levels of child and maternal mortality in Pakistan (see Figure 4) are a result of various factors, including the low status of women in society, poor nutrition, poor access to health services, particularly emergency obstetric and neonatal care (EmONC), rural-urban disparity, and poverty and illiteracy.²⁵² In a study of emergency obstetric care in Punjab, it was found that no district met the minimum standards established by the UN for providing EmOC services.²⁵³ Only 4.7% of women with complications attended hospitals and Caesarean section was carried out in only 0.4% of births.²⁵⁴ The majority of maternal deaths are due to direct obstetrical causes, most of which are preventable. In home-based delivery or in hospitals, the leading causes are hemorrhage, eclampsia, sepsis, abortion and obstructed labor.²⁵⁵





Mothers' nutrition is particularly important as better nutritional status of mothers has been associated with better child health and survival. Women's education has also been positively linked to a range of health benefits for children—from higher immunization rates to better nutrition to lower child mortality.²⁵⁶

Although abortion is illegal in Pakistan (except to save a mother's life), 13% of pregnancies are

terminated by induced abortion and the annual abortion rate is 29 per 1,000 women of reproductive age.²⁵⁷ Clandestine abortions are performed by partly trained or untrained health workers, placing women at greater risk²⁵⁸ and many abortions take place in unhygienic conditions that can result in post-abortion complications. In 2002, an estimated 197,000 women were hospitalized as a result of unsafe abortions,²⁵⁹ though this figure likely represents only a portion of the actual number experiencing complications since poor women may not be able to access hospital based-care.²⁶⁰ The incidence of maternal death as a result of unsafe abortions is estimated to contribute to approximately 13% of maternal deaths in the country.²⁶¹

In addition, according to the national nutritional survey 2001 – 2002, 12.5% of mothers and 16.1% of lactating mothers are malnourished--anemia was present in 29.4% mothers, 22.5% being moderate to severely anemic.²⁶²

Sexual and Reproductive Health

IPV, discussed above, also has other implications on women's reproductive health and rights—victims of IPV are less likely to use contraceptives,²⁶³ which may be due to poor communication with spouses on matters related to reproductive health or non-cooperative behavior from husbands. Women who experienced sexual and physical violence were less likely to have prenatal care as well.²⁶⁴ Other barriers to contraception include the husband's desire for more children, a preference for the sex of the next child, and the woman's poor education attainment level. On the other hand, an improved husband-wife educational level results in greater reproductive autonomy of women and an increased use of contraception,²⁶⁵ and if a family decides to use contraception, a woman is willing to travel long distances to access family planning services.²⁶⁶ Men are also constrained in knowing much about reproductive health and pregnancy because of social taboos; greater use of contraception and better reproductive health could potentially be achieved if they faced less social barriers to this type of knowledge.²⁶⁷

While international attention has generally been focused on maternal mortality, the prevalence of other reproductive morbidity is also problematic and should be studied on a larger scale. In a study of women in Karachi, the prevalence of uterine prolapse and pelvic inflammatory diseases was determined to be 19% and 13%, respectively, the most frequently reported morbidities.²⁶⁸ In addition, young women need more information and education on delayed puberty, delayed or heavy menstruation, irregular discharge and sexual abuse, and married adolescents who become mothers in their teens are in need of information about reproductive health and access to services.²⁶⁹ Greater dissemination of this information to young women is particularly imperative in light of a study in Lahore that found that boys have slightly more knowledge than girls about puberty, pregnancy, family planning and sexually transmitted diseases.²⁷⁰

Finally, although accurate figures on the number of infected women in Pakistan are not available, the main challenge for women with HIV/AIDS is due to socio-cultural reasons, it is difficult for women with HIV/AIDS to talk or be open about it.²⁷¹ It is also difficult for them to receive treatment--narrative reports from Cambodia, Malaysia, Nepal, and Pakistan include stigma and discrimination as barriers to providing prevention, treatment, and care services to key population groups and to providing treatment and care for people living with HIV.²⁷²

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