

Pakistan

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About Pakistan

- Around 160 million people live in Pakistan.
- GDP per capita is US\$925. The average growth rate over the past five years was 7%.
- Pakistan has enjoyed over five years of sound economic growth and poverty reduction since 2002, yet in 2004/05, 24% - nearly 40 million – were still living below the national poverty line.
- Only just over half of 5-9 year olds go to school.
- Life expectancy is 64 years for men and 66 for women and 50% of the adult population is illiterate.
- One in ten children die before their fifth birthday.
- Every year at least 15,000 women die from complications of pregnancy and childbirth.
- Half the adult population is illiterate, including 2/3 of women.
- National Assembly elections were held on 18 February 2008 and a coalition government is now in place, under the leadership of the Pakistan Peoples Party.

DFID: Working to reduce poverty in Pakistan

In November 2006, the UK and Pakistan signed a 10-year Development Partnership Arrangement and the UK announced a doubling of aid for the period 2008-2011 to £480 million. Since then, DFID has begun a programme of consultation with other government departments, civil society, academics, MPs and the general public in the UK and Pakistan on how this new money should be spent. The new country plan will be available in the latter part of 2008.

Making aid effective

In line with our commitment to improve the effectiveness of aid, DFID has been at the forefront of efforts to harmonise donors' programmes and policies. In 2004, DFID co-founded the Donor-Poverty Reduction Working Group, formed to share information, promote joined-up engagement with government, and develop common positions.

Apart from assistance to federal (national) programmes, DFID is concentrating its assistance on two provinces: Punjab and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). In taking this decision, we considered need (population size and poverty levels), working relationships and the size and scope of other donors' programmes. We are considering working in other areas of Pakistan in the future.

Governance

Pakistan has invested in major changes to several areas of governance since 1999. These include a decentralisation of functions, power and funds to local governments, a major reform of the justice sector, reforms to the police system and improvements to the revenue collection and administration functions. The gains made through such reforms are substantial, yet Pakistan continues to face serious challenges in its ability to provide citizens with fair, equitable and effective access to their rights. DFID supports better state effectiveness in Pakistan through working for increased capability, greater accountability and increased responsiveness of government. DFID supports state capability at the federal, provincial and district levels through support for improved planning and budgeting, better systems for monitoring and evaluation and more predictable resource allocation. It also supports increased engagement of citizens in

the political process at both the local and national level, particularly through support for women's participation in public life and has contributed £3.5 million to strengthening the electoral system.

Inclusive Growth

A range of targeted programmes is being supported to improve livelihoods and employment opportunities for the poor, to ensure the benefits of recent high economic growth reach all groups in Pakistan. DFID's microfinance programme with the Kashf Foundation has, for example, increased incomes of 300,000 women, by up to 51%. A proposed £50 million Financial Inclusion Programme aims to increase the number of borrowers from 1 million to 3 million over 5 years, leveraging support from commercial banks and the private sector. A proposed programme of £30 million will help the Government of Punjab to design and implement new livelihoods and employment opportunities for people in its poorest districts. About 9 million people are likely to benefit from this programme.

Health

Federal and provincial governments increased budgets for health from £333 million in 2005/06 to £405 million in 2006/07. DFID has provided £91.8 million in support of the health sector over the past 3 years. Examples of current programmes are the National Health Facility (NHF), which provides £75 million in sector budget support with a focus on seven national programmes (Lady Health Workers, EPI, TB, Malaria, Aids Control, Nutrition and Population Welfare) and £8.5 million for technical assistance. Some achievements of the NHF include:

- EPI coverage (number of children 12-23 months fully immunised for EPI target diseases) increased to 76% in 2006-7 compared with 53% in 2001-02.
- Lady Health Worker numbers have increased to 96,000 and are set soon to reach the 100,000 target.
- Treatment success rate is currently 87% of identified TB cases, achieved earlier than the 2010 target of 85%. Case detection rates are improving, but are still low at 49% compared with a 70% target for 2010.
- There are 200,000 fewer child deaths and 800,000 fewer children who are malnourished.

The NHF has been extended to the end of this year and DFID is currently designing its successor.

Since 2005 DFID has provided £16.3 million to WHO for the Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme. These funds are used for national immunisations days and polio surveillance. In Pakistan, polio cases have fallen from more than 5,000 in 1993 to 32 cases in 2007. 2.4 million cases of TB have been prevented as well as 450,000 malaria cases.

DFID has committed up to £90 million over 2006-11 in support of the Government of Pakistan's National Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Programme. The first intake of a new cadre of community midwives is expected this year. If successful, the Programme will save the lives of 30,000 women and 100,000 babies, avert serious ill-health and disability for around 3.5 million women, and improve quality of life for around 10 million families by providing better access to services.

HIV and AIDS

With an overall HIV prevalence rate of less than 0.1%, Pakistan has until now been categorised as being a low prevalence, high-risk country. However, in major cities, the prevalence rate has gone beyond 5% in at least one of the high risk populations - intravenous drug users.

The Government has shown its commitment, for example by increasing funding for preventive services for high risk groups and for treatment and care through the National HIV & AIDS Control Programme (NACP), and this year has developed new HIV & AIDS policy and supporting legislation.

Examples of DFID interventions include:

- Technical assistance to the NACP, including development of a national monitoring & evaluation framework, development of National HIV legislation, a behaviour change and communication strategy, training on antiretroviral therapy, and specialised human resource support.
- Jointly funded by DFID, WB, UNICEF and UNAIDS, a mid-term review of the national response to control HIV & AIDS has just been completed.
- Through policy dialogue, we are seeking faster progress on the 'three ones' and better integration of HIV & AIDS and reproductive health services.
- We fund technical assistance and advocacy through UNAIDS and for STI/ HIV survey work.

Humanitarian

DFID provided £53 million in immediate emergency relief in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake of October 2005. Examples of initiatives underway include the supply of up to 50 bridges and support to an effective disease early warning system. DFID is also providing direct budget support to the Earthquake Reconstruction & Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA), which has been tasked to oversee and coordinate reconstruction. Overall, DFID has committed £126 million to earthquake relief and rehabilitation and over £2.2 million to help those affected by the flooding of June 2007.

Education

Education indices in Pakistan are extremely poor compared with countries of similar per capita income. The Primary Net Enrolment Rate is now 56%, with very high dropout rates and low transition to secondary education. There are thought to be at least 7 million school-age children out of primary school. Nearly half of those over 10 years old are literate - lower for females, and lower in rural areas.

- DFID is drawing up plans for a major five-year education programme.
- DFID funded several studies of education in Pakistan to inform our engagement with government - generally, we will be supporting government to strengthen provision, oversight and quality assurance of education in both state and private schools, including madaris.
- DFID is collaborating with GoP and the World Bank to support the National Education Assessment System (NEAS), Pakistan's first initiative to assess learning outcomes at elementary level. The evidence provided by NEAS is informing the National Education Policy Review and accompanying reforms of the curriculum, textbooks and examinations.
- DFID is supporting a Gender and Education Policy Support Project with GoP and UNICEF. This will strengthen understanding of gender issues and the capacities of policy-makers, planners and managers to coordinate, implement and monitor current and planned initiatives.

Making progress against the Millennium Development Goals...

Steady progress has been made towards most of the MDGs in Pakistan since 2000, but a low starting point and slow progress during the 1990s mean that many of the MDG targets will be difficult to reach. On the positive side, Pakistan is on track to halve the population without access to improved water and sanitation by 2015; income poverty has decreased rapidly recently – if this trend can be sustained Pakistan will reach the MDG target of halving the income poverty headcount by 2015; the proportion of the population living below the national poverty line decreased from 34.5% in 2001 to 24% in 2004/5; and primary school enrolment rates have improved - there are now 3 million more children in primary school than in 2001; The ratio of female to male primary enrolment rates has increased from 0.68 in 1991 to 0.82 in 2005-6 and under 5 child mortality rates have reduced from 130 per 1000 in 1990 to 99 in 2005.

For more information about DFID's work in Pakistan please visit www.dfid.gov.uk. If you wish to know more about DFID and its work to reduce poverty in S. Asia please call DFID press office: 0207023 0600.