

Commentary on Pakistan's domain ranks in the 2014 Global AgeWatch Index

By Waqas Qureshi, Advocacy & Communications Coordinator, HelpAge International Pakistan (waqas.qureshi@helpagesa.org) phone: +92 333 5533231



Global AgeWatch Index rank

91

out of 96

Pakistan ranks low on the Index, at 91 overall. It ranks moderately in the capability domain (44), with near regional average values for employment (56.2%) and educational attainment (26.7%).

It ranks low in the health domain (78), with below regional average values for life expectancy and above average for psychological wellbeing. It ranks lower in the enabling environment domain (81), but this is a significant increase from its 2013 ranking (91). This was due to a rise in values for social connectedness (60%), perception of safety (65%) and civic freedom (46%). However, values for these indicators remain below regional averages.

It ranks second lowest overall (95) in the income security domain. This is a significant decrease from its 2013 ranking (84) due to revised pension data. It now ranks lowest in its region for pension income coverage (2.3%), though it also has the lowest old age poverty rate (1.8%) and a low GDP.

Age Demands Action campaigners in Pakistan are calling for the inclusion of older people in social protection policies and programmes.



Income security

95

6.0/100

Pakistan is ranked 95 in the income security domain. Currently, just over 2% of older people over the age of 65 receive a contributory pension and these are limited to older people who worked in government organisations. There is currently no social pension system in place for the many older people who have worked in formal and informal sectors.

A contributory pensions system called Employee Old Age Benefit Institute has been established to cater for private sector workers, but its coverage is still very limited. A social protection policy is also being developed. Efforts are being made to include social pensions for older people in this policy. Older people engaged in the Age Demands Action campaign are raising the voice for inclusion of older people in social protection systems.



Health status

78

31.8/100

Pakistan is ranked 78 in the health domain. In a study from 2013 by HelpAge International Pakistan it was found that for instance in the province of Punjab, 20.5% of people coming to utilize public health care services at primary level and 25% at secondary level facilities were older people.

For Age Demands Action older campaigners have been advocating for age-friendly health facilities. There are ongoing discussions in government departments to increase health budgets and introduce health insurance.



Capability

44

33.9/100

Pakistan is ranked 44 in this domain, which is its highest rank of the four domains. The retirement age in Pakistan is currently 60. However, the majority of older people aged over 60 still work if their health allows them to.

Some older people tend to keep busy with social activities after retirement. For instance, some get involved in conflict resolution and decision making.



Enabling environment

81

56.0/100

Pakistan ranked 81 in this domain. Older people in Pakistan face difficulties as transport services are often not age-friendly. Social connections are very strong and older people are involved in their communities. However, in urban environments, some older people experience isolation.

Currently there is no law or legislation for the protection of the rights of older people in Pakistan. HelpAge International along with partners, older people's associations and other stakeholders have been advocating for this to change. In August 2014, in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa-province of Pakistan, a law called "the Senior Citizen Bill" was passed by the provincial government. This law, when implemented, will protect older people's rights. Other provinces and the federal territory are still to introduce a law for older people rights.

The Global AgeWatch Index ranks countries by how well their older populations are faring.

For general enquiries please contact HelpAge International's Media Manager, Sarah Gillam (sarah.gillam@helpage.org).

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