



What Percentage of GDP Does Pakistan Allocate to Social Assistance Programs?

What percentage of GDP does Pakistan allocate to social assistance programs?

- 2%
- 1.5%
- Less than 1%
- 5%
- Show Answer...

Correct Answer: Less than 1%

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- A. 2%
- B. 1.5%
- C. Less than 1%
- D. 5%

Explanation:

Pakistan allocates less than 1% of its GDP to social assistance programs. This low allocation reflects the challenges the country faces in funding essential services for its population, particularly for vulnerable groups who rely on these programs for support. Given the country's economic constraints and growing demands for social protection, there is ongoing debate about increasing this allocation to better address poverty and inequality.

IMPORTANT Facts and Figures Given in the [article](#):

- High inflation in Pakistan is eroding the purchasing power of the poorest.
- The World Bank estimates poverty in Pakistan will remain around 40%, with 10 million people at risk of falling below the poverty line.
- Pakistan allocates less than **1% of its GDP** to social assistance programs.



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- The Doing Good Index (DGI) 2024 report classifies Pakistan as “doing okay,” a decline from “doing better” in 2020.
- The registration process for SDOs in Pakistan takes an average of 360 days, compared to the Asian average of 123 days.
- The perceived transparency in the government procurement process for SDOs has dropped from 48% in 2020 to 10% in 2024.
- The percentage of SDOs finding it easy to win government contracts fell from 30% to 6% between 2020 and 2024.

Poverty and Social Assistance in Pakistan

Introduction to Social Assistance in Pakistan

Social assistance programs are vital for providing financial support to the most vulnerable populations in any country. In Pakistan, the allocation for these programs is critically low, amounting to less than 1% of the nation’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This limited allocation has significant implications for the country’s ability to reduce poverty and support those in need.

Current Allocation and Its Impact

Pakistan’s social assistance programs, including the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and various other subsidies, are funded through a meager portion of the national budget. With less than 1% of GDP directed towards these initiatives, many argue that the allocation is insufficient to address the growing needs of the population. This low percentage also highlights the broader fiscal challenges that Pakistan faces, including high levels of debt, defense spending, and the need to invest in infrastructure and education.

Comparative Perspective

When compared to other developing countries, Pakistan’s allocation for social assistance is relatively low. For instance, countries in similar economic conditions often allocate between 1.5% to 3% of their GDP to social protection programs. The limited allocation in Pakistan raises concerns about the effectiveness of poverty alleviation efforts and the ability to protect the most vulnerable segments of society.

The Need for Increased Social Spending

There is a growing consensus among economists and policymakers that Pakistan needs to increase its spending on social assistance programs. Investing more in these programs can have a multiplier effect on the economy by reducing poverty, improving health and education outcomes, and fostering social stability. Additionally, a more robust social safety net can help mitigate the impact of economic shocks, such as natural disasters or global financial crises.

Conclusion

Pakistan's allocation of less than 1% of its GDP to social assistance programs is a critical issue that requires attention. While the country faces significant economic constraints, increasing spending on social protection is essential for reducing poverty and promoting inclusive growth. As the debate continues, it remains to be seen whether the government will take steps to prioritize social assistance in its fiscal policies.

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