



**Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)**

*A coalition of civil society organizations, networks, peace movements, human rights activists, peasants, Labourers, workers, teachers and students alliances etc.*

**GCAP coalition in Pakistan focuses upon issues related with Health & Education sectors to address poverty & inequality**

Website: [www.gcappakistan.net](http://www.gcappakistan.net)

Email: [zia@gcappakistan.net](mailto:zia@gcappakistan.net)

Tel: +92-61-4784606

+92-61-4577409

Fax: +92-61-4584909

Ref: ACDS/GCAPEDC011/2010

Date: 17-09-2010

Mr. Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani  
Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan,  
Prime Minister Secretariat,  
Constitution Avenue,  
Islamabad – 44000,  
Pakistan

**Honorable Prime Minister,**

In September, heads of states will gather in New York to provide the world with a progress report on the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the global effort to halve poverty by 2015. During the election campaign 2008, your party, Mr. Prime Minister promised to provide quality education, health care and safe drinking water, to give high priority to women empowerment and ensure their equal rights, and to protect environment. All these major election manifesto points of your party are similar to those have asked in the MDGs and Pakistan has made a commitment to achieve them by 2015.

2. Independent reports suggest that in Pakistan nearly 40% citizens live in extreme poverty, without enough to eat or access to basic services - education, healthcare and safe water. The global financial, food and climate crises and violent conflict has also increased disparities and particularly impacted children, women and marginalised communities. While Pakistan is the frontline state in the war against terror, the recent devastating flood has increased the misery of poor citizens immensely.
3. We are concerned because a report released by Planning Commission of Pakistan in July 2010 reveals that Pakistan is not progressing consistently in achieving the targets of MDG commitment.
4. We believe that the principle responsibility to ensure the delivery of basic public services lies with the state. However, citizens must be able to actively engage in participatory and transparent monitoring of budget allocation and expenditure.
5. We also believe that leveraging innovation should be a focus of Pakistan's MDG strategy, which is why we are calling for an innovative approach to Pakistan's allocate sufficient funding through a multilateral initiative is one of the most effective ways to ensure the success of all eight goals and improve the lives of generations to come.
6. In this spirit, we offer several recommendations to be considered by the Pakistan government during the New York MDG Summit:
  - In the light of the emerging scenario of food crisis, the states must legislate a strong regulation by enshrining the right to food in law.
  - Support a 'smallholder rescue package' for increased agricultural productivity and sustainable agricultural practices by facilitating the access of smallholder farmers, especially women farmers, to natural resources such as land and water, markets, credits

**National Secretariat at:**

**Awaz Foundation Pakistan: Centre for Development Services**  
H. No. 2440/N/8A, D-Block, Shamasabad Colony, Multan – Pakistan  
P.O Box No. 141, 60000- Multan GPO-Pakistan  
[info@awazcds.org.pk](mailto:info@awazcds.org.pk) ; [zia@awazcds.org.pk](mailto:zia@awazcds.org.pk)  
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- and inputs. Develop and implement explicit gender strategies to support women smallholders as they are particularly vulnerable in terms of food security.
- Food and nutrition security is a critical issue in Pakistan. The State has the responsibility to ensure this security and must implement cash and food packages, public works employment schemes, free school meals, unemployment benefits and other social grants to improve gender equality, minimum wage laws and labor market regulations to enhance and protect the earning power of the most vulnerable communities.
  - Urgently address the lack of data on hunger and malnutrition in order to properly monitor progress and shortfalls on the Goal 1 and to design the most effective strategies for eradicating hunger, taking into account the need for gender disaggregated data.
  - Adequate and additional resources as well as technology transfers to support adaptation and address mitigation to reduce vulnerability from climate crisis must be prioritized.
  - Research shows that investing in education has a lasting impact on health, gender equity, hunger, nutrition, security and climate change. The largest contributing factor to reducing child malnutrition has been the education of women—even more so than direct food aid. High rates of primary education are correlated with lower rates of food insecurity. If every child received a quality, basic education, more than 700,000 cases of HIV could be prevented each year. Therefore the government must increase the budget allocation for education to 4% of the GDP.
  - MDGs must be legislated and implemented as human rights. Under the framework, the state is held accountable for ensuring the economic, cultural and social rights of its citizens, including the right to food, decent work and quality education and health services, by integrating into national planning, budget provisions and above all localization of MDGs.
  - The state must also create a conducive environment for citizens to actively claim their rights, ensure inclusive, accountable and transparent governance processes, including a right to information, citizen monitoring, independent commissions and legally-binding accountability mechanisms as we develop concrete strategies to address corruption and achieve the MDGs.
  - Ensure broad-based civil society participation at all levels of the MDG review and implementation process to ensure that MDG-based legal and policy frameworks are translated into effective implementation on the ground.
  - Gender equality is integral to each MDG and in collaboration with civil society, governments must conduct gender audits for each MDG. In collaboration with civil society, governments must conduct social exclusion audits for each MDG, measuring the MDG progress for groups facing discrimination and disadvantage on grounds such as caste, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion, living with HIV/AIDS and sexual orientation.
  - We note however that a number of regional countries have drafted and approved laws empowering women and in line with MDG Goal 3, such as progressive legislation on violence against women (VAW), domestic violence, harassment, and gender equality. However proper interpretation and implementation of the legal framework is required, as is a rights-based approach to family planning that affirms sexual and reproductive rights. We are deeply concerned that through the 18<sup>th</sup> amendments the reserved seats for women in the parliaments have been abolished. The government therefore must repeal this amendment for greater social inclusion.
  - The need to ensure that access to public services is particularly important to strengthen health infrastructure. But the government must urgently address inequality and discrimination by implementing targeted programs for marginalised communities, vulnerable populations and women, including high-impact evidence-based approaches to reduce child and maternal mortality, which remain a major challenge of Pakistan.

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- The Government must allocate sufficient resources to enhance institutional capacity of service providers to ensure that they have the equipment, infrastructure, supplies and necessary skills for effective implementation and delivery of basic services.

Mr. Prime Minister, through this petition, we therefore urge you to craft a clear plan for achieving MDGs and encourage you to announce that plan at the MDG Summit in September. The ability to achieve the MDGs and sustain success however depends, in large part, on whether or not we invest in basic services to achieve the MDGs for our future generation and prosperity of the country.

Sincerely,

(Mohammad Zia-ur-Rehman)

National Coordinator

**GCAP-Pakistan**

**Contact Mobile: 0300-6301215**

On behalf of **435 coalition member organizations and civil society networks** of GCAP-Pakistan from across the country including: AwazCDS-Pakistan, Shirkat Gah, CCSD, PILER, SEHER, PADO, SAP-Pakistan, Packard Foundation, Development Advocates and Lobbyists, PARC-Network, NCE, World Population Foundation, Aurat Foundation, Taraqee Foundation, WESS, BDCC, SCC, Amnesty International, Anjuman Mazareen Punjab, etc.

CC: **Advisor to PM, Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali** (as suggested in the meeting held on September 14, 2010)

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