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Women in Pakistan live a life that is much different from ours, in the United States. In some ways, their lives seem much richer and fuller. They have time to spend with their families, and to enjoy the splendors of sharing menial duties on a regular basis. Some women prepare meals with their daughters and sisters. They spend time living, together. Most women do not rush around, nor do they have financial obligations, or the responsibility of an entire household, as most women in the United States do.

On the other hand, the sadness that they must feel, as they remain subservient to men seems almost unbearable. Many women must witness attacks of violence on a regular basis. For example, they may have to witness as their husband beats their child (ren). These women cannot speak up to their husband. If they do, they also take the risk of being abused. The husband has the right to marry up to four times (Under Islamic Law), depending on his financial capacity. If he should bring a new wife to live in the same home with the previous one, they are expected to treat each other with the highest regard.

I feel truly grateful to speak of these women as the other, as my personal path came quite close to theirs. I was born in neighboring Afghanistan, where women suffer even worse. Due to war, most of them currently live in refugee camps in Pakistan. This is the root of the force that compelled me to study a possible solution for women in Pakistan. In the process, I have learned of a very important tool for development: Education.

An educated society is more likely to make responsible decisions that are aimed at improving conditions. They are more likely to have the wherewithal needed to find new ways to increase community equity. They tend to be more analytical in nature, and less prone to violence. They also tend to plan in a long-term manner that is more inclusive of their family and neighbors.

Educated women are essential to a healthy society today. Women must be at least partially responsible for their own personal development, the development of their children, their home, their community, and the world around them. The benefits of allowing women to make decisions and to plan for future goals have been reiterated for decades by development agencies, governments, scientists and individuals.