

THE STARRING ROLE OF SDG 10: “REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES”. A CASE STUDY FROM PAKISTAN

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Abstract:

In developing countries, many organizations have adopted the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. This is the case of Pakistan, where Bisconni Company Pakistan was the first leading organization that focused on Sustainable Development Goal 10 “Reduce inequality within and among countries”. In 2019, Bisconni Company Pakistan decided to join hands with Bioniks to create a truly remarkable campaign titled “Complete Others”, to help children with disabilities through bionic arms. Our purpose is to analyze this campaign under the modality of a case study.

Keywords: *SDG 10 (“Reduce inequality within and among countries”); children with disabilities; Bisconni Company Pakistan; Bioniks in Pakistan.*

EL PAPEL PROTAGONISTA DEL ODS 10: “REDUCIR LA DESIGUALDAD EN Y ENTRE LOS PAÍSES”. UN ESTUDIO DEL CASO DESDE PAKISTÁN

Resumen:

En los países en desarrollo, muchas organizaciones han adoptado la "Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible". Tal es el caso de Pakistán, donde la Compañía Bisconni Pakistán fue la primera organización líder que se enfocó en el Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible número 10 "Reducir la desigualdad en y entre los países". En el 2019, la Compañía Bisconni Pakistán decidió unir fuerzas con Bioniks para crear una campaña realmente impresionante llamada "Complete Others" para ayudar a los niños con discapacidad al darles brazos biónicos. Nuestro propósito es analizar dicha campaña bajo la modalidad de caso de estudio.

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Palabras clave: ODS 10 ("*Reducir la desigualdad en y entre los países*"); *niños con discapacidad; Bisconni Company Pakistán; Bioniks en Pakistán.*

O PAPEL PRINCIPAL DO ODS 10: “REDUZIR A DESIGUALDADE DENTRO E ENTRE PAÍSES”.
UM ESTUDO DE CASO DESDE PAQUISTÃO

Resumo:

Nos países em desenvolvimento, muitas organizações adoptaram a "Agenda 2030 para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável". É o caso do Paquistão, onde a Bisconni Company Pakistan foi a primeira organização líder a concentrar-se no Objectivo 10 de Desenvolvimento Sustentável "Reduzir a desigualdade dentro e entre países". Em 2019, a Bisconni Company Pakistan decidiu unir-se à Bioniks para criar uma campanha verdadeiramente notável intitulada "Complete Others" para ajudar as crianças com deficiências através de armas biónicas. O nosso objectivo é analisar esta campanha sob a forma de um estudo de caso.

Palavras-chave: SDG 10 ("*Reduzir a desigualdade dentro e entre países*"); *crianças com deficiência; Bisconni Company Paquistão; Bioniks no Paquistão.*

1. Introduction

Sustainable development is defined as “*a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*” (United Nations General Assembly, 1987, p. 43). In 2015, the United Nations Member States established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are renowned as the “Global Goals”. The main objectives of the SDGs are to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure all humans enjoy peace and prosperity by the end of 2030 (UN, 2022).

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the heart of the 2030 Agenda, a universal call to action by all developed and developing countries for a global partnership. These goals are identified as (UN, 2022): (1) no poverty, (2) zero hunger, (3) good health and well-being, (4) quality education, (5) gender equality, (6) clean water and sanitation, (7) affordable and clean energy, (8) decent work and economic growth, (9) industry, innovation and infrastructure, (10) reduced inequalities, (11) sustainable cities and communities, (12) responsible consumption and production, (13) climate action, (14) life below water, (15) life on land, (16) peace, justice, and strong institutions, and (17) partnerships for the goals.

This paper specifically focuses on SDG 10 “Reduce inequality within and among countries”, which is a call to reduce all kinds of inequalities (e.g., based on gender, age, income, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, etc.). It analyzes the case of a Pakistani company, Bisconni Biscuit Pakistan, which, in 2019, took the initiative to celebrate the children’s day by getting a “*bionic arm*” to those children without arms (because they were born without them, or they lost them later on – Bisconni, 2023). This campaign was titled “*Complete Others*” and its main aim was to contribute to improving the quality of life of these children and to facilitate their integration into school life and society in general, thus helping them to have a better future.

2. The role of CSR. The case of Pakistan.

The European Commission defined Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as “*a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis*” (European Commission, 2004). According to Carroll (1983), four dimensions constitute CSR: economic, legal, ethical, voluntary (or philanthropic) dimensions. Subsequently, Carroll (1991) revised the concept of CSR and introduced the “Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility”, describing four main responsibilities of the company: economic responsibility (“be profitable”); legal responsibility (“obey the laws and regulations”); ethical responsibility (“do what is just and fair”); philanthropic responsibility (“be a corporate citizen”). Moreover, Elkington and Rowlands (1999) introduced the concept of “Triple Bottom Line”, which focuses CSR on three issues: social responsibility (“people”), environmental responsibility (“planet”), and economic responsibility (“profit”).

In the 21st century, CSR reports began to appear on corporate websites to reach different audiences (stakeholders). Freeman and Velamuri (2008) expressed that corporations have a responsibility towards suppliers, consumers, employees, shareholders and local communities, so they indeed proposed to replace the term “corporate social responsibility” with “company stakeholder responsibility”. Today, CSR has become a key issue for all types of companies and in all countries, both developed and developing ones.

In the particular case of Pakistan, as it is a mainly Muslim country, CSR has been implemented with an Islamic perspective and is slowly making progress within national and private sector organizations (Khan & Nomani, 2002). Currently, most organizations in this country are involved in CSR activities, mainly related to philanthropy and charitable giving (Pr-Carrón, Lund-Thomsen, Chan, Muro, & Bhushan, 2006). In deed, a high number of CSR activities in Pakistani companies have a predominant philanthropic approach. In the modern world, philanthropy typically encompasses improving the quality of life of the general public.

Pakistan has adopted the SDGs as its “National Development Agenda”. Thus, a National SDGs Framework was introduced in March 2018. Looking at the CSR activities developed by Pakistani companies, it was

found that the for-profit organizations and non-profit organizations were always engaged in philanthropic activities related to the SDGs.

3. Case Context

3.1. Development Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

The United Nations (UN) explains: “*The international community has made significant strides towards lifting people out of poverty. The most vulnerable nations – the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries, and the small island developing states – continue to make inroads into poverty reduction. However, inequality persists, and large disparities remain in access to health and education services and other assets*” (SDGs UN, 2022). Consequently, the United Nations have determined, for SDG 10, several targets (10) which specify the different goals (Table 1), and indicators (11) which measure and track the progress on these targets.

Table 1: 10 targets of the Sustainable Development Goal 10

Goal	Descriptions
Goal 10.1	By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 percent of the population at a rate higher than the national average.
Goal 10.2	By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
Goal 10.3	Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies, and action in this regard.
Goal 10.4	Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.
Goal 10.5	Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations.
Goal 10.6	Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions, in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions.
Goal 10.7	Facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.
Goal 10.a	Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries; in particular, least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements.
Goal 10.b	Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest; in particular, least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States, and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes.
Goal 10.c	By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent.

Source: UN (2022)

3.2. Children with disabilities

According to the definition of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), “*disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others*” (CRPD, 2006). And according to the definition of the ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act (2020), “*disability means a long term physical or mental condition that limits a person’s movements, senses or activities and shall include physical, mental, intellectual and developmental disorders or sensory impairments...*”.

Globally, at least 240 million children with disabilities are at risk (UN, 2022), as shown in Table 2. Children with disabilities were born with a genetic condition that affects their physical, mental, or social development (UNICEF, 2022), or got a disability later in life (due to illness, accident, war, etc.). In addition, children with disabilities are at much greater risk of violence, neglect, abuse, and exploitation (UN, 2022).

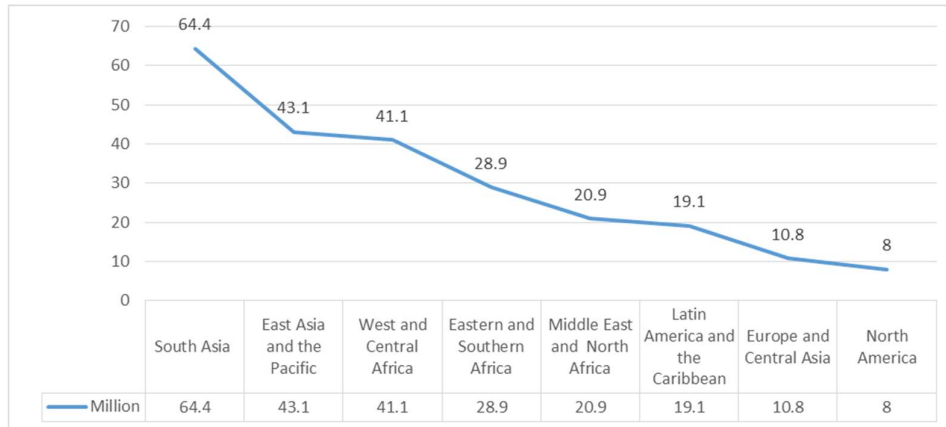
Table 2: Global status of children with disabilities

- Evidence from developing countries shows that a percent of the population is still up to three times more likely to die before their fifth birthday than children in the richest quintiles.
- Social protection has been significantly extended globally, yet persons with disabilities are up to five times more likely than average to incur catastrophic health expenditures.
- Despite overall declines in maternal mortality in most developing countries, women in rural areas are still up to three times more likely to die while giving birth than women living in urban centers.
- Up to 30 percent of income inequality is due to inequality within households, including between women and men. Women are also more likely than men to live below 50 percent of the median income.
- Of the one billion population of persons with disabilities, 80 percent live in developing countries.
- One in ten children is a child with a disability.
- Only 28 percent of persons with significant disabilities have access to disability benefits globally, and only 1 percent in low-income countries.

Source: Adapted from UN (2022)

Each region of the world faces different challenges against children disabilities from ages 0 to 17 years, as shown in Figure 1. This figure shows that the South Asia region has the highest percentage compared to other regions. Pakistan, as part of the South Asia region, faces the problem of children with disabilities.

Figure 1: Statistics of Children with Disability Region wise



Source: Adapted from UNICEF (2022)

Children with disabilities face many well-being problems among different cultures, as shown in Table 3. The Child Rights Convention calls for action to be embedded in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and to mandate the set of Sustainable Development Goals (UNICEF, 2022).

Table 3: Children with disabilities

- 34 percent more likely to be stunted
- 25 percent more likely to be wasted
- 53 percent more likely to have symptoms of acute respiratory infection
- 25 percent less likely to receive early stimulation and responsive care
- 25 percent less likely to attend early childhood education
- 16 percent less likely to read or be read to at home
- 42 percent less likely to have foundational reading and numeracy skills
- 49 percent more likely to have never attended school

- 47 percent more likely to be out of primary school
- 33 percent more likely to be out of lower-secondary school
- 27 percent more likely to be out of upper-secondary school
- 32 percent more likely to experience severe corporal punishment
- 41 percent more likely to feel discriminated against
- 51 percent more likely to feel unhappy
- 20 percent less likely to have expectations of a better life

Source: Adapted from UNICEF (2022)

According to the Population and Housing Census (2017), 0.48 percent of Pakistan's population has a disability (in 1998, it was 2.38 percent), while the World Bank Report on Disability indicates that it is 3.56 percent. In absolute terms, it implies that 4 to 8 million people are disabled in this country, of whom 45% are children (Mohtasib, 2022).

According to a report of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2022), children with disabilities in rural areas account for a higher proportion compared to urban areas, as shown in Table 4. Also, compared to the other Pakistani provinces, Sindh and Punjab have a higher disabled population.

Table 4: Disabled population by nature of disability in Pakistan

Administrative Unit	Total Disabled Population	(In percent)						
		Blind	Deaf/Mute	Crippled	Insane	Mentally Retarded	Having Multiple Disability	Others
Pakistan	3,286,630	8.06	7.43	18.93	6.39	7.60	8.23	43.37
Rural	2,173,999	7.92	7.53	20.52	5.94	7.32	8.23	42.55
Urban	1,112,631	8.32	7.24	15.81	7.28	8.15	8.22	44.97
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	375,752	7.24	7.69	31.73	5.90	7.43	8.11	31.90
Rural	327,638	7.46	7.52	32.25	5.81	7.26	8.22	31.48
Urban	48,114	5.71	8.84	28.21	6.55	8.63	7.31	34.75
Punjab	1,826,623	8.48	8.17	20.83	6.75	7.87	8.07	39.84
Rural	1,338,410	8.58	8.16	20.84	6.29	7.63	8.18	40.32
Urban	488,213	8.22	8.20	20.79	7.99	8.51	7.77	38.52
Sindh	929,400	7.48	6.18	10.56	6.13	7.45	8.92	53.29
Rural	385,984	6.24	6.02	11.25	5.34	6.81	9.06	55.28
Urban	543,416	8.36	6.29	10.07	6.69	7.91	8.82	51.86
Balochistan	146,421	8.42	5.24	14.81	4.60	5.61	6.35	54.96
Rural	117,971	7.11	5.20	14.31	4.25	5.53	6.24	57.36
Urban	28,450	13.87	5.42	16.86	6.03	5.97	6.83	45.02
Islamabad	8,434	9.22	12.09	29.89	12.46	8.05	4.55	23.73
Rural	3,996	9.78	12.16	29.65	6.03	8.63	4.02	29.73
Urban	4,438	8.72	12.03	30.1	18.25	7.53	5.05	18.32

Source: Adapted from Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2022)

4. Case Development

4.1. Children's Day

World Children's Day was established in 1954 as Universal Children's Day and is celebrated every year on November 20 to promote international togetherness and awareness over children worldwide, and to improve children's welfare (November 20th, 1959, was the day when the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child). In 1989, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Everyone in society (parents, educators, health personnel, authorities, business people, media professionals, etc.) has an important role to play in defending, promoting and celebrating children's rights and, consequently, building a better world for children (UN, 2022).

In Pakistan, the Ministry of Human Rights, in collaboration with UNICEF, is pushing the so-called "Children's Agenda" through a review of child rights legislation at both provincial and federal levels, among other initiatives (Daily Time, 2019).

4.2. Biscoconi Company Pakistan

Biscoconi company started its journey in 2002 under the aegis of Ismail Industries Limited⁴ (IIL). It entered the Pakistani biscuit market with chocolate biscuits and cocomo. Nowadays, this firm produces biscuits that meet international standards of food safety and quality.

After a few years, Biscoconi company became the iconic brand in Pakistan. Furthermore, the company has diversified its product line and increased its portfolio with Cocomo, Chocolate Chip Cookies, Choccolato, Novita, Rite, Ingredient Cookies, Flo, Chai Wala Biskut, Crux, and Rollies (Biscoconi, 2022). These products are exported to over 40 countries around the world, including those in Africa, Australia, Europe, the Far East, the Middle East, and the US (Aurora, 2020).

The firm stands for providing “*the perfect snack choice, whether sweet or savory, which can be enjoyed at any time of the day by consumers*” (Biscoconi, 2022). Innovation and making a positive impact on people's lives, offering health and enjoying the taste, all at a price that is affordable for everyone (regardless of age or social class), are key to Biscoconi Company Pakistan (Biscoconi, 2022). Thus, its vision is “*we strive to be the most recognized and loved confectionary company through our brand's innovation*” (Biscoconi, 2022).

4.3. Bioniks in Pakistan

All over the world, Bioniks has been the first leading organization to work on “*Giving the world a helping hand*”. It is “*a social enterprise striving to facilitate humanity in every field of life, a symbol of hope for individuals with disabilities – giving them a helping hand in the form of prosthetics*” (Bioniks, 2022). Thus, this organization has provided the most advanced Artificial Limbs or Prosthetic limbs in Pakistan.

Bioniks is a company that not only seeks economic benefits. It also wants to be an active member of society (Bioniks, 2022). Its main purpose is to improve the current system of healthcare centers by providing innovative solutions in form of the most advanced prosthetic limbs (artificial limbs). Bioniks provides services in two major areas: highly advanced prosthesis and models for surgical planning.

Bioniks also contributes to the sustainable development goals through SDG 3 “Good health and wellbeing”, SDG 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”, SDG 10 “Reduced inequalities”, SDG 12 “Responsible consumption and production”, SDG 13 “Climate action” and SDG 17 “Partnerships for the goals”. Recently, Bioniks broke a world record by providing a bionic arm to a 4-year-old child (previously, the record was held by a UK-based company, which had provided a bionic arm to an 8-year-old child, with funding of \$8.5 million) - Bioniks (2022).

4.4. “Complete Others” Campaign

According to Wafaqi Mohtasib Pakistan, between 4 to 8 million people in Pakistan have disabilities, from which 45% are children (Aurora, 2020). That is why, in 2019, Biscoconi, in collaboration with Bioniks, decided to launch a CSR campaign named “Complete Others”, as a part of the World's Children's Day celebration. Biscoconi started an initiative to donate prosthesis to kids with disabilities of the country. Exclusive bionic arms were designed for these kids, bringing a new ray of sunshine into their lives. Bionic arms work by picking up signals from a user's muscles, while bionic hands are controlled by tensing the

⁴ Ismail Industries Ltd (IIL) was incorporated in 1989 as a Public Limited Company and largest confectionery company in Pakistan. The company manufactured high quality sugar confectionery products under the famous brand name of CandyLand. In CandyLand, the categories covered Candies, Jellies, Bubble Gums, Toffees, Chew Toffees, Lollipops, Chocolates and Marshmallows.

same muscles, which are used to open and close a biological hand (The News, 2019). As a result, the “Complete Others” campaign donated prosthetic arms to 10 children (Aurora, 2020).

A video of this campaign was aired on television with the heart-touching song “hum ab kar sakte hain” (its meaning in English is: “now we can”). These words gave hope to children with disabilities, to unite and come together as a society.

Under the “Complete Others” campaign, the company also evolved the “Child Education Program” that had been sponsored by the “Ismail Academy School” and “Khadija Girls College” in an underprivileged area of Korangi. In cooperation with “Al-Mustafa Welfare Society”, on Children’s Day, Bisconi collaborated with Bionik to donate bionic arms to those schools (Ismail Industries Limited, 2020).

In addition, Bisconi launched another nationwide campaign (a cause-related marketing campaign) with Viscous⁵: for the sale of every Rs. 10 pack of Cocomo, Chocolatto, and Chocolate Chip cookies, Rs. 1 was donated to the creation of prosthetic arms for children in need (either because they were born without arms or had later lost them). The aim of this campaign was to enable these children to live a life as normal as possible. The campaign was also on social media, inviting prominent bloggers, influencers and publishers, as well as the general public to show their support for the cause by pledging to “Complete Others”.

Mr. Sabir Godil (GM Marketing of Bisconi), said: *“I take pride in announcing that team Bisconi has initiated a life-changing project to bring smiles on many faces. This children’s day, we’ve pledged to help kids achieve their dreams by giving them a present of bionic arms. We at Bisconi are inspired by the sheer determination these children show in their daily lives and are thrilled to be a part of their special world”* (NUT, 2019).

This campaign was also ran in different social media (e.g. YouTube⁶, Facebook⁷, and Twitter⁸) and people all over the world have joined hands and started an online movement to support the campaign by pledging. In 2020, Bisconi won the award for the best CSR campaign from the “Pakistan Digital Award 2020”⁹.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Bisconi took the Sustainable Development Goal 10 “Reduce inequality within and among countries” initiative and established a strong footprint in the Pakistani market. Thus, Bisconi initiative to help these children both emotionally and physically, by providing them the means to live a normal life, has put smiles on the faces of Pakistan’s children, empowering them to be their best selves.

But this campaign has been only a small contribution to society. Pakistan is a developing country, where people cannot afford bionic arms for their children because of their limited resource access. Therefore building more campaigns is really positive to solve these persistent economic issues.

However, the campaign has some limitations, such as being advertised in limited educational institutes at Pakistan. The issue of children disability has heterogenously impacted over different educational institutes in Pakistan. The government should also take initiative to provide bionic arms for disabled children in special education institutes.

⁵ Viscous.co in Pakistan *“is revolutionizing the field of manufacturing through 3D printing and 3D design. This printing company works in reverse engineering and robotics (manufacturing prosthetic arms and legs)”* – Viscou.co (2022).

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRXrRfQJ7eA>

⁷ <https://m.facebook.com/BisconiPk>

⁸ <https://twitter.com/techlistpk/status/1197161302604550144>

⁹ The Pakistan Digital Awards are an independent and free-of-influence platform that recognizes the outstanding innovation and creativity of the best digital professionals and companies.

Because nowadays societies should not accept “bullying” with their disabled children, the government and companies should take initiatives to promote the fulfillment of rights for children with disabilities, avoiding isolation and helping them to take part in their communities.

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