

# AGEING POPULATION IN INDONESIA AND PAKISTAN: LESSONS TO BE LEARNED AND CHALLENGES TO BE FACED

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## **Abstract**

*This paper is aimed to highlight the emerging problem of ageing in Pakistan and Indonesia, its future implications and the measures these countries are taking to address the issues and challenges of elderly citizens. The paper discusses in detail the different measures Pakistani and Indonesia governments are taking to facilitate the elderly citizen in terms of their health, day care, finances, and social engagements. Presently, Indonesia and Pakistan are having larger strata of young population. But if this youth is not properly utilized through appropriate policies and planning for socio-economic development, soon in coming decades this large strata of young population will start growing older. This will result in a burden of more elderly people on society and economy at the same time with less number of people in working age group to boost the economy. The paper highlights the need for preparedness for these countries to address the issue of ageing that is expected to become more critical in coming decades.*

**Keyword:** *Pakistan, Indonesia, Ageing, Elderly, Challenges of ageing.*

## **Introduction**

Ageing is growingly becoming a global issue. The problem is affecting the world in terms of its social, economic and political aspects. The world is said to almost have 809,743,000 elderly people of 60+ age group in the year 2012 (United Nations 2012). It means 11% of the total world population in 2012 is above 60 years of age. The future projections also show that this number will increase to almost

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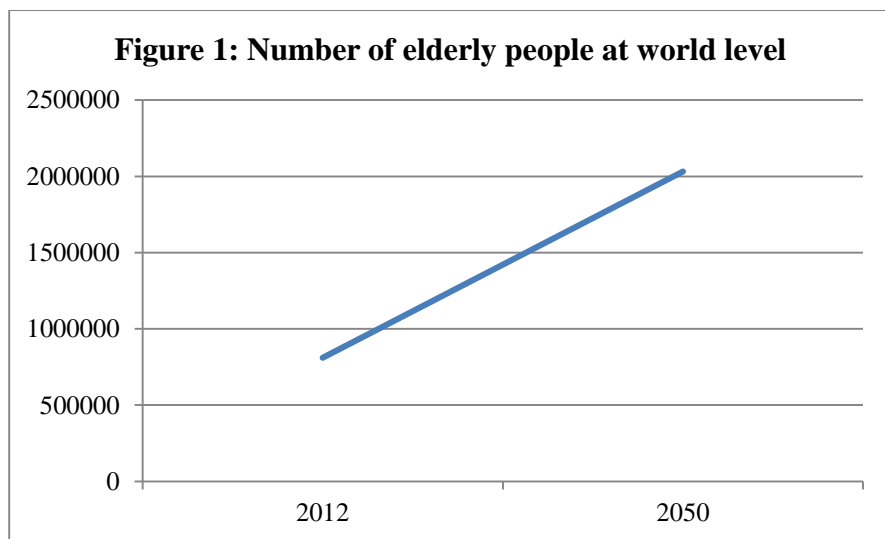
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2,031,337,000 elderly people of the same age group all around the world in 2050 (United Nations 2012). It means the 2050 is supposed to witness 22% elderly people of 60 + age group out of the total world population.

**Table 1: Number and proportion of elderly (60+ years of age) population in world**

	2012	2050
<b>Number of elderly people (in thousands)</b>	809743	2031337
<b>Proportion of total population (in %)</b>	11	22

Sources: (United Nations 2012)



Ageing has usually been called the “challenge of development”. It is linked with the socio-economic development of the societies. Therefore, there are variations in the number and the proportion of elderly population in countries with different levels of socio-economic development all around the globe. On the one hand, the countries and regions characterized with more socio-economic

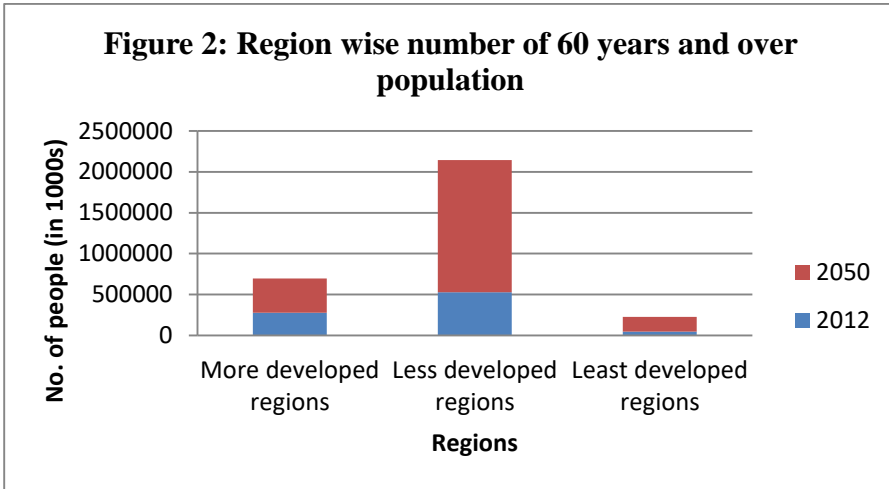
development including Europe, North America, Japan, Australia and New Zealand had average 22% of their population in 60+ years of age group (i.e. almost 279,287,000 elderly people) in the year 2012. On the other hand, the countries or regions characterized with less socio-economic development, mostly in Africa and Asia excluding Japan, Latin America, and the Caribbean, etc.) hosting 530,455,000 elderly people have average 9% of the population in the 60+ age group. While the least developed regions (including 33 countries of Africa, 9 of Asia, 1 of Latin America and the Caribbean and 5 of Oceania) hosting almost 46,389,000 elderly people have 5% of the population in 60+ age group in the year 2012.

**Table 2: Number and proportion of elderly (60+ years of age) population in world**

	More developed regions		Less developed regions		Least developed regions	
	2012	2050	2012	2050	2012	2050
<b>Number of elderly people (in thousands)</b>	279287	418326	530455	1613011	46389	181568
<b>Proportion of total population (in %)</b>	22	32	9	20	5	11

Sources: (United Nations 2012)

The rapid increase in the number of elderly people within these regions is expected in future. The number of elderly people in more developed regions is expected to increase up to almost 418,326,000 people with 32% of the total population in the year 2050. The less developed regions show a more rapid increase in the number of elderly people as compared to other two regions. The number of elderly people in this region is expected to reach almost 1,613,011,000 people with 20% of the total population by the year 2050. Similarly, the proportion of elderly citizens in least developed regions will reach to (181,568,000 people) 11% of the total population of these regions by the year 2050.



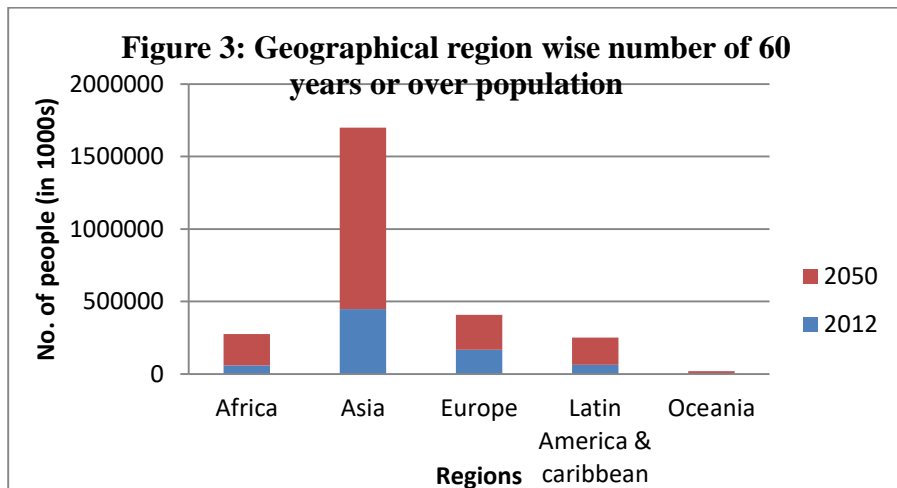
Thus, less developed regions (that also include Asia except Japan) are the regions hosting the largest number of elderly people today and will also witness the highest increase in the number of elderly people in next few decades.

The geographical regions also differ in their standing to face the problem of aging population. The number of elderly population and their proportion in total population is given in Table 3. The data presented clearly shows that Asia, with almost 446,974,000 people of 60+ age group, is the geographical region that is hosting an incomparable number of elderly population as compare to any other region in the world. Asia is also expecting a highest increase in the number of elderly people in next few decades as compare to any other region. It is estimated that the number of elderly people in Asia will come to 1,252,588,000 by the year 2050 (United Nations 2012).

**Table 3: Number and proportion of elderly (60+ years of age) population in different geographical regions**

	Africa		Asia		Europe		Latin America & Caribbean		Oceania	
	2012	2050	2012	2050	2012	2050	2012	2050	2012	2050
<b>Number of elderly people (in 1000s)</b>	59782	215249	446974	125258	166397	241828	63064	187869	5928	13006
<b>Proportion of total population (%)</b>	6	10	11	24	22	34	10	25	16	24

(United Nations 2012)



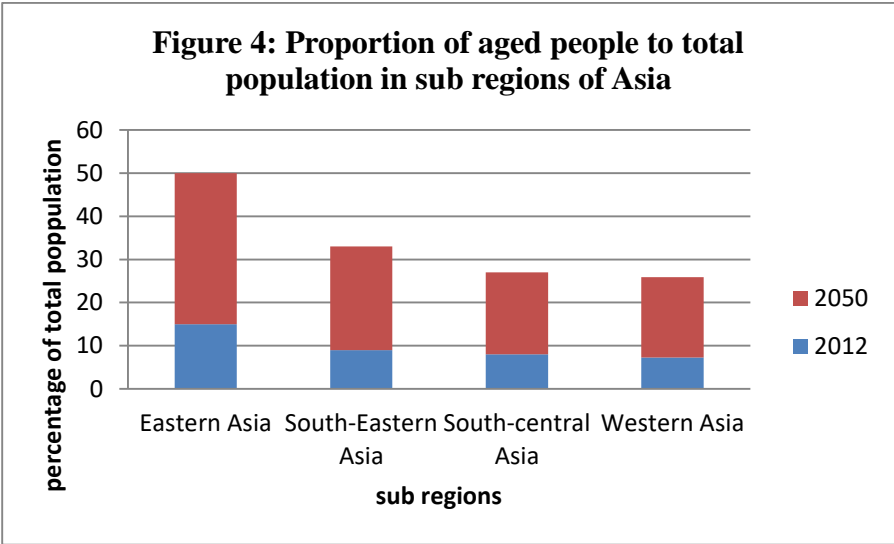
Asia is hosting 60% of the elderly population in the world. It is also expected that by 2050 Asia will be hosting 65% of the elderly population of the world. Different sub regions within Asia are more or less facing the similar problems of aging. East Asian countries are being critically affected, especially Japan. Western Asia is still the least effected region within Asia in terms of aging. While the South

East Asian and South Central Asian countries are facing an increasing number of elderly, but still with a large group of relatively young population. The three nations of Asia having the largest population in region, namely China, India, and Indonesia, also possess the largest population of elderly in the world. It is further expected that this proportion of elderly in these three nations will increase from 37 percent in 2006 to 42 percent by the year 2050 (Hofmeister 2010). The regions are going to face the problem of aging in coming decades, thus still have time to prepare themselves to deal with the issue. The following section will deal in detail with two countries from these two regions: Pakistan and Indonesia.

**Table 4: Number and proportion of elderly (60+ years of age) population within Asia**

	Eastern Asia		South Eastern Asia		South Central Asia		Western Asia	
	2012	2050	2012	2050	2012	2050	2012	2050
<b>Number of elderly people (in 1000s)</b>	237507	521949	53152	183259	138728	473859	17587	73522
<b>Proportion of total population (%)</b>	15	35	9	24	8	19	7	19

(United Nations 2012)



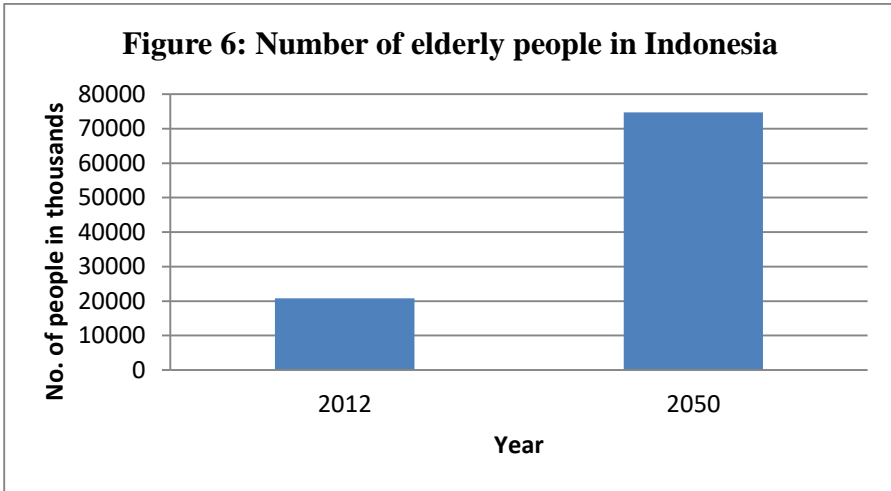
**Ageing in Indonesia**

Indonesia is a society with large strata of young population. But simultaneously the country is also experiencing increasing number of elderly citizens. The number of people aged above 60 year in Indonesia was 20,834,000 in the year 2012. The number is expected to increase to 74,703,000 by 2050. The proportion of elderly people to total population will also increase from 9% in 2012 to 25% in 2050.

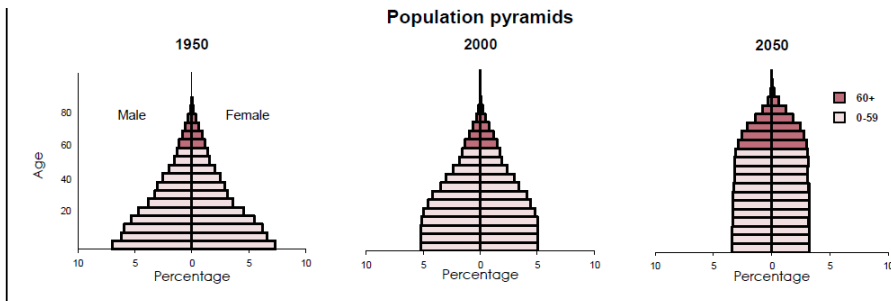
**Table 6: Number and proportion of elderly (60+ years of age) population in Indonesia**

	2012	2050
Number of elderly people (in thousands)	20834	74703
Proportion of total population (in %)	9	25

Sources: United Nations 2012



This demographic change is visible in the population pyramid of Indonesia. It also shows that the problem of increasing number of elderly population is going to be increased in coming decades.



Population Division, DESA, United Nations

It is projected that the working age population of Indonesia may start declining after 2040 (Hofmeister 2010). Some of the scholars are of the view that Indonesia is discovering that the demographic changes are going to effect it in a smaller period of time before it become rich (Hofmeister 2010). Therefore, the Indonesian Government find itself compelled to start taking a variety of measures to address issues and problems related to elderly population in 1990s (Mujahid, 2006). Some of these measures are as following:



- Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare Decree
- Declaring the Indonesian Elderly Day on 29 May
- formulating favorable laws for elderly welfare such as Law 13 in 1998 on Older Persons Welfare
- Preparing National Plan of Action for elderly citizens welfare (2003-2008)
- Presidential Decree regarding formation of the National and Regional Commissions on Ageing
- Forming working groups to monitor implementation of Government Regulations for elderly welfare (e.g. for No. 43/2004 on Older Person Welfare Improvement Efforts).
- PUSAKA Community-based home care (it is based on both government & non-government resources)
- Introducing geriatric services in hospitals and Health Services (PUSKESMAS).
- The National Social Security System Law of 2004

The Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare Decree in 1993 assigned the responsibility of promoting and improving the status of older persons in the country to the Minister for Social Affairs (Mujahid, 2006). The government celebrated the Indonesian Elderly Day on 29 May, 1996 and declared the same day as Indonesian Elderly Day hereafter. The government also formulated a variety of legislation in this regard. For example, the formulation and promulgation of Law 13 in 1998 on elderly welfare (Mujahid, 2006). This was considered as the first policy instrument for elderly welfare in the country (Mujahid, 2006). But the law was still normative and not completely implemented. Its several provisions need modification and improvement. The law was also not implement in its true spirit because of the regional autonomy policy creating discrepancies in national and regional laws (Abikusno 2007). Therefore, Elderly people could not get access to several services

outlined in the law (Abikusno 2007).

Indonesian government developed a national action plan for elderly welfare. For this purpose, the government received a grant in the year 1998. The research centers for population and development located in five different regions of the country dominated by five major ethnic groups were assigned to undertake research studies in this regard. The purpose of these research studies was to create knowledge that may provide sufficient basis for development of National Action Plan. As a result of all these activities, a National Action Plan for Older Person's Welfare Guidelines 2003 were developed for next five years (2003-2008) (Abikusno 2007).

The objectives of the National Plan of Action 2003 included the promotion of political commitment on elderly persons' issues among different civil society actors like policy makers, NGO activists, community leaders and religious leaders. It embarked to arrange for older persons' formal and informal support. It strived to take measures for elderly persons' formal support through improved health and social services. The plan also intended to strengthen institutional capacities for proper and timely management of issues related to elderly persons. The NPA further elaborated and establish the productive and positive role of elderly persons in social issues relevant to the family, community, nation and state.

A Presidential Decree was passed by the Indonesian government in the year 2004. The decree formed national and regional level commissions on ageing. The national commission was assigned with the task of assisting the president in respect of implementation of national policies and programs. The commission was also responsible for providing advice and recommendations for improving elderly persons' social welfare (Mujahid 2006). In turn, the National Commission formed various working groups to monitor the implementation of the National Plan of Action Guidelines (Abikusno 2007).

In the meantime, several other laws also complemented or supported the elderly welfare agenda in Indonesia (Abikusno 2007). The Law No. 39/1999 on Human Rights has aligned policies and programmes related to elderly persons in accordance with the Principles of Older Persons that is issued by the United Nations in the year 1998. The main weakness of the law was that rather than recognizing the elderly with their special needs as a separate target group, it was grouping elderly persons with women, children, and other as vulnerable groups.

The government regulation No. 43/2004 on older person welfare was also addressing a variety of aspects of elderly people's social life. It dealt with the religious, mental, spiritual, health, work opportunity, education, and training services. It also aimed to facilitate elderly persons' access to general facilities and appropriate infrastructure. It facilitates and enhances elderly persons' access to public places like public buildings, roads, parks, and public transport facilities. It was also addressing the access to and provision of legal services to older persons. It was intended to provide social protection and social assistance to old people.

The National Social Security System Law of 2004 was related to different social security schemes implemented for Indonesian citizens. These social security schemes also included old age persons' pension, savings, health and work place injuries' insurances, and death related monetary benefits to benefit and enhance elderly persons' related agenda. The law states to expand the social security coverage in next decade to include persons from the informal sector or unemployed.

One of the social organizations named PUSAKA ("Pusat Santunan Keluarga" means Centre of Family Charity) provides elderly support through community-based home care. It focused on poor and neglected elderly persons; especially older females (Mujahid 2006). It provides day care support for the old aged persons such as provision

of meals and health care. Specific health related programs for the elderly were also launched by introducing integrated geriatric services within hospitals and Community Health Services (PUSKESMAS) (Mujahid 2006).

The following three state departments are found involved in ageing related initiatives:

- Department of Social Welfare,
  - Institutional homes or non-institutional homes
  - Formation of centres of activities
- Department of Health
  - by providing facilities like Centre for Community Health that promote specific health service to address the special health related needs of the elderly.
- the State Ministry of Population/National Family Planning Coordination Board (BKKBN).
  - Through program *Bina Keluarga Lansia-BKL* (Directorate of the Aged Family).

Three main government departments involved in planning and implementing the programs for elderly are the Department of Social Welfare, the Department of Health and the Ministry of Population and Family Planning Coordination Board. The Department of Social Welfare offers care services for elderly in institutional homes or non-institutional homes. For this purpose the department established a number of institutional homes in different parts of the country. By the year 2000, the number of nursing homes for the elderly citizens in Indonesia reached to 141 homes, offering services to almost 8,308 old aged persons. These arrangements were insufficient to address a larger elderly population in the country. Besides that the non-institutional homes also provide support for day care to those elderly persons who live with family. It delivers meals for the frail elderly and provides funds for the elderly persons eligible to undertake some

work or economic activity.

The Department of Health offers programs for providing the elderly specific health care facilities at Centers for Community Health. These facilities include different activities designed to ensure good health conditions of the elderly citizens; such as by supervision of elderly groups in any community. State Ministry of Population and National Family Planning Board launched a program called *Bina Keluarga Lansia-BKL* (Directorate of the Aged Family) aiming to address families living with elderly parents or relatives through raising awareness and assistance for carrying out economic activities to be able to bear the financial burden of their elderly.

All the programs for elderly persons initiated by Indonesian government were coordinated by the State Ministry for People's Welfare and Alleviation of Poverty but still they seem to be lacking in coordination. Consequently, the programs remained limited in scope and impact with questions on their sustainability (Do-Le & Raharjo 2002).

### **Ageing in Pakistan**

Pakistan is still not critically affected with the problem of ageing. Still the country's population has its largest strata of young people. But the same largest strata of young population will slowly and gradually grow old along with the deliberately controlled and declining fertility rates. This will lead to the less number of new comers in population (children) while the largest strata of the youth will start growing older in coming decades. Then the problem may become a critical one for Pakistan. To prevent this critically effecting situation, Pakistan should learn lessons from the experiences of other countries and take measures to meet the needs of the increasing elderly population in future.

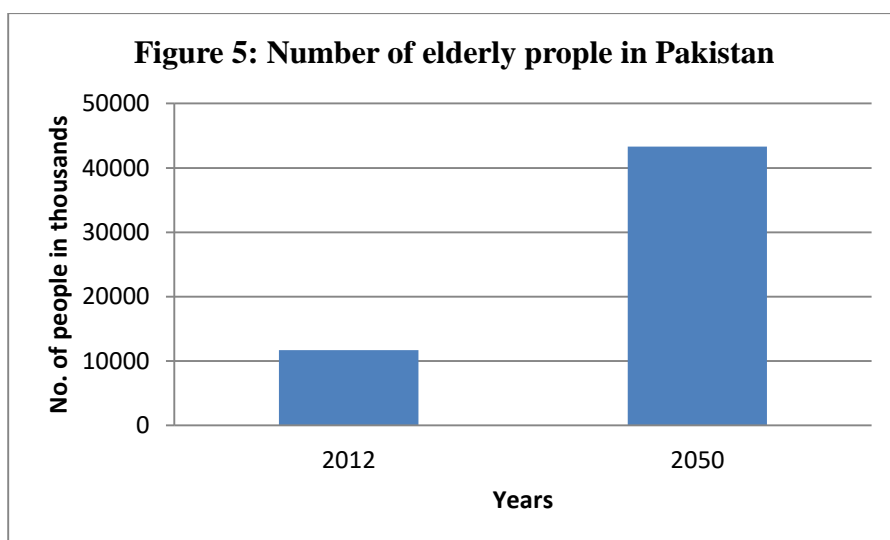
Pakistan had 11,698,000 elderly people as comprising 7% of its total population in the year 2012. The number is expected to increase to

43,305,000 elderly people comprising 16% of the total population by the year 2050.

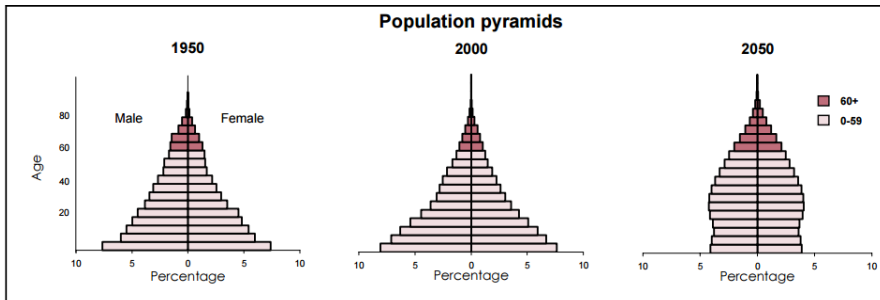
**Table 5: Number and proportion of elderly (60+ years of age) population in Pakistan**

	2012	2050
<b>Number of elderly people (in thousands)</b>	11698	43305
<b>Proportion of total population (in %)</b>	7	16

Sources: United Nations 2012



The changing number of people in different age groups has implication on the whole social structure. It is visible from the population pyramid of Pakistan, that today's youth of Pakistan will start getting older in coming decades and the problem of ageing, if not attended properly, may get critical in the country. It may affect the decline in working age population and the overall population of Pakistan.



Population Division, DESA, United Nations

The government of Pakistan has taken few measures to address the issues of elderly people in Pakistan. Some of them are as following:

1. Employees Old Age Benefit Scheme
2. Employee's Social Security scheme
3. Pension for Government Employees
4. National Policy for Elderly 1999
5. National Committee on Ageing
6. Proposed Senior Citizens Welfare Act, 2007
7. National Senior Citizens Task Force
8. Old People's Home
9. Senior Citizens Talent Pool
10. Special Handling Counters at Public Places (SHARP 2008).

Employees Old Age Benefit Act was promulgated in 1976 and an Old Age Benefit Scheme for formal sector employee and self-employed individuals was introduced (SHARP 2008; Vertejee & Karamali, 2014). Similarly, Employee's Social Security Act was introduced in 1965 and Employees Social Security Institutions are working in all provinces to provide old age and disability pensions to workers of formal sector. The Pension for Government Employees and Government Employees Benevolent Fund provides financial benefit for government employees after their retirement. All these three measure were mostly addressing the need of elderly who were either employed in formal sector or in public sector. These schemes are not extended to the larger population that is employed in informal sector

of Pakistan. Therefore, they are unable to address the issues of elderly in a comprehensive manner.

The National Policy for Elderly was announced in 1999 to promote social and economic security of older people (SHARP 2008). This policy included comprehensive measures for health care of elderly (Sabzwari & Azhar 2010). Unfortunately, its implementation is still awaited and its possible impact is still unknown. A Senior Citizens Welfare Act was also proposed in 2007 (SHARP 2008). A National Committee on Ageing was established under the Federal Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education. The committee is not functional proactively to provide a forum for older people, government departments and NGOs working for older people (SHARP 2008).

The government schemes for senior citizens can facilitate provision of shelter, income support programme and medical services (Vertejee & Karamali, 2014). National Senior Citizens Task Force was to carry out analysis of Ageing, identification of needs and draft a comprehensive National Policy, Old People's Home established by provincial governments, Senior Citizens Talent Pool, & Special Handling Counters at Public places (SHARP 2008) are the measures still not proved very effective in solving the problems of elderly people. Additionally, community support groups including the non-profit organizations working for welfare of elderly population are also taking measures (Vertejee & Karamali, 2014). A few nursing homes exist in large cities and are primarily run by private or religious organizations (Sabzwari & Azhar 2010).

There seems a wide gap between government and non-government organizations regarding the working for elderly. Besides that there is very little information about situation of older people in Pakistan (SHARP 2008). Therefore, the government and private sector both needs to reconsider the needs of elderly presently and think seriously for the future situations expected to be happening in terms of increased number of elderly in Pakistani society.



### **Opportunity for cooperation between Pakistan and Indonesia**

Indonesia and Pakistan, both the countries are facing the increasing number of elderly people in their population. The problem of ageing society is not apparent for a layman's eye due to existing larger number of young and working age population in both countries. But sooner, if not addressed, the problem may become critical, if the countries' youth may grow old without achieving a sufficient level of social and economic development. Therefore, both the countries should view today as a window of opportunity to take proper measures in this regard. The countries should learn lessons from the nations already affected with the problem.

Pakistan may learn from some of the government and non-government organization led programs in Indonesia for elderly welfare. It is important to address the larger population in the informal sector or unemployed in Pakistan. The engagement of private sector and community based organizations is also seen important to achieve better results in this regard.

Both the countries may also exchange knowledge, skills and, strategies to deal with the problem of ageing. The successful programs may be adopted and replicated from each other's experiences. Even a scholarly dialogue between the countries may also be started to develop a broader strategy as preparation for future in terms of ageing issue.

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