

## Pakistan Vision 2025 and Social Health Determinants

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age that impact their health outcomes. These determinants are shaped by various social, economic, political, environmental, and cultural factors. Pakistan Vision 2025 aims for a society where every Pakistani can have a quality life. The UNDP Human Development Report 2013 ranked Pakistan 146th out of 187 countries on the HDI ranking, which measures health, education and standard of living.<sup>1</sup> Pakistan is currently facing serious challenges on various fronts. Social indicators reflect serious deficiencies in education, health and population, gender equity and social services. Every year, Pakistan adds the equivalent of New Zealand to its population. Health is pivotal to economic and social development.<sup>2</sup> With compromised health, it is hard to think of accelerated growth. Pakistan's health indicators severely fall short of the required levels. Per capita expenditure on health is very low in Pakistan and, in the last eleven years, has not increased significantly.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, strong management systems and poor governance could have spent more on this spending. Moreover, Pakistan exhibits the highest population growth rate among all SAARC countries, adding pressure to an already strained healthcare system. Pakistan Vision 2025 places people at its core, aiming to enhance their well-being and access to health services.<sup>1</sup>

Research has consistently shown that Social Determinants of Health play a significant role in shaping health inequalities and influencing health outcomes across diverse populations.<sup>3</sup> The current curricula of Pakistani medical and nursing institutions are mainly focused on learning and research to build clinical knowledge and skills without any emphasis on health disparities and inequities and their role in addressing these issues.

The integration of important SDOH themes within medical curricula is not just a necessity, but a potential game-changer. By contextualizing scientific concepts within the broader social and environmental context, students can gain a more comprehensive understanding of health determinants. Recognizing health disparities and acquiring the expertise and methods to tackle them effectively is not just crucial, but could lead to significant improvements in healthcare outcomes.<sup>4</sup> This is a crucial step towards achieving the Vision Pakistan 2025. A thorough consideration of this by policymakers is not just required, but could pave the way for a healthier and more prosperous Pakistan.

### REFERENCES

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