

Population, Labour Force and Employment

The Human Resource of a country plays an important role not only in the economic development but also for the social well-being of the country. However, large population size and lack of proper management of human resources may lead to social distress and reduce economic performance. Because of increasing population growth, Pakistan is facing difficulty in optimal social spending i.e. health care, education, housing and unemployment etc. In this scenario, the advent and spread of COVID-19 has further aggravated the situation. The government of Pakistan has taken several steps to overhaul the ailing structure of the economy and to implement remedial measures particularly for human capital development.

According to the National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) estimated population of Pakistan is 215.25 million with population growth rate of 1.80 percent in 2020¹ and population density of 270 per Km². Pakistan has an extraordinary asset in the shape of youth bulge, which means that the largest segment of our population consists of young people. The population falling in the age group of 15-59 years is 59 percent, whereas 27 percent is between 15-29 years. This youth bulge can translate into economic gains only if the youth have skills consistent with the requirements of a modern economy. The government has started different programmes for improving employment opportunities for youth such as "Prime Minister's Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme" and "Prime Minister's Hunermand Programme-Skills for All".

During COVID-19 Pandemic, protection and creation of jobs is the second biggest challenge after the health crisis in Pakistan. The pandemic adversely impacted employment and labour productivity by impeding growth in various economic sectors. State Bank of Pakistan has taken different measures to counter the effects of COVID-19 like support to firms in paying wages to their employees amid the lockdowns to prevent layoffs (Rozgar Scheme). Further, revival of construction industry during pandemic is one of the major initiatives of the government for employment generation in the country.

Pakistan, being the 5th most populous country and having 9th largest labour force in the world, adds a large number to its labour force every year. Pakistan's labour market data has been derived from the latest available round of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) for 2017-18. The data pertaining to 2018-19 round of the LFS has not been released yet. Moreover, Labour Force Survey for 2019-2020 did not take place due to preparations

¹ Population data reported in the chapter is based on available projection of NIPS. Census Results 2017 have been released by PBS. NIPS will provide projected data accordingly, with the consultation of PBS and M/o Planning, Development and Special Initiatives. The revised Population data will be published in Statistical Supplement PES 2020-21.

for an extensive survey in 2020-21, which will have a district level representative sample.

Special Initiatives taken by the Government for Youth Development

The ability of an economy to generate sufficient employment opportunities for its population stands vital for optimal utilization of resources. The government has accorded highest priority in its manifesto to youth empowerment at national level. To accomplish the vision of the Prime Minister, National Youth Development Framework (NYDF) was developed on the basic principles of 3Es: Education, Employment and Engagement. The government has designed a comprehensive program “**Prime Minister’s Kamyab Jawan Program**”. Six (06) components of the Programme are as follows:

- i. Prime Minister’s Hunarmand Programme (Skill for All)
- ii. Prime Minister’s Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES)
- iii. Prime Minister’s Start up Pakistan
- iv. Prime Minister’s Green Youth Movement (GYM)
- v. Prime Minister’s National Internship Program
- vi. Prime Minister’s Youth Engagement Platform (Jawan Markaz)

The government has already launched two of the components under Prime Minister’s Kamyab Jawan Programme i.e., Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) and Hunarmand Pakistan (Skills for All) whereas Prime Minister’s Start up Pakistan is in final stages. However, remaining three components are under process.

Prime Minister’s Hunarmand Pakistan Programme -Skill for All

Prime Minister’s Hunarmand Pakistan Programme-Skills for All under Kamyab Jawan program has been implemented since February, 2020 and training cost has been disbursed to all selected training institute to commence the training of 100,000 educated youth in market oriented conventional and High-Tech/High-End courses. The programme will directly employ 42 individuals under the project staff, whereas the services of more than 28,000 individuals will be hired on remuneration basis as instructional, non-instructional technical field experts, assessors, subject judges, industrial experts etc. The 14 areas of interventions covered under this programme are as follows:

- i. Development & Standardization of 200 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Qualifications
- ii. International Accreditation of 50 Pakistani TVET institutes with joint degree programmes
- iii. Extension of National Vocational and Technical Training Commission’s (NAVTTTC) Job Portal into National Employment Exchange Portal
- iv. Establishing 75 Smart Tech Labs for virtual skill development programmes
- v. Establishing 10 country of destination specific facilitation centers

- vi. Establishing 70 vocational labs in Madrassas
- vii. Skill development programme for 50,000 youth belonging to less developed areas
- viii. Skill development training for 50,000 youth in High-End technologies
- ix. Apprenticeship training for 20,000 youth in industry under Apprenticeship Act-2018
- x. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) of 50,000 youth
- xi. Establishment of National Accreditation Council – placed at ICT
- xii. Accreditation of 2,000 TVET institutes across Pakistan
- xiii. Training of 2,500 TVET teachers in international best TVET practices
- xiv. Establishment of 50 Business Incubation Centers

Above mentioned 14 areas of interventions are expected to serve as a catalyst for kicking off the transformation of the entire TVET system in the country. It is also projected that with the initiation of this programme, the long overdue process of TVET sector reforms and transformation will increasingly attract other stakeholders i.e., the provincial governments, industry, private sector and the donors to contribute their share in bringing Pakistani TVET sector at par with international standards. A total number of approximately 170,000 skilled and certified workforce, 2000 Accredited TVET institutes, a national level Accreditation Council, a centralized data based for demand and supply of workforce, National Employment Exchange Portal and technical and vocational labs in Madrassas are the objectives which will be achieved after successful implementation of this programme.

Keeping in view the COVID-19 crisis, free online courses were arranged by NAVTTC, with international certification in order to provide continuous opportunities for youth. More than 12,000 students were enrolled in these courses and the scope of the courses is being further enhanced to bring advance courses for a greater number of youths. Apart from the above initiative of NAVTTC, skill training components have also been included in the EHSAS programme for the most marginalized segments of society. These programmes will be helpful for the socio-economic betterment of youth and deprived segments of the society.

Prime Minister's Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES)

Government of Pakistan in collaboration with SBP has launched 'Prime Minister's Kamyab Jawan Youth Entrepreneurships Scheme (PMKJ-YES)' to empower Pakistan's youth by extending affordable financing for new and existing startups. Under the scheme, 21 banks are working as executing agency and are providing business loans to youth entrepreneurs ranging from Rs 100,000 to Rs 25 million at the mark-up rate of 3-5 percent p.a. with the maximum loan tenure of 8 years. As an incentive to the banks, Government will bear credit losses in case of default (principal portion only) on the disbursed portfolio of the banks. For Tier-1 loans, risk coverage is up to 50 percent. For Tier-2 and Tier-3 loans, risk coverage is up to 20 percent and 10 percent, respectively. Under PMKJ-YES, Rs 8,566 million have been disbursed till April 2021 for various businesses.

Prime Minister’s Start-Up Pakistan

Prime Minister’s Startup Pakistan is flagship initiative of KJP taken by the government and envisioned to develop a national startup ecosystem that provides training to one million young people in entrepreneurship and launch 10,000 startups by 2023 as well as creates jobs and economic activities in an inclusive, scalable and sustainable way to provide a single point of contact for the entire Startup Eco system. The program will be executed by Higher Education Commission. The PC-I of the Prime Minister’s Start-up Pakistan is at final stage of finalization and will be implemented soon after meeting all codal formalities.

COVID-19: Impact on Labour Market and Employment

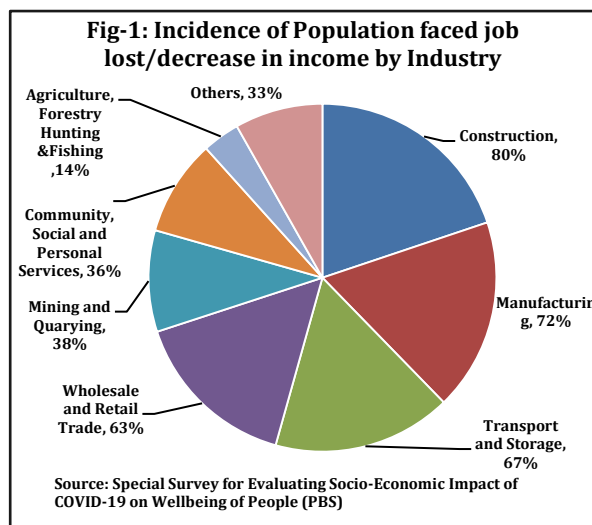
The COVID-19 Pandemic does have devastating effect not only on human life but it has also come across as an unprecedented challenge to the public health and economic growth. Pakistan has also borne the economic brunt of COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in negative growth of -0.47 percent in FY20, job losses, falling income and deteriorating social indicators. According to "Special Survey for Evaluating Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Wellbeing of People" conducted by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), almost half of the working population was affected due to closure of business and lockdown.

As per Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, prior to COVID-19, the working population was 35 percent (55.75 million). However, in pandemic closure of economic activities due to imposition of lock down for health safety, this number declined to 35.04 million which indicates people either lost their jobs or were not able to work. In July 2020, the government announced package for construction sector. Thus opening of sectors in which daily wagers were working along with fiscal stimulus and monetary measures made economy to recover. It was reported that 33 percent (52.56 million resumed working.

The sectoral analysis reveals that construction and manufacturing sectors remained the most vulnerable sectors during this Pandemic. Wholesale & retail and transport & communication sectors are severely affected on account of COVID-19.

Summarized COVID-19 Pandemic impact on population who lost jobs/could not find job and experienced decrease in income is explained in Fig-1:

The above figure shows that COVID-19 Pandemic hampered economic activities in construction and manufacturing sectors due to decline in consumer, business confidence and production and supply chain disruptions. It is estimated that 80 percent worker lost jobs/could not find work and received lower income in construction sector. People were



reluctant to invest in this sector. Further, manufacturing sector observed disruption in production because of contraction in demand resulting 72 percent worker either lost jobs/could not find work or faced decrease in income. In addition, the present government imposed strict lockdown which hampered wholesale & retail business and transport & storage business leaving 63 percent and 67 percent people to become jobless or had lower income respectively.

Prudent government strategies and timely interventions have put economy on the trajectory of recovery and save the nation from very severe impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Further, construction sector package and industrial relief packages etc. are other key initiatives of the government resulting recovery of all segments of the economy from the shock. It was observed that out of 20.6 million people (industry) who lost their jobs/could not work during April-July 2020, 18.4 million had started working again during August- 5th November 2020 depicting a V-shaped recovery.

Box-I: Initiatives taken by Government during 2020-21 to reduce the adverse impact of COVID-19 and generate employment

Government has taken various steps for reviving the economy, accelerating the pace of economic growth and creating employment in the country. The major programmes are as under:

Construction Package

Construction industry has backward and forward linkages and boost 40 sectors of small and large manufacturing industry simultaneously. It is estimated that millions of employment opportunities would be generated through construction package.

Textile Industry Package

Textile production has increased by 5.9 percent during July-March FY21 as compared to 2.6 decline in last year. Flurry of export orders, tax refunds and duty draw backs have facilitated the sector. Statistics have shown that the government has recreated half a million jobs by strengthening the textile industry.

Bundal Island Project

The project would attract up to five million tourists with people already approaching the government for investment. Approximately 150,000 jobs will be generated by the project.

Export Processing Zones

Export Processing Zones Authority is conceived and designed to increase and improve the exports of the country. Its main objectives are accelerating the pace of industrialization in the country and enhancing the volume of exports by creating an enabling environment for investors to initiate ambitious export-oriented projects in the Zones which would, as a corollary, create job opportunities, bring in new technology and attract foreign investment.

Ravi River Urban Development Programme

The government is confident that the Ravi City Project costing Rs 5 trillion (\$ 30 billion) would create millions of jobs as at least 40 industries are connected to the construction sector.

IT Parks Package

Pakistan's IT Industry, being a vibrant and expanding economic contributor generates over 2 billion dollars each year for the country. Its potential is also being explored. Rapid investment is being fueled by the mushrooming growth of exports along with the support of government organizations and policies. It is expected that thousands of employment opportunities will be generated through this programme.

SBP Rozgar Scheme

The Scheme aims to prevent layoff by financing wages and salaries of employees for six months (April 2020-Sep. 2020) for all kind of businesses except for Government entities, public sector enterprises, autonomous bodies and deposit taking financial institutions. It was the most popular refinance scheme of SBP which has helped to prevent layoff of 184,8945 employees of 3,331 businesses till end September, 2020. Out of these, 3,13,599 employees are of 1512 SMEs and small corporates.

Source: M/o Planning, Development & Special Initiatives (ii) State Bank of Pakistan

Employment Generation under CPEC

Investment under CPEC is expected to be around \$ 50.70 billion. This huge inflow of investment will generate massive economic activities and consequently employment opportunities. Apart from focusing on energy, infrastructure and Gwadar projects, 9 Special Economic Zones will be established under CPEC portfolio, which will create tremendous job opportunities and technological transformation. Further, the ML-1 project to upgrade and dualize the rail track from Peshawar to Karachi (1872 km) has a potential to create 174,000 direct jobs. Employment opportunities under CPEC would further go up over the period of time.

Skill Development Initiatives

For low and middle income economies, lack of professional and management skills in youth may lead to unemployment or resistance to acquire quality jobs with decent work environment. The issue is becoming more serious with rapidly changing economies that requires more innovative skills. Workers need to be updated, flexible and adaptive in order to exploit the market opportunities both at national and international level.

Thus, youth empowerment and productivity has always been given priority in national plans. Socio-economic progress of youth through Technical & Vocational Education & Training (TVET) is included in long term development plan and globally agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Various programs /schemes have been initiated to meet the confronting challenge of unemployment among youth during current financial year. More than 100,000 youth are under training through targeted training programmes being implemented at federal level.

National Skill Strategy (NSS)

NAVTTTC has devised a National Skill Strategy (NSS), which emphasize on creating a demand-driven training system responsive to requirement of the job market. The priority areas for skill development are well aligned with CPEC projects and indigenous clusters such as agricultural, industrial and mining as well as exportability of skilled workforce. The National Skills Strategy proposed a paradigm shift from time bound curricula-based education to competency-based training and from supply driven trainings to demand driven skills. NSS is well aligned with Prime Minister's strategy for "Skills for ALL". Its objectives are:

- ▶ Relevant skills for industrial and economic development
- ▶ Improvement of access, equity and employability.
- ▶ Assurance of quality through an integrated approach

Strengthened Industrial Linkages

One of the major reasons for non-performing TVET sector in Pakistan was the absence of strong industrial linkages. To overcome this deficiency special emphasis has been laid on giving pivotal role to industry and private sector in TVET sector development in the country. For this purpose: -

- ▶ Three Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) have been established in the construction, hospitality, renewable energy and textile sectors.
- ▶ The concept of Institute Management Committees (IMCs) has been introduced for the first time in Pakistan at the TVET institute level, which gives greater representation to private sector in the management and training delivery at the TVET institute level.
- ▶ Industry has been actively involved in all aspects of training such as curricula development, final assessments, on-job training and selection of institutes.
- ▶ The outdated Apprenticeship Bill, 1962 has been replaced with Apprenticeship Act, 2018. The new law has a broader scope and is in line with the latest best practices in the field of apprenticeship.

Job Placement Centres (JPCs)

A dedicated web portal (www.jobplacement.gov.pk) has been developed by NAVTTC to link skill workers with potential employers. Skill profiles of more than 570,000 Pakistani youth are available on this job portal and NAVTTC which is providing free of cost facility to both youth and Pakistani industry to bring them closer and realize the dual objective of employment for youth and quality skilled workforce for industry in order to enhance their productivity and competitiveness. More than one hundred Job Placement and Vocational Counseling Centers (JP&VCCs) have also been established across the country for the benefit of youth.

Overseas Employment

Pakistan is one of the largest labour exporting country in the region. Overseas migrant workers are the most valuable asset of Pakistan and they are playing key role in the socio-economic development of the country through their remittances. More than 11.43 million Pakistanis have proceeded abroad for employment to over 50 countries through official procedures. The migration of Pakistani workers is mostly concentrated to Gulf Cooperation Council countries (96 per cent) with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates hosting the majority.

Table 12.1: Pakistani Workers Registered for Overseas Employment

Countries	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Saudi Arabia.	462,598	143,363	100,910	332,713	136,339
U.A.E.	295,647	275,436	208,635	211,216	53,676
Oman.	45,085	42,362	27,202	28,391	10,336
Qatar.	9,706	11,592	20,993	19,327	7,421
Bahrain.	8,226	7,919	5,745	8,189	7,843
Malaysia.	10,625	7,174	9,881	11,323	2,296
Others	7,466	8,440	9,073	14,044	6,794
Total	839,353	496,286	382,439	625,203	224,705

Source: Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (Data of overseas employment is collected and recorded as per calendar year)

During 2020, Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment has registered 224,705 for overseas employment as compared to emigrants 625,203 in 2019 showing a decrease of 400,498 people as compared to the last year. It is evident from the table 12.1 that Saudi Arabia (KSA) is the main destination country for Pakistani emigrants where more than 60 percent of emigrants proceeded followed by UAE (24 percent) and Oman (4.6percent). Due to COVID-19 pandemic, overall a declining trend was observed in terms of emigrants registered in 2020 including GCC countries.

Table 12.2: Pakistani Workers Registered for Overseas Employment During the period 2016-2020 Province Wise

Year	Federal	Punjab	Sindh	Khyber Pakhtun -khwa	Baloc-histan	Azad Kashmir	N/Areas	Tribal Area	Total
2016	8,472	446,566	85,326	206,929	6,378	43,093	2,961	39,628	839,353
2017	4,635	261,849	53,590	107,366	4,528	33,318	3,417	27,583	496,286
2018	2,471	185,902	41,551	88,361	2,930	33,028	2,760	25,436	382,439
2019	4,295	312,439	57,171	186,176	5,103	30,151	2,554	27,314	625,203
2020	1,814	118,818	16,950	68,299	1,869	7,685	244	9,026	224,705

Source: Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment

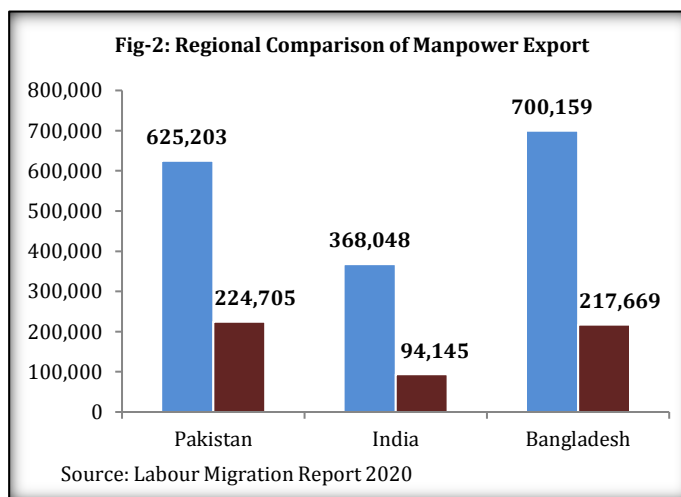
The comparison among provinces in Table 12.2 shows that during 2020, the highest number of workers went abroad were 118,818 from Punjab, followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 68,299.

Regional Comparison of Manpower Export

The COVID-19 pandemic hampered the manpower export not only from Pakistan but also from other regional countries. The graph given below illustrates that a total of 224,705 emigrants were registered for overseas employment from Pakistan in year 2020 as compared to 625,203 registered in 2019 which shows the decrease of 400,498 emigrants. Similarly, India and Bangladesh faced a decline of 273,093 and 482,490 respectively in terms of emigrants registered during 2020 as compared to 2019.

Ministry of Overseas Pakistani & Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) has taken the following steps to boost the manpower export and to ensure regular emigration: -

- ▶ Task Force has been established in order to enhance manpower export and facilitation of Overseas Pakistanis.
- ▶ To boost manpower export, Ministry of OP&HRD signed



bilateral Agreements/ MOUs with destination countries such as Turkey and Malaysia in 2020.

- ▶ Ministry of OP&HRDis actively working to explore job opportunities for Pakistani workers in non-traditional countries. In this regard, a comprehensive diversification strategy has been developed for top five priority countries i.e Saudi Arabia, UAE, Malaysia, Qatar & Oman along with other five potential/ non-traditional countries such as Kuwait, South Korea, Japan, Germany and China to promote the export of manpower to these countries.
- ▶ To provide One-window facilitation services to intending emigrants, BE&OE deployed a project titled, “Registration of Intending Emigrants via Biometric Verification System linked with NADRA” through which protector registration procedure completion has been made possible in minimum time and is being implemented in all Protector of Emigrants Offices.
- ▶ Campaign against illegal overseas job advertisements in close coordination with media, FIA, PTA and other relevant Departments. Moreover, in order to tighten enforcement and zero tolerance policy with respect to emigrants complaints, licenses of Overseas Employment Promoter are suspended, if found involved in breaking/violating the Emigration Ordinance/Rules 1979.
- ▶ BE&OE started registration of foreign employers on its website so that the intending emigrants may be hired either directly or through OEPs by registered Employers depending upon their requirements.
- ▶ Two new Protectorate Offices i.e., D.G Khan and Sialkot have been established. Two more Protectorate Offices i.e., Abbottabad and Sukkur, are expected to be established and functional in the second half of fiscal year 2020-21.
- ▶ BE&OE created linkages between Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC) and NAVTTC for matching of available jobs at BE&OE official website and in this regard data of the trained job seekers maintained by NAVTTC.
- ▶ OEC signed a cooperation Agreement with the Ministry of Health (MoH), Kuwait for supply of medical professionals. Resultantly, 404 medical professionals (doctors/nurses/technicians) have joined their duties in various hospitals of Kuwait. Further recruitment of medical professional for Kuwait is under process. The cooperation between Pakistan and Kuwait in the field of employment has revived after a long time.
- ▶ OEC convened a webinar on ‘potential of ICT Human Resource Export to Japan’ on 17thDecember 2020. All major stakeholders including Ministries of Overseas Pakistanis & HRD, Foreign Affairs & IT & Telecom, Embassy of Japan, Islamabad, Embassy of Pakistan, Tokyo, Ignite, Pakistan Software Export Board, NUML, NUTECH, Pakistan Japan Business Forum, Pakistan Software Houses Association, Pakistan Overseas Employment Promoters Association, Pakistan and Japan based IT companies and a large number of IT personnel attended the webinar. The webinar resulted in achieving following tangible outcomes.

- Development of awareness among stakeholders regarding opportunities, requirements, modalities and procedures involved in ICT human resource export to Japan.
- Facilitation in developing business to business contacts and matchmaking between Information Technology Industries and Overseas Employment Promoters.
- Consensus of OEC and NUML to start online Japanese language classes for ICT overseas jobseekers.
- ▶ OEC convenes online and in-person Korean language classes for the facilitation of those candidates who are interested to go to Korea for employment purpose. 375 students were enrolled for the said classes from July to December 2020.
- ▶ A portal was launched on 9th June 2020 for registration of returning workers. Since the pandemic hit, 93,078 (9th June 2020 to 5th April 2021) returned workers have been registered with the Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC) portal.
- ▶ To tackle the situation emerged due to COVID-19 pandemic, BE&OE developed a comprehensive reintegration strategy for returned migrant workers to analyze the impact of COVID-19 on labor migration and suggested a plan which includes registration of returnee workers profile by OEC, so that they can be contacted if any job arises matching their credentials.
- ▶ 14,176 jobseekers have registered themselves on OEC Online Job Portal for Overseas Employment and Reintegration from July to March 2021. The portal provides one-step solution to overseas jobseekers, Overseas Employment Promoters and foreign employers.
- ▶ To facilitate Pakistani emigrant going abroad, an initiative 'Worker's Foree Remittance Account' with a full feature bank account available in current and profit and loss sharing-saving accounts were inaugurated at all 09 Protectorate Offices across Pakistan.

Women Empowerment

Women are 48 percent of the population and the potential of Pakistan. However, the status of women in Pakistan is not homogenous because of the interconnection of gender with other forms of exclusion in society. There is considerable diversity in the status of women across classes, regions and the rural/urban divide due to uneven socio-economic development and the impact of tribal, feudal and capitalist social formations of women's lives. The Government has been fully cognizant of its constitutional responsibilities for protecting the rights of the women and realizing their full potential in all spheres of life, especially social, economic, political and personal.

In 2020-21 the government introduced several interventions to improve gender governance through financial empowerment of women and expansion of social protection net to encompass needs of women in the most vulnerable groups of population and curb gender-based violence.

Initiatives under Ehsaas Strategy:

- **Ehsaas Interest-Free Loan Initiative.** The Rs 42.65 billion programme involves 100 districts across the country and will impact 16.28 million people. 50 percent of the loan recipients are women. During April, 2021 Rs 1271.66 million interest-free loans have been given to 38,119 borrowers and out of these 20,370 borrowers are women.
- **Ehsaas Amdan (Income) Programme.** The key objective of this programme is to create opportunities for the most disadvantaged people through the transfer of small income-generating assets. The programme is launched in 375 rural union councils of 23 districts across Pakistan. The total budget of the programme is Rs. 15 billion and it will transfer 200,000 productive assets to deserving households (60 percent women) overall impacting 1.4 million individuals countrywide.
- **Ehsaas Kafaalat Program:** Kafaalat is a new unconditional cash-transfer programme, that provides monthly payments of Rs. 2,000 through saving bank accounts and improved access to mobile phones for seven million disadvantaged women across the country. More than 5 million women have been included in the programme.
- **Ehsaas Nashonuma Program:** The nutrition conditional cash transfer programme utilizing special nutrition food for mothers and children to address stunting, was launched. This programme is being rolled out after extensive spadework in 33 centers in 9 of the poorest districts and is being executed in collaboration with the World Food Programme. Eligible Pregnant and lactating Women (PLW) and children less than 2 years of age will receive specialized nutritional food and quarterly cash stipends of Rs. 1,500 for PLWs for boy child and Rs. 2,000 for the girl child. In addition, immunization, awareness sessions and antenatal and postnatal care are also part of the Ehsaas Nashonuma.
- **Waseela-e-Taleem:** This conditional cash transfer programme which has been ongoing for the last 8 years, currently in 50 districts has undergone a massive reform with technology. All institutional arrangements have been made to expand Waseela-e-Taleem Plus, nationwide to 148 districts and 4 million primary school going children will benefit from this. The stipend for girls has been increased to Rs. 2,000 per quarter whereas the stipend for boys has been increased to Rs. 1,500 per quarter.

Box-II: Empower Women-Initiatives

- a) SBP has developed a “Banking on Equality: Policy to Reduce the Gender Gap in Financial Inclusion”. It aims to introduce a gender lens within the financial sector through identified pillars and specific measures, to bring a shift towards women friendly business practices.
- b) To encourage women participation in the economy, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has enhanced the financing limit under its Refinance and Credit Guarantee Scheme for Women Entrepreneurs from Rs 1.5 million to Rs. 5 million. The objective of this enhancement in financing limit is to increase financial inclusion of women since more women entrepreneurs are likely to be attracted for setting

up of new businesses or for expanding the scope of their existing businesses by availing concessional financing.

c) Pakistan has significantly improved its score on entrepreneurship indicator of Woman, Business and the Law (WBL) index, from 50 to 75 points, as per WBL Report 2021

d) The following legislations have been promulgated during 2020-21 for empowerment of women:

(i) Zainab Alert, Response & Recovery Act, 2020

(ii) The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Domestic Violence Against Women (Prevention & Protection), Act 2021

(iii) ICT Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2020

Source: State Bank of Pakistan (ii) M/o Planning, Development & SPI

Women Income Generation and Self-reliance Programme (WINGS)

Punjab Social Protection Authority (PSPA) in collaboration with the Department for International Development (DFID), UK has designed Women's Income Growth and Self-reliance (WINGS) Programme. The WINGS will be funded through DFID grant of £36 million that includes £28.5 million grant for financial assistance component along with £7.5 million for technical assistance component. The total project cost is £35.7 million that includes £28.5 million of DFID grant and £7.2 million counterpart funding by Government of the Punjab. The Project envisages the productive inclusion and economic empowerment of women and will support transition of 63,000 extremely poor women from social protection to sustainable livelihoods, prosperity and self-reliance in the Punjab province. It will partner with the Government of Punjab to develop government-led delivery channels and policy reforms for enabling the women relying on social safety nets to engage in income-generating activities, accumulate productive assets, have support to access social and financial services and exit extreme poverty for good.

Punjab Human Capital Investment Project

Punjab Human Capital Investment Project is being launched by Punjab Social Protection Authority which will target the problem right from the early stages of life cycle. The World Bank will provide USD 200 million for this project. The main objective of Punjab Human Capital Investment Project (PHCIP) is to increase the access to quality health services, economic and social inclusion of the poor and vulnerable households in selected districts in Punjab. Under this project, three main activities will be performed which are as under:

Health Services Quality and Utilization: Conditional Cash Transfer Health & Nutrition is based on the first 1,000 days (i.e. the period from conception to two years of age) approach to address malnutrition. Under this component, poor pregnant and lactating women will be incentivized through cash transfers to increase utilization of Health Nutrition and Population (HNP) services (pre- and post- natal care, skilled birth, growth monitoring, immunization, HNP awareness and counseling).

Economic and Social Inclusion: Productive inclusion of adolescents and youth will be enhanced by providing education, skills, micro-financing and asset transfer.

Additionally, interventions for early childhood education will also be part of this component.

Social Protection Service Delivery Platform: Capacity of Punjab Social Protection Authority to deliver social protection services will be enhanced. PSPA's current structure and capacity needs considerable beefing-up to enable it to deliver effectively as premier provincial social protection authority. This component is aimed at addressing the current institutional, technology and resource gaps of PSPA and establishing a robust social protection delivery platform. The existing PSPA beneficiary database and program dashboards would be strengthened to keep track of major initiatives and beneficiaries' information in Punjab.

Zewar-e-Taleem Program

Punjab Social Protection Authority launched Zewar-e-Taleem Program which is the conditional cash transfer to the girl students enrolled in public sector schools in 16 districts with low literacy rate. Over 571,313 girls are receiving Rs.1,000/- per month on compliance to 80 percent attendance requirement in schools. The purpose of this initiative was to improve enrolment and retention in schools, besides addressing their nutritional requirements, essential for adolescent girls. Students enrolled in grade 10 are automatically excluded from the Program upon completion of the academic session. The students dropped out of schools are also excluded from the Programme.

Nayee Zindgi Program

Punjab Social Protection Authority under "Punjab Ehsaas Program" has launched "Nayee Zindagi Program" for Acid Attack Victims. The Program aims at rehabilitation of Acid Attack victims through reconstructive surgeries and psychological counselling for their socio-economic mainstreaming. These services will be provided by Specialized Healthcare & Medical Education Department. Empowering Acid Attacks Victims through an institutional arrangement in various fields can be a very significant step towards mainstreaming their socio-economic conditions. With the help of Rs. 200 million, the victims of the heinous crime of throwing acid will be financially assisted and fully rehabilitated at the government's expense, including the skin grafting treatment followed by skill-building and interest-free loans for livelihood support.

Sarparast Program for Poor Widows & Orphans:

Punjab Social Protection Authority initiated "Sarparast Program", a social assistance, financial support to the families of the poor and vulnerable widows for improving their wellbeing and social status. It also addresses the cross-cutting objective of Ehsaas Strategy that is lift lagging areas. Sarparast program will provide dignified social assistance specially designed for the poor widows of Punjab. With an initial outlay of Rs 2 billion, Sarparast Programme for assisting poor widows and orphans will be a key feature of Punjab's Ehsas Programme.

Punjab Day Care Fund Society

Punjab Day Care Fund Society (PDCF) was registered under the society Act for provision of grants to interested organization for establishment of Punjab Day Care Facility. Under the programme, 115 Day Care Centers have been finalized and efforts are underway to execute the facility further.

Helpline – 1099 for Legal Advice on Human Rights Violations

Ministry of Human Rights has established Helpline – 1099 for legal advice on human rights violation with special emphasis on the rights of women. The Helpline is working with the objective of addressing the issues of human rights violations through legal advice, grievance-redressal mechanism through referral services to the victims of human rights violations.

Helpline – 1043

The Punjab Women’s Toll-Free Helpline 1043 is available 24/7. Managed and supervised by Punjab Commission on the Status of Women, helpline team comprises all-women call agents, three legal advisors, supervisors and management staff to address inquiries and complaints on workplace harassment, gender discrimination, property disputes and inheritance rights, domestic violence, hostels, day-care centres and other facilities for working women, quota for women in public sector jobs, skill development opportunities and various other economic and social issues.

BOLO Helpline 0800-22227

BOLO Helpline 0800-22227 is established at Provincial level for the victims of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and persons with disabilities at Directorate of Social Welfare and Women Empowerment, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The pilot phase of Programme is accessible in Districts of Peshawar, Mardan, Swat, Nowshera, Swabi and Abbottabad with the objective to ensure convenience and accessibility of services to survivors of gender-based violence, extend program outreach to improve GBV response services and provides GBV survivors with essential support and develop a database of victims and allow department to work out future plans for GBV programming and track response mechanism.

COVID-19 Impact on Family Planning Services:

Global crisis of COVID-19 pandemic had profound impact on health, social systems and economies. During such emergencies human and financial resources are diverted from essential health programmes to respond to the disease outbreak, meaning that there can be potential rise in maternal and new-born mortality and morbidity, increased number of unintended pregnancies and gender-based violence. Recent evidence shows that service provision for skilled birth deliveries, Family Planning (FP) services and other reproductive health needs were disrupted leading to increased risks of maternal morbidity, deaths, poor neonatal outcomes, higher unmet need and discontinuation of

FP methods.²

PSDP Allocation (2020-21) on Population Welfare Programme

Federal government has allocated Rs.185.74 million for Population Welfare Programme of Special Areas (AJK & GB). Detail of PSDP allocation and cost of population welfare programmes for the year 2020-21 is as follows:

PSDP Projects 2020-21			(Rs in million)
Sr. No	Project	Allocation	Release Status (July-April FY2021)
1	Population Welfare Programme, AJK	20.00	16.00
2	Population Welfare Programme, GB	165.749	132.599

Source: Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives

Family Planning Initiatives

Country Engagement Working Group (CEWG)

Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination has constituted CEWG with its members from the concerned Federal & Provincial Government Departments, CSOs and Development Partners. The CEWG is mandated to review the progress of Federal and Provincial Departments and CSOs regarding FP2020 targets Pakistan committed at FP2020 London Summit, 2012. Recently, in an international event “FP2020 celebrating progress, transforming for future”, held on 26th January 2021, partners from around the world once again committed and pledged to move forward the FP agenda by 2030.

Revision and Updating of Curriculum for RTIs

The Regional Training Institutes (RTIs), all over Pakistan, are responsible for capacity building of the Health personnel for providing family planning/reproductive health services to the communities. The Training Curriculum used by the RTIs has been revised and updated with technical assistance from WHO.

Consultative Meeting on Population and Development

Four Consultative meetings on Population and Development have been organized by the Planning Commission with the provincial government under the chairmanship of Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, to address the high population growth challenge and to put the population development and family planning agenda in the country on fast track.

Population Situation Analysis (PSA) 2020

Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives conducted a comprehensive analysis of the situation in the population and development in collaboration with the United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA) Pakistan, in order to provide the basis for an integrated appraisal of the population dynamics and their linkages and impacts on

²Pakistan Situation Analysis 2020

poverty, inequality and development. The PSA, 2020 has assessed the current situation and proposed recommendations for strategic actions to address issues in the areas of population and development, reproductive health, youth, gender, in addition to women empowerment. The PSA has identified and proposed priority areas as well as formulation of relevant public policy for interventions to address population and development issues in the forthcoming development plans and strategies.

Summary of FP Initiatives undertaken by Provincial Population Welfare Departments (PWDs) during 2020-21

Punjab

- ▶ Establishment of Strategic Planning Unit
- ▶ Construction of Regional Training Institute, Faisalabad & Sahiwal
- ▶ Expansion of Family Welfare Centres and Introduction of Community Based Family Planning Workers (CBFPWs)
- ▶ E-Registration of Eligible Couples / Clients
- ▶ Franchising of Clinical Services – Phase-II
- ▶ Support innovative ideas of private sector through Punjab Population Innovation Fund

Sindh

- ▶ Functional Integration of Health & Population Welfare Departments
- ▶ Joint platform for all partners Department for Population & Health along with their allied programs i.e., People's Primary Health Initiatives (PPHI), LHW's and Maternal Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH), Planning and Development Board, Finance, Education, Women Development, Information, Youth Affairs, INGOs and Academia.
- ▶ Declaration of 300 Private Hospitals PWD supported facilities Reproductive Health Services (RHS-B) centres
- ▶ Sindh Reproductive HealthCare Rights Act, 2019 and Marital Counseling and Registration of Nikah Bill are at final stages
- ▶ Life Skill Based Education (LSBE) has been included in the curriculum of secondary and high school
- ▶ Joint Procurement of Contraceptives by PWD Sindh for all stakeholders

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

- ▶ Promulgation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Reproductive HealthCare Rights Act, 2020
- ▶ Included topic of "Population Dynamics of Pakistan" in various courses of 18 out of 30 universities.
- ▶ Expansion of Population Welfare Programme through establishment of 200 new Family Welfare Centres
- ▶ Pre-marital counselling has been piloted in two districts, Haripur and Kohat.

- ▶ Advocacy and Communication Strategy launched by the department.
- ▶ All service delivery outlets have been strengthened through providing clinical and furniture items.

Balochistan

- ▶ Functional integration between Health and Population departments.
- ▶ The first Provincial Taskforce meeting held on 13th December 2019 under the chair of Provincial Minister for Population Welfare Department.
- ▶ Letter of Understanding (LOU) signed with PPHI to involve their Basic Health Units in FP service delivery network
- ▶ Completed contraceptive forecasting at provincial level for meeting the need of Department of Health, Population Welfare and PPHI including private sector
- ▶ Initiated the process of registration of all such Private practitioners who are willing to offer FP services.
- ▶ The Early Child Marriage Restraint Act prepared by Social Welfare Department has been submitted in the Provincial Cabinet for approval.
- ▶ Larger focus on behavioural change communication campaigns
- ▶ Consultation is in progress for including Life Skills Based Education and Population Studies in Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools curriculum

Conclusion

Pakistan is the fifth most populous country with an estimated population of 215.25 million in 2020 out of which 61 percent population is in the age bracket of 15-64 years. The country has limited resources and its increasing population is putting more pressure on these resources. The government is trying to overcome the issue of high population growth and fertility rate through different programs like media campaign, establishment of Family Welfare Centers (FWCs), Reproductive Health Services Centers (RHSCs), Regional Training Institutes and Mobile Services Unit.

An educated and skilled youth is needed to reap the benefits of demographic dividend. If this demographic dividend is harnessed and skilled to meet domestic and international market requirements, the youth bulge would yield increased industrial productivity and higher foreign remittances. For this reason, the government has given priorities to the education and skills of the youth for their productive employment. For this purpose, the government has launched "Skills for All" and "Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme" for the youth. These programmes for skills training, employment, entrepreneurship and engagement will play an important role in the socio-economic development of the country.
