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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: ARE WE READY TO IMPLEMENT THEM IN PAKISTAN?

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Abstract

The paper attempts to track the history and conceptual framework of the concept of sustainability and sustainable development in the context of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Based on the learnings of the Millennium Development Goals, the paper seeks to draw a map of the existing socio-economic and environmental indicators of Pakistan and their projections by 2030. The paper seeks to identify the projected gaps on various targets and indicators envisaged under SDGs and resource requirements to bridge these gaps for ensuring achievement of targets within a given timeframe. It also seeks to answer the question whether the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 sufficiently addresses the issue of local culture and context: which is markedly different in terms of the Global South and North. Generally, secondary data on the topic inform the analysis of the paper. The paper also suggests measures to implement and achieve SDGs targets. The paper follows positivist paradigm to interpret the nature of the SDGs and expected improvements in socio-economic indicators.

Key Words: *Pakistan, Millennium Development Goals, Sustainability, Sustainable Development Goals.*

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Introduction

In order to take forward the agenda of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), leaders across the globe came together at United Nations Headquarters from 25th to 27th September 2015 and pledged to transform the world by adopting ***“the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”*** It comprises 17 goals and 169 associated targets. The heads of states, governments and their representatives vowed to work together in partnership to fight against hunger, deprivation, illness, want and maladies our planet is facing including discrimination in all its forms and nuances. It was a resolve to work together in order to protect dignity and respect for every individual regardless of his/her caste, creed, color and religion. It was the collective will of the comity of nations that every country on the globe should enjoy sustained and inclusive economic growth, ensuring decent work for everyone.

While only developing countries committed themselves to the MDGs, the 2030 agenda has been endorsed and adopted by both the developed and the developing world. The SDGs are also larger in scope as compared to MDGs. They address all shades and dimensions of sustainable development such as social, economic and environmental in a well-integrated and coherent manner. The development goals are expected to stimulate actions in all areas important for mankind and the mother earth. The 2030 agenda specifically focuses on five areas namely people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership – called five Ps. The world leaders are resolute to end deprivation and starvation in all its shapes and shades, while ensuring equality of opportunity to everyone. It has been covenanted that natural resources will be exploited and consumed in such a manner that there should be no compromise on the needs of future generations. It has been envisioned that every possible effort would be made to set societies free from all kind of fear and violence. It has been recognized that peace and stability are fundamental to achieve targets set under SDGs. The role of global solidarity and partnership, in terms of benefiting from each other’s experiences and mobilization of resources needed to implement SDGs, has been appreciated and encouraged. Participation, inclusion, capacities and partnership are the cross cutting themes for implementation of SDGs.

Review of the Literature

Daly (1996) argued that almost a decade ago the terms “*sustainable development*” and “*sustainability*” gained currency on the stage of development. In 1987 the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (UNWCED) published a document named “*Our Common Future*” - the Brundtland Report. The report has an important role in popularizing the term “sustainable development”. It was basically a threefold conceptualization of sustainability viz social, economic and environmental. Apart from its acclaimed ambiguity and insufficient clarity, the definition of development suggested in the Brundtland Report remained pivotal in evolving a “*global view*” vis-à-vis concerns related to future of the earth. The sustainable development was defined as “*the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*” (Le Blanc, D. 2015). Similarly, “*the Earth Summit 1992*” organized in Reo de Janeiro played an important role in developing and adopting the MDGs.

In June 2012, the United Nations (UN) organized another conference on sustainable development called Rio+20 in Rio de Janeiro. The agenda of development was discussed and the member states agreed to start working on developing a set of development goals that could serve as a guide for pursuing focused and well-integrated actions on sustainable development in post MDGs era. The conference communique motivated thousands of initiatives launched at various levels across the global with a view to address the global environmental concerns. The debate also fathered a number of encouraging outcomes at local levels. However, long-term outcomes in determining the shared future on long-term bases appeared to be of least significance vis-à-vis the quantum of the challenges presented at global level. This thwarted the level of commitment and efforts of the clusters working on advocacy and promotion of the philosophy of sustainable development (Mebratu 1996).

1980s witnessed a strong feeling that viewed the sustainable development no more than a watchword that eventually would subside as happened to the concept of appropriate technology of the 1970s. However, the concept showed more resilience and started significantly influencing the policy development at national and international level; it was rather found place at the center of the public policy and program documents of international development agencies and business

organizations. The concept of sustainable development fathered volumes of discussion; this resulted in emergence of a variety definitions and interpretations of the term sustainable development.

By now sufficient literature has been produced to describe the concept of sustainability and sustainable development. Some major theories of sustainability are described here for better understanding of the concept and its implications for development. Sen (1985, 1992) and Sachs (2001) offered equity and human rights theories of sustainable development. These theories deal mainly with studies on poverty and unequal development and have held the field since mid-1980s. Coleman (1998) Putnam (1993) Rees and Wackernagel (1996) presented capital stock theories of social development. The subject matter of these theories is social capital, environmental capital, equity, and cities ecological footprints. Chambers (1992) and Healey (1992) presented institutional theory and governance of sustainable development. The theory primarily deals with participation and stakeholder analysis and is holding the field since early 1990s. Elkington (1994) came up with theory of sustainability in business and corporate world. The theory explains phenomena of triple bottom line, which measures corporate's degree of social responsibility, economic value and its environmental impact. Layard (2005) presented a set of theories related to behavioral and social sciences. The theories address the issues like well-being, health and happiness perspective of sustainability and sustainable development. Rotmans, Loorbach *et al.* (2006) gave the idea of transition theory. It deals with transition and governance related issues. Finally, McElroy *et al.* (2007) focuses on binary, absolute, and relative orientation of sustainability and explains that sustainability is easy to measure when seen from this perspective. The development is viewed either sustainable or non-sustainable; else it is less sustainable or more sustainable. However, the sustainable development as conceived in Brundtland Report in terms of its three dimensions – social, economic and environmental – form the basis for the current study and set the criteria to measure the expected performance of Pakistan on the targets set under SDGs.

Research Methodology

In September 2015 leaders from the member states came together for a historic UN Summit at UN Headquarters, New York City and agreed to embrace an elaborated agenda of sustainable development for next fifteen years (2016 – 30). They agreed upon a development agenda aiming at freeing the society from all forms of discrimination and subjugations, protecting the dignity of all

men and women on the earth and ensuring equal opportunities for all to nourish, develop and tap their potential to the optimum. The ambitious agenda was precipitated into 17 goals and 169 targets. While the commitment and intentions of the world leaders to achieve these goals were worth appreciating, there remains serious questions as to their abilities and capacities to translating them into reality; especially in view of their less than satisfactory performance on erstwhile MDGs. Therefore, it is imperative that the world community should come up with a pragmatic approach, evidenced by past performance and future projections, making sure that targets set under the 2030 agenda of development are achieved. The implementation plans need be supported by diligently devised baselines and objective assessments of available opportunities and challenges. It is also worth taking note that SDGs are universal in nature but have differentiated responsibilities for the member states. The context and culture of each country are different and as such call for a context specific implementation strategy and a unique skill set to implement them. In this backdrop, the current study attempts to assess the strengths and weaknesses of Pakistan which may facilitate or hinder its performance on SDGs.

The current paper, based on the analysis of secondary data sets, attempts to explore the answer to the question whether Pakistan has done necessary spade work and managed adequate resources to implement and achieve targets set under the 2030 agenda of sustainable development. The specific objectives of the study include tracking performance of Pakistan on MDGs targets, assessing institutional capacities and frameworks, gauging preparedness level of the country and finally making projections and draw a trajectory of country's expected performance on SDGs by 2030 following the business as usual approach. The paper seeks to answer two questions. First, in view of historical data available on achievements of MDGs, what are the prospects of Pakistan to achieve the targets set under the SDGs by 2030? Second, whether "*Pakistan Vision 2025*" could serve as an enabler to achieve SDGs targets?

The current study is guided by positivist research paradigm. Given the fact that the SDGs have been launched quite recently, the availability of data is very limited. The study, therefore, follows exploratory research strategy and places reliance on the review and analysis of secondary and historical data. The comparisons and projections that have been drawn to ascertain the current socio-economic status of Pakistan and its prospects to achieve the SDGs targets by 2030, are based on quantitative analyses of historical data. The reports published by the international development

partners, development financial institutions, other organizations at national and international level and research studies undertaken by the academia have also been consulted to define the concept and collect relevant data.

Discussion, Analysis and Findings

MDGs in Context

Informed by deliberations of a number of conferences convened by the UN over a decade, leaders across the globe, in September 2000, joined hands at the UN Headquarters and agreed to embrace the United Nations “*Millennium Declaration*”. They expressed commitment of their nations to the millennium declarations and avowed to fight against extreme deprivations and set a number of well-defined targets to be achieved by 2015. The agenda later became to be known as MDGs. In 2002, the UN launched the Millennium Project aimed at developing a well thought out action plan for achieving the MDGs, aiming at addressing the challenges of extreme poverty, hunger, and disease on the earth. The final recommendations of this independent advisory body were submitted to the Secretary-General in the shape of a synthesis volume (Sachs, 2005).

The United Nations Millennium Campaign mobilized and motivated people all around the globe to take steps aiming at furthering the cause of achieving the targets of MDGs. In 2005 a World Summit at UN Headquarters which was represented by more than 170 heads of states and governments. It was a rare opportunity in generations to take long term decisions to effectively confront the challenges the world was facing in the realm of development, security, human rights and reform of the United Nations. The Secretary-General outlined the agenda in the shape of a set of achievable proposals in March, 2005. All the stakeholders such as governments, foundations, businesses, and civil society groups put their weights in favor of implementation of MDGs with an object to reduce poverty, hunger and disease by the target date. The delegates renewed their commitment to meet the MDGs targets in a high profile event held on September 25, 2008 at UN Headquarters.

Performance of Pakistan on MDGs

The MDGs expired in September 2015. However, despite commitments and efforts of the government, performance of Pakistan on most of the targets set under MDGs remained less than

impressive. The Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report 2013 paints a depressing picture of country's progress on achieving MDGs targets. The following table drawn on the basis of the data collected from this report shows the performance of the country on MDGs.

No.	Indicators	Latest National Value	Target	Status
1.	Goal 1: Eradicating Extreme Poverty and Hunger			
1.1	Proportion of population below the calorie based food plus non-food poverty line.	12.4	13	On Track
1.2	Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age	31.5	< 20	Off Track
1.3	Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption	30		Off Track
2.	Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education			
2.1	Net primary enrolment ration (percent)	57	100	Off Track
2.2	Completion/survival rate Grade 1 to 5 (percent)	50	100	Off Track
2.3	Literacy Rate (percent)	58	88	Off Track
3.	Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment			
3.1	GPI Primary Education	0.9	1.00	Off Track
3.2	GPI Secondary Education	0.81	1.00	Off Track
3.3	Youth Literacy GPI	0.81	1.00	Off Track
3.4	Share of Women in Wage Employment	10.45	14	Off Track
3.5	Proportion of Seats held by Women in National Assembly	22	n/a	Achieved
4	Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality			
4.1	Under 5 Mortality Rate (Deaths per 1000 Live Births)	89	52	Off Track

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4.2	Infant Mortality Rate (Deaths per 1000 Live Births)	74	40	Off Track
4.3	Proportion of Fully Immunized Children 12-23 Months	80	>90	Off Track
4.4	Proportion of under 1 year children immunized against measles	81	>90	Off Track
4.5	Proportion of Children Under 5 Who Suffered from Diarrhea in the Last 30 Days (percent)	8	< 10	Achieved
4.6	Lady Health Worker's Coverage (percent of target population)	83	100	Off Track
5. Goal 5: Improved Maternal Health				
5.1	Maternal Mortality Ratio	276	140	Off Track
5.2	Proportion of births attended by Skilled Birth Attendants	52.1	>90	Off Track
5.3	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate	35.4	55	Off Track
5.4	Total Fertility Rate	3.8	2.1	Off Track
5.5	Proportion of women 15-49 year who had given birth during last 3 years and made at least one antenatal consultation	68	100	Off Track
6. Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases				
6.1	HIV prevalence among 15-49 year old pregnant women	0.041	Baseline reduced by 50%	On Track
		IDU = 37.4	Baseline reduced by 50%	Off Track
		FSW = 0.8		
		MSW = 3.1		
		HSW = 7.3		
6.2	Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective	40	75	Off

	prevention and treatment measures			Track
6.3	Incidence of TB/10,000	230	45	Off Track
6.4	TB cases detected and cured under DOTS	91	85	Achieved
7. Goal 7: Ensuring Environmental Sustainability				
7.1	Forest Cover (percent)	5.2	6	Off Track
7.2	Land Area Protected for Conservation of Wildlife (percent)	11.6	12	On Track
7.3	GDP (in 1980-81 Rs.) per ton of oil equivalent (energy efficiency)	26,543	28,000	On Track
7.4	Sulfur Content in High Speed Diesel	0.6	0.5-0.25	On Track
7.5	Proportion of population with Access to Improved Water Sources	89	93	On Track
7.6	Proportion of Population with Access to Sanitation	72	90	Off Track
7.7	Proportion of Katchi Abadies Regularized	n/a	95	Off Track

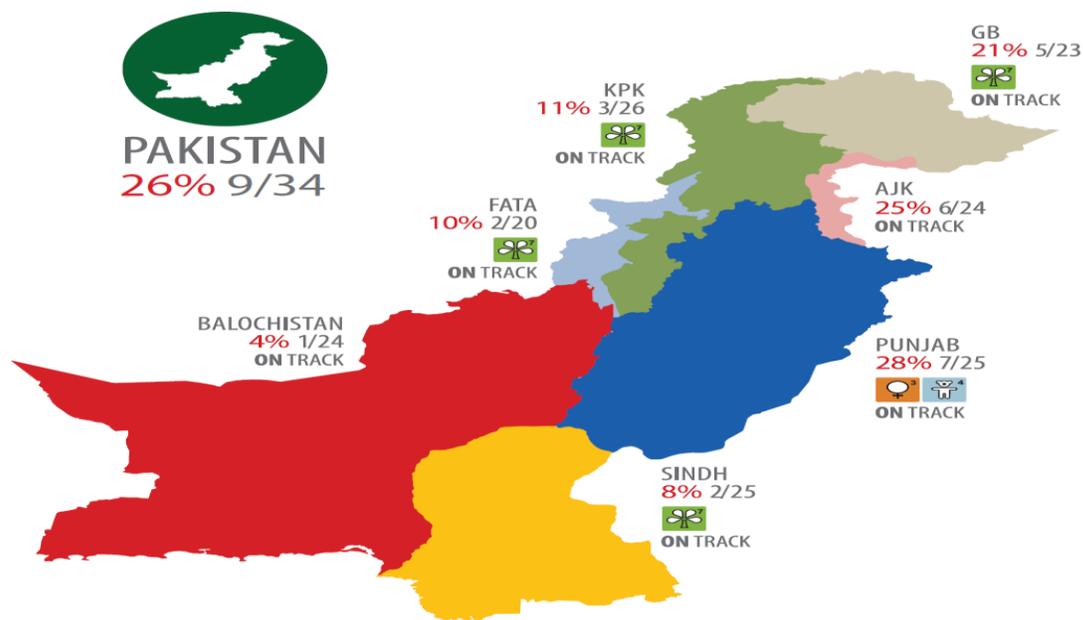
Source: Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report 2013

The table shows that Pakistan was on track 26% targets of MDGs. It means that Pakistan remained on track in case of only 09 indicators, while performance on 25 indicators was rated as off track. While data was not available on rest of six targets. This issues a serious caveat in terms of country's expected performance in meeting the targets set under SDGs. Keeping in with the murky track of country on MDGs, it has become imperative that a well thought out strategy should be devised and following steps may be taken to ensure smooth implementation of SDGs. First, conduct a thorough analysis with a view to see how SDGs can be integrated in country's national priorities and development plans. Second, undertake an institutional analysis to assess the level of institutional capacities to plan, implement, and monitor the progress of SDGs. This analysis then should inform the development of a capacity building framework in order to raise the competence level of the institutional arrangements responsible for implementation of SDGs. Third, immediately develop a comprehensive reporting mechanism to effectively coordinate among all the agencies and actors responsible for planning and implementation of development agenda. Fourth, we need to strengthen

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our research and development component to learn from national and international efforts being made in relations to implementation of SDGs. The findings of the research should guide policy makers on the latest happenings and to make necessary course corrections to keep our progress on track, ensuring achievement of targets within given timelines.

In terms of administrative divisions, the progress on MDGs targets is equally depressing. Following map shows that Punjab was successful in achieving only seven targets against 25 targets. As such, performance remained only 28%, highest among the four provinces. Sindh could achieve only two targets; performance in terms of percentage was only 8%. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa registered success only on three targets and its performance remained 11%. Baluchistan met only one target and progress was only 4%. Similarly, Federally Administered Areas, State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit Baltistan (GB) could meet only two, six and five targets and performance remained 2%, 25% and 21% respectively. The figure below presents these data graphically.



Source: Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report 2013

The data presented above clearly show that Pakistan missed on 26 targets out of 34 targets set under MDGs. However, data on rest of six targets was not available. This dampens our prospects to deliver on our commitments with regard to SDGs. This is an evidence unto itself that more

concerted efforts backed by a well thought out strategy and a long term commitment at highest levels is required to keep our pledge, else be ready to cut a sorry figure down the road.

SDGs: Prospects and Challenges for Pakistan

Since SDGs were approved in September 2015 and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group finalized and published SDGs indicators only in March 2016, it would be too early to expect of the governments of developing countries that they would put in place a mechanism to localize the development agenda, identify the gaps and strengthen the institutional capacities to kick start the implementation of SDGs. Official data archives of the government of Pakistan has little to answer the basic questions like what steps have so far been taken to take forward the 2030 development agenda; whether the government has developed and made functional a mechanism to integrate the SDGs in its Annual Development Plans (ADPs). The information in relation to the strategy of the government to make SDGs a reality is limited to few press statements of its ministers. However, the Government of Punjab, in collaboration with UNDP Pakistan, is taking lead on this front and has launched the Punjab SDGs Project. The Punjab SDGs Project is aimed at achieving four objectives. First, mainstreaming SDGs in local development plans and strategies, clearly delineating the resource requirements; second, strengthening coordination, reporting and monitoring mechanisms for SDGs; third, supporting integrated and innovative approaches to accelerate progress on SDGs on priority areas; and fourth, policy support, research and analysis and knowledge management for SDGs.

Given the scarcity of locally available data on SDGs, the report of World Bank “*Trajectories for Sustainable Development Goals: Framework and Country Application*” provides valuable information on the current status and future prospects of Pakistan vis-à-vis achievement of goals of sustainable development agenda. The framework analyzes the capacity of the country to achieve the SDGs in four steps. Step one, benchmark the Pakistan’s current SDGs indicators compared with the countries, using the level of Gross National Income (GNI) per capita as a yardstick. Step two, make projections of Pakistan’s achievements on SDGs in 2030 taking business as usual (BAU). The GNI per capita of the country forms the basis of the projections. At step three, it is assessed that how the achievement of more ambitious targets could be made possible vis-à-vis those suggested by the BAU projections. In order to achieve this objective, the current status of determinants of various SDGs is benchmarked for Pakistan and then these are compared with those of other countries. This

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assess the spending priorities of the countries under investigation. The process thus identifies the determinants of SDGs where Pakistan lags compared to countries having a similar level of GNI per capita in order to give them special attention. At step four, challenges related to expansion in fiscal space required to implement the ambitious development agenda are identified and addressed. The analyses, therefore, weighs Pakistan's options to create additional fiscal space taking benefit of the available additional financing and by improving government efficiency. This also measures Pakistan's current situation in comparison with what is expected of a country having same level of GNI per capita. Finally, the findings related to availability of fiscal space are compared with those of spending priorities identified and assessed at level three. The table below presents Pakistan's history since 2000 and projections to 2030 on SDGs indicators.

Pakistan – SDG Indicators: Evaluation since 2000 and Projections to 2030

No	Indicator	Actual		Expected	Projection	Global Ambition 2030
		2000	Recent	Recent	2030	
.						
1.	Poverty and shared prosperity					
1.1	Poverty at \$ 1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	29.0	12.7	14.9	6.8	By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day
1.2	Shared prosperity: Income share for lowest 4%	21.1	22.7	16.7	-	By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 percent of the population at a rate higher than the national average.
2.	Education					
2.1	Pre-primary enrollment (% gross)	62.8	82.1	22.1	83.6	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.
2.2	Primary completion (% gross)	-	71.9	76.6	77.8	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

2.3	Secondary enrollment (% gross)	36.6	52.3	46.6	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.	
2.4	Primary completion, ratio of females to males (%)	85.7	94.5	-	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.	
2.5	Secondary enrollment, ratio of females to males (%)	73.5	87.9	79.9	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.	
3.	Health					
3.1	Under-5 mortality (per 1,000 live births)	113	86	49	66	By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age.
3.2	Maternal mortality (per 100,000 live births)	280	170	205	116	Maternal mortality (per 100,000 live births)
3.3	Malaria cases (% of population)	0.06	0.16	0.30	0.06	By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water borne diseases and other communicable disease
3.4	HIV prevalence (% of population ages 15-49)	0.10	0.10	0.84	-	By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water borne diseases and other communicable diseases.
4.	Infrastructure					
4.1	Access to improved sanitation facilities (% of population)	37.4	47.6	38.1	54.7	By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls an those in vulnerable situation
4.2	Access to improved water sources (% of population)	88.3	91.4	75.1	92.9	By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all

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4.3	Road density (km per 100 sq.km of land)	31.2	33.0	12.7	35.9	Develop quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.
4.4	Access to electricity (% of population)	79.5	91.4	37.2	92.7	By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy service.
4.5	Internet users (per 1,000 people)	0.1	10.9	10.2	-	Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the internet in least developed countries by 2020.
5. Environment						
5.1	CO2 emissions (metric tons per capita)	0.74	0.93	0.42	1.23	Integrate climate change a measure into national polices, strategies, and planning.

Source: Gable, Susanna, Hans Lofgren, and Israel Osorio Rodarte. 2015. "Trajectories for Sustainable Development Goals: Framework and Country Applications." Washington, DC: World Bank. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO

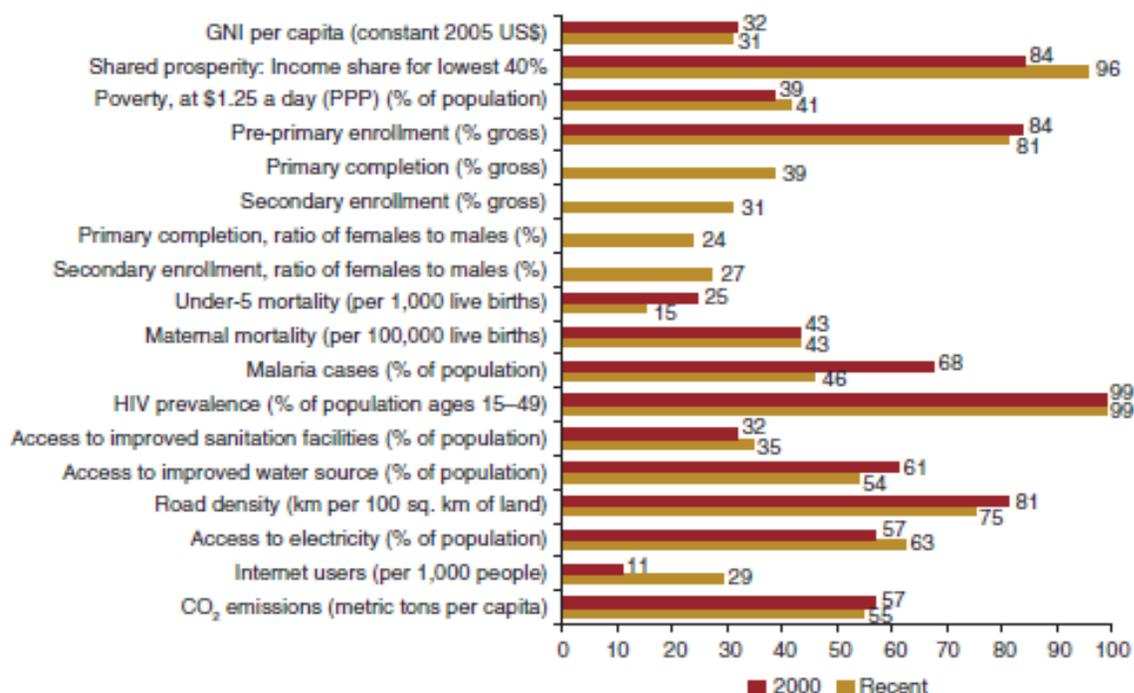
The table shows summarized data of Pakistan for the selected SDGs in terms of historical trends, actual and expected values for a recent year and projected 2030 values. The data has been presented in the context of the estimated cross-country relationships between each SDG indicator and GNI per capita. In the instant case the projected average annual rate of GNI per capita growth is 2.5 percent. The projected SDG values reflect a set of expectations of a country, considering the factors such as country's initial point, projections on growth in terms of GNI per capita, rates of progress over a period of time as per cross-country trends, and a continuing convergence to bridge the gaps between experienced and expected values. Projections for SDGs indicators are presented only when the cross-country relationship between the indicator and GNI per capita is classified as tightly fitted. A loose relationship suggests that progress in the indicator is primarily a reflection of country specific factors and that it should not be expected to respond strongly or systematically to change in GNI per capita.

Gable *et al.* (2015) noted that Pakistan's current outcomes were better than expected (compared to a country having the same GNI per capita level) in case of eight of the indicators (shared prosperity, pre-primary school enrolment, maternal mortality, HIV prevalence, access to clean and improved water sources, better sanitation facilities, electricity and road density). In case of poverty and malaria, the current outcomes match the expectations. However, the country falls short of expectation for the remaining seven indicators such as primary completion rate, secondary school enrolment, gender ratio of primary completion, gender ratio of secondary enrolment, under-five mortality, internet users, and CO₂ emissions.

Pakistan – Percentile Cross Country Ranking for SDGs Indicators since 2000

Analyses of data between 2000 and 2012 show that Pakistan, among the low and middle income countries, performed more or less in the similar manner in terms of GNI per capita (Gable *et al.* 2015). It may be noted that, during the same period, among 13 SDGs indicators with ranking for both years, four improved their rankings (shared prosperity, access to sanitation facilities, access to electricity, and Internet use). The ranking remained unchanged for four indicators (poverty, maternal mortality, HIV prevalence and CO₂ emissions), while the ranking deteriorated for five indicators (gross pre-primary enrolment, under-five mortality, malaria cases, access to improved water sources and road density). The bar graph below shows the comparative picture against various SDGs indicators.

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Source: Gable, Susanna, Hans Lofgren, and Israel Osorio Rodarte. 2015. "Trajectories for Sustainable Development Goals: Framework and Country Applications." Washington, DC: World Bank. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO

The World Bank (2015) further concluded that when comparing the results from regressions on GNI per capita to changes in percentile rankings, a few insights emerge. Under-five mortality stands out as a problematic area since it combines underperformance with a strong deterioration in ranking compared to GNI per capita. This is also the case for malaria though the current performance matches the expectations. For SDGs indicators, with the strongest ranking improvement on Internet use, Pakistan, nevertheless, remains an underperformer. For shared prosperity, the country's ranking has improved considerably and the indicated value is now better than expected. Notwithstanding the considerable improvements projected for most of the selected indicators, the improvements are moderate, compared to global ambitions. This clearly suggests that in order to get close to the realization of these ambitions, a break with the past is needed, something that would be facilitated by a combination of more rapid growth and improvements in policies that directly influence different SDGs.

Current Results of Pakistan for SDG Indicators

Pakistan's current outcomes are better than expected (compared to a similar country having the same GNI per capita level) in case of eight indicators, as expected for two and below expectations for seven (Gabel et al. 2015). The below table summarizes the Pakistan's current performance.

Overperforming	As Expected	Underperforming
Pre-primary school enrolment	Poverty	Primary completion rate
Maternal mortality	Malaria	Secondary school enrolment
Access to improved water sources		Ratio of female to male primary completion
Access to electricity		Ration of female to male secondary enrolment
Road density		Under-five mortality
Shared prosperity		Internet users
HIV prevalence		CO ₂ Emission

Source: Gable, Susanna, Hans Lofgren, and Israel Osorio Rodarte. 2015. "Trajectories for Sustainable Development Goals: Framework and Country Applications." Washington, DC: World Bank. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO

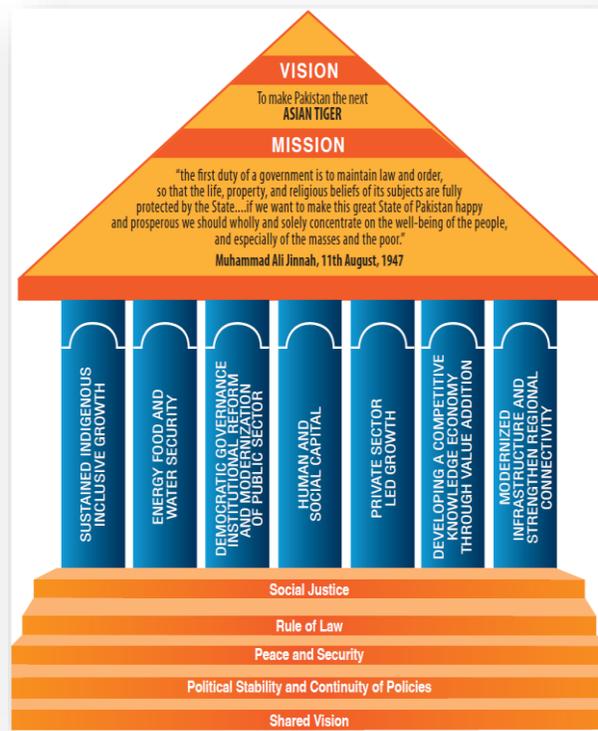
The results suggest that by 2030 though considerable improvements are projected for most of the indicators, they are still likely to fall short of the global ambitions. This clearly indicates that a break from the business as usual and the current trends would be needed to realize the ambitious SDGs targets. While, underperformance on many SDGs targets suggests that additional gains are feasible with additional efforts and resources. It underscores the need for reviewing the current policies, especially related to under-five mortality for which Pakistan's ranking among low and middle income countries has deteriorated significantly. The cross country analyses also endorse that government spending is relatively low and there is a need to create additional fiscal space, mainly through increased tax revenues. The increased government spending in priority areas may yield positive results in terms of achieving targets set under SDGs.

Pakistan Vision 2025 and its Linkages with SDGs

Taking cognizance of the challenges Pakistan is facing on social, economic and environmental fronts, Planning and Development Ministry, Government of Pakistan launched “Pakistan Vision 2025” in August 2014. The Vision 2025 envisages to increasing the per capita income - based on purchasing power parity (PPP) - from US\$ 1,299 to US\$ 4,200 by 2025, reduce the extreme deprivation (poverty) from 49% to 20% and taking the exports volume of the country to a level equal to US\$ 150 billion. Primary school enrollment and completion rate have been aimed at 100% , while the target of literacy rate is set at 90%. The higher education coverage will be increased from initial 7% to 12 % . It has also been emphasized that the number of Ph.Ds. in the country will increased from 7,000 to 25,000. Achieving gender parity index level 1 for primary and secondary education level. An important feature of the vision 2025 is to increase the female participation in workforce from 24% to 45%. The milestones include increasing the availability and access to improved sanitation from 48% to 90%.

Concerning reduction in infant mortality rate, it has been envisaged to bring it down from 74 to less than 40 (per 1,000 births). Similarly, it is targeted that maternal mortality rate will be reduced from 276 to less than 140 (per 1,000 births). Reducing the incidence of hepatitis, diarrhea, diabetes and heart diseases by 50% also form important targets under the vision 2025. It is also hoped that Pakistan would be world champion in three sports and would earn thirty medals in the Asian Games.

Pakistan Vision 2025 document has five enablers and seven pillars. The five enablers comprise political stability and continuity of policies, shared vision, rule of law, social justice and peace and security. While, achieving sustained, putting people first – developing human and social capital, indigenous and inclusive growth, institutional reform and modernization of the public



sector, improving governance, energy, growth led by private sector and entrepreneurship, water and food security; developing a competitive knowledge economy based on value addition and modernizing communication infrastructure especially transportation infrastructure and greater regional connectivity comprise the seven pillars of the Pakistan Vision 2025. A closer look of the enablers and pillars of the Vision 2025 reveals that these are closely aligned with the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. Pillar one, putting people first and developing social and human capital resonates well with SDGs focussing on poverty reduction, provision of health services, provision of education and achieving gender parity and equality. Pillar two, sustained, indigenous and inclusive growth is aligned with SDGs 8, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15. Pillar three, institutional reforms and modernization of public service has a close link with SDG 16. Pillar four, energy, water and food security is in harmony with SDGs related to achieving zero hunger, attaining water security, ensuring energy security and focussing on urban development. Pillar five, growth led by private sector and entrepreneurship is closely linked with SDG emphasizing on fostering innovation. Pillar six, development of a knowledge economy to be achieved by promoting a culture of value addition is in conformity with SDGs on infrastructure and education. Pillar seven which emphasize on improving regional connectivity by investing on modernization and upgradation of transportation infrastructure sounds well with SDGs on infrastructure and global partnership. Comparative study of SDGs and the Vision 2025 makes it clear that both have many similar targets and indicators. This is a strong indicator of the resolve on the part of the Government of Pakistan to strive hard in systematic manner to achieve SDGs target as committed in the UN Summit 2015.

In addition to the Vision 2025, the Government of Pakistan has set up a Parliamentary Task Force under the Chairpersonship of the Speaker, National Assembly at Federal level. Similarly, all four provinces and Azad Jammu and Kashmir has developed project proposals to launch SDGs projects. The projects are aimed at localizing the SDGs in the development plans, particularly related to education, health and agriculture, identifying the institutional capacities and to assess the resource requirements, especially human and financial resources required to implement the plans. The projects are also aimed at undertaking extensive research on the subject to facilitate the implementing governments to have an updated database on what is going on at the local, regional and global level in relations to implementation of SDGs.

Conclusion

It is evident from the literature and covenants, the Government of Pakistan has signed with international community, that people of Pakistan are committed to achieving SDGs targets by 2030. The Vision 2025 is an evidence unto itself that the state of Pakistan is fully determined to partner with international community to achieve the target set under 2030 agenda of sustainable development covering its socio-economic and environmental dimensions. Seven pillars and five enabler of the Vision 2025 are in complete harmony with the aims and objectives of SDGs. Federal and all state governments including administrations of federally administered areas are ready to launch SDGs projects in collaboration with UNDP Pakistan. The projects aim at localizing the SDGs in national and sub-national priorities and ensuring required budgetary allocations in Annual Development Plans (ADPs). A Parliamentary Task Force in National Assembly secretariat has also been set up to steer the agenda of SDGs and guide the policy makers to align ADPs with SDGs targets.

Notwithstanding the commitment of the governments to implement and achieving the targets set under SDGs agenda, the performance in terms of achieving MDGs targets show that country could hardly achieve 26% of total targets and performance on rest of 25 targets was far below than expected values. While data on six targets was not available. Since future direction is influenced by the past performances, it is, therefore, important to learn from the lessons of MDGs and formulate better policy and institute better institutional capacities to achieve the SDGs targets; else it seems a distant dream and we may have to cut a sorry figure by 2030 in the comity of the nations. Not only would this cause an embarrassment for Pakistan at international fora, but people of Pakistan would also be deprived of the fruits of development in terms of their socio-economic uplift and environmental sustainability. Gable *et al.* (2015) noted that Pakistan's current outcomes were better than expected (compared to a similar country having the same level of GNI per capita) in case of eight of the indicators (shared prosperity, pre-primary school enrollment, maternal mortality, HIV prevalence, access to and availability of improved water sources, provision of improved sanitation, electricity and road density). In case of poverty and malaria the current outcomes were on track. However, the country falls short of expectations for the remaining seven indicators – primary completion rate, secondary school enrolment, gender ratio of primary completion and secondary enrolment, under-5 mortalities, Internet users and CO2 emissions.

In the same vein, projections 2030 suggest that while considerable improvements are expected for most of the indicators, they are still likely to fall short of the global ambitions, indicating that a break from the business as usual and current trends would be needed to realize ambitious 2030 agenda. However, underperformance on many SDGs targets suggests that additional gains are feasible with improved efforts and increased investments in the respective sectors. It underscores the need for reviewing the current policies, especially related to under-five mortality for which Pakistan's ranking among low and middle income countries has deteriorated significantly. The cross country analyses also suggest that government spending is relatively low and there is a need to create additional fiscal space mainly through increased tax revenues. This increased government spending in priority areas may yield positive results in terms of achieving SDGs targets.

The results of analyses suggest that Pakistan need to be very calculated and careful while formulating policy framework to embark upon the implementation of development agenda 2030. It calls for a thorough review of the existing institutional capacities and resource requirements. There is a need to integrate the SDGs in ADPs and sufficient allocations need to be made available to achieve targets on yearly basis. A robust research and development mechanism is needed to be developed to inform the policy makers to recommend course corrections and best practices. Similarly, effective monitoring and evaluation of projects, aimed at achieving SDGs targets, is critical to keep them on track. A strong and functional M&E mechanism could guarantee the success in achieving the desired results by 2030. Also important are the identification of fiscal gaps, increasing tax revenues and making resources available for implementation of projects. To this end, government may explore avenues in the form of financial assistance available with various international consortia and the Bretton Wood Institutions for cheap loans and grants. In sum, the SDGs offer an opportunity to build a better and prosperous future and the people of Pakistan must partner with global community to realize the dream of progress, prosperity and human dignity.

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