

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN PAKISTAN

ANNUAL REVIEW

2002-03



**SOCIAL POLICY AND
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
KARACHI**

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FOREWORD

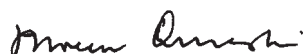
The world has entered the age of the knowledge-based economy. Technological changes and globalization of markets has ushered in an unprecedented process of transformation of the economies of the world from the traditional 'resource' to a 'knowledge' basis. Knowledge is now the engine of growth and it is the production of ideas rather than the production of goods that provides comparative advantage and the impetus for economic development. The most important components of a knowledge-based economy are human and institutional capital. A knowledge-based economy necessarily requires a higher average standard of education. However, such an economy does not merely need a skilled workforce. It necessitates a populace with a more multi-disciplinary and holistic body of institutionalized knowledge to be economically productive and to ensure culturally enriched life-styles.

The historic change that is under way presupposes certain sociopolitical conditions. Throughout history, the changes in production relations as a consequence of the transformation of world economies from one phase to another has also seen a corresponding adaptation and change in social and political institutions of governance at societal and state levels. Thus, while the pastoral/agricultural age saw the dominance of the tribal/feudal systems, the advent of the Industrial Revolution saw its replacement by the capitalist order. The place of education has changed accordingly. Education, which was more of a 'consumption good' in the feudal/tribal age became a 'production good' in the industrial age and is now the basis on which the knowledge-based economy can be built.

Pakistan appears to have failed to develop its human resources over the last half a century and presents a rather unfortunate picture with respect to the need for change to meet the requirements of time. However, the importance and urgency of a transformation of societal and state values and structures and the development of human resources cannot be ignored, given the challenges posed by the emerging knowledge-based economies in the world and in the region itself.

SPDC's Annual Review of Social Development for 2002-03 focuses on certain fundamental questions of educational development in Pakistan. Chapter 1 documents the state of education in its various dimensions. Chapter 2 highlights the relationships between education and human resources, on one hand, and growth and development, on the other. Chapter 3 outlines the structural and policy factors that have tended to inhibit the advancement of education. Chapter 4 examines the problems in primary education beyond the much-discussed issue of enrolment rates. Chapter 5 analyzes the state of science education and the problems therein. And chapter 6 underlines the effect that multiple streams of education have had on national cohesion and identity.

The theme of the Annual Review for 2002-03 is State of Education. It is an attempt to present an independent and objective assessment of the problems of education in Pakistan and is intended to open a debate on this critical prerequisite of social and economic development. It is hoped that the publication will be of interest and value to policy makers parliamentarians, academics, development practitioners, civil society activists, and people at large in the country and abroad, who share a concern for human and social development in the country.



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Established in 1995, the Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC) is a private sector research organization that serves as a focal point for policy-relevant research on social sector development. Using a multidisciplinary approach, the Centre assists both public and private sector institutions and non-governmental organizations to plan, design, finance, execute and manage social sector programmes in a cost-effective manner. The results of its research are made available to policy makers, interested groups and the general public to promote informed discussion and action on vital social sector issues.

SPDC is independent and non-partisan and cooperates with a wide range of organizations working in related areas, within Pakistan and internationally. It determines its own pace-setting research agenda within the parameters of its mandate and objectives, and maintains autonomy, flexibility and balance between responsive and proactive social sector research. Key activities include research and policy analysis; social sector government database support; pilot project monitoring and evaluation; training of government, private sector and non-governmental organizations; and information dissemination through publications, conferences, seminars and workshops.

SPDC receives core funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The Canadian Advisory Agency (CAA) provides advisory services and support to strengthen SPDC and help it achieve its mandate. In addition, SPDC undertakes a significant component of self-financing.

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