

Pakistan's untapped **غیر استعمال شدہ** potential

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THE **Al-Karaouine** University in Fez, Morocco, is the oldest existing, and continually operating, educational institution in the world, according to **Unesco**. It was founded by a Muslim woman, Fatima Al-Fihri, in 859 AD. That is over 900 years before the US even came into existence, **let alone** **کو چھوڑیں** American universities, and even **predates** **سے پہلے** Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Interestingly, Pakistani women also **value** **اہمیت دیتی ہیں** education. Research shows that when women are part of household decision-making, households tend to spend more on young girls' education than the average household.

There are countless studies conducted worldwide that point to a direct connection between women's education, women in the workforce and the growth and development of a country. **How does Pakistan fare** **پاکستان کا کیا حال ہے** ?

According to **Our World in Data**, women's economic participation in Pakistan is lower than other countries with similar levels of **GDP per capita** such as Bangladesh, and not very different from countries with much lower GDP per capita, such as Afghanistan.

Economic participation by women in Pakistan is currently a third that of the men. Male participation in the labour force is higher than that of women's all over the world, but the **extent** **حد** of the male-female gap in Pakistan is **extraordinarily** **غیر** large. Women's participation in the workforce in Pakistan has been consistently low, **hovering** **منڈلانا** below

25 per cent. This puts us **at odds** متصادم with many other countries in the world.

Why should women's participation in the workforce matter? We give three main reasons, each important on their own, and very difficult to ignore collectively.

One, the lack of female economic participation **implies** مطلب يا loss of a much-needed source of income and productivity in the country. One estimate suggests that closing the male-female gap in labour force participation could lead to a **one-off** 30pc **boost** اضافہ، فروغ in Pakistan's GDP.

Two, when both men and women earn, households are generally better **equipped** لیس، آراستہ، to handle economic shocks, such as the recent Covid-19 pandemic وبا and current global food and fuel shortages. With nearly half of the population estimated to be **vulnerable** خطرہ to falling back into poverty, enabling women's contribution to the household income should also be a **priority** ترجیح for Pakistan. This will be even more important as Pakistan faces future climate-related **disasters** آفات، given it is expected to be one of the top 10 countries most affected by **climate change** موسمیاتی تبدیلی.

Third, **beyond** سے بٹ کر economic benefits, female **employment** ملازمت has proven developmental **impacts** اثرات for the women and their **dependants** زیر کفالت، and **ultimately** بلاآخر for the country. Data shows that working women in Pakistan are more likely to **have a say** گھریلو استعمال in household **consumption** گھریلو استعمال decisions, such as how much money goes towards education,

as well as their own health decisions, including the use of **contraceptives** حمل روکنے سے متعلق . Given the current discussion on population control, this has important policy **implications** اثرات for Pakistan.

A **deeper dive** اترنا میں گہرائی into Pakistan's particular situation **reveals** ظاہر ہونا، سامنے آنا a **complex** پیچیدہ picture and an uncomfortable truth. In Pakistan, there is **considerable** معقول، کافی **variation** فرق in female participation in the workforce across **income quartiles**, ranging from 24pc for the lowest quartile to only 7pc for women from the highest income quartile.

These women from poor households work primarily to **augment** بڑھانا، اضافہ کرنا income. However, they engage in **informal** غیررسمی، often **low-pay** کم تنخواہ والے work, and may not be **compensated** معاوضہ دینا at the same rate as men. Our research suggests that multiple-earner households report a significantly higher monthly income: an average of Rs34,000 compared to Rs14,000 earned by single earner families. However, multiple-earner households where women also work (rather than only male family members) earn only Rs5,000 more than single-earner families.

On the other hand, in interviews with 2,500 women enrolled in undergraduate studies in public arts colleges of Lahore, more than four-fifths expressed a desire to work after graduation. However, even among this educated sub-sample, female **labour force** participation is very low.

If women have a desire to work, why aren't more working? Research in Pakistan suggests that major challenges to women's participation in the workforce include a lack of

access ناکافی، فقدان، inadequate to finance and childcare, skills, discrimination امتیازی سلوک in the labour market, and a lack of safe transport options. Together, these factors contribute to many highly trained women, such as even medical doctors, finding it difficult to balance demanding work commitments وعدے with housework and travelling after dark رات یا اندھیرے کے بعد.

However, in Pakistan, the uncomfortable truth is that social norms سب سے بڑی یا اہم اصول are the overarching رکاوٹ. Ultimately, husbands and fathers need to encourage their wives and daughters to work and value their contribution, and women need to use their education and contribute to both society and their households.

Surely the time has come to learn from Morocco, Turkey, Indonesia and Malaysia on how they have moved forward. The Quaid's wise words, delivered at Aligarh in 1944, sum it up best: "...no nation can rise to the height of glory, unless women are side by side with you".

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Frozen Afghan funds

Editorial

WITH Afghanistan facing a humanitarian catastrophe and economic **collapse** تباہی, the American decision to not release \$3.5bn of Afghan funds to the Taliban-controlled central bank can only be described as heartless. While it is unknown how the decision will **impact** متاثر کرنا the financial status of the **hard-line** سخت گیر group that rules Afghanistan, it will certainly **spell more doom** for ordinary Afghans. The total Afghan funds held by the US come to around \$7bn, and President Biden had earlier made the equally unjust decision of **allocating** مختص کرنا half of the funds to families of 9/11 victims, as if the Afghan people had facilitated those **horrendous** بولناک incidents. The US State Department **spokesman** ترجمان recently said that there were no plans to transfer the remaining \$3.5bn to the Afghan central bank because the US believed the funds could **end up in the hands** کے ہاتھ لگنا of terrorists. The decision has **apparently** بظاہر been influenced متاثر ہوا by the discovery and **subsequent** نتیجے میں killing in an American drone attack of **Al Qaeda** chief Ayman al-Zawahiri in Kabul last month.

While the US may have a point in preventing funds from reaching terrorist **outfits** تنظیمیں, the fact is that the money in question belongs to neither America nor the Taliban; these funds belong to the people of Afghanistan. And the humanitarian situation for the average Afghan right now is **dire** سنگین. According to the **UNHCR**, 25m Afghans have been pushed into poverty, half the population is **reliant** منحصر on aid

for survival, while a million children face “severe **malnutrition** غذائیت کی کمی”. And as a recent letter written to the US president by leading economists pointed out, Afghanistan’s economic collapse has been **precipitated** پیدا ہونا، جنم لینا by the fact that its central bank has no funds. “The reserves”, the financial experts write, are “**critical** اہم to the functioning of the Afghan economy”. To ensure the funds do not end up in the hands of terrorists, the US can involve Muslim states as guarantors with the Taliban so that the money is spent on **rehabilitating** بحال کرنا the Afghan economy. By no means should America block these **desperately** شدت سے needed funds.

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The University of **al-Qarawiyyin**, also written Al-Karaouine or Al Quaraouiyine, is a university located in Fez, Morocco. It was founded as a mosque by Fatima al-Fihri in 857–859 and subsequently became one of the leading spiritual and educational centers of the Islamic Golden Age.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**) is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN) aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, sciences and culture. It has 193 member states and 11 associate

members, as well as partners in the non-governmental, intergovernmental and private sector. Headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France, UNESCO has 53 regional field offices and 199 national commissions that facilitate its global mandate.

Headquarters: Paris, France

Founded: November 16, 1945

Our World in Data (OWID) is a scientific online publication that focuses on large global problems such as poverty, disease, hunger, climate change, war, existential risks, and inequality.

It is a project of the Global Change Data Lab, a registered charity in England and Wales, and was founded by Max Roser, a social historian and development economist. The research team is based at the University of Oxford.

GDP stands for "Gross Domestic Product" and represents the total monetary value of all final goods and services produced (and sold on the market) within a country during a period of time (typically 1 year). Purpose. GDP is the most commonly used measure of economic activity.

GDP per capita **في كس** measures the economic output of a nation per person. It seeks to determine the prosperity of a nation by economic growth per person in that nation. Per capita income measures the amount of money earned per person in a nation.

One-off is an idiom. It is one of the most commonly used

expressions in English writings. One-off stands for Occurring once; one-time

have a say

Have the right or power to influence or make a decision about something. For example, I want to have a say in this matter, or Citizens want to have a voice in their local government

income quartile

A method to measure the average (mean) household income of residents, ranking them from poorest to wealthiest, and then grouping them into 4 income quartiles (1 being poorest and 4 being wealthiest), each quartile containing approximately 25% of the population

labour force

noun

all the members of a particular organization or country who are able to work, viewed collectively

spell doom

to cause the end, death, or destruction of someone or something

The arrival of the home computer spelt doom for the typewriter.

Al-Qaeda, alternatively spelled al-Qaida and al-Qa'ida), officially known as Qaedat al-Jihad (lit. 'Base of Jihad'), is a multinational militant Sunni Islamic extremist network composed of Salafist jihadists. Its members are mostly composed of Arabs, but may also include other peoples. Al-Qaeda has mounted attacks on non-military and military targets in various countries, including the 1998 United States embassy bombings, the September 11 attacks, and the 2002 Bali bombings; it has been designated as a terrorist group by the United Nations Security Council, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union, India, and various other countries

UNHCR

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is a United Nations agency mandated to aid and protect refugees, forcibly displaced communities, and stateless people, and to assist in their voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement to a third country.

Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland

Founded: December 14, 1950