

UNITED NATIONS PAKISTAN



Magazine

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The second issue of the United Nations Pakistan magazine for 2017 focuses on women's empowerment. Following International Women's Day 2017, celebrated across the globe and in Pakistan, we bring you features touching upon the transformative role of women in society, the paramount importance of providing them with equal rights and the UN's progress in facilitating this, through initiatives such as the gripping anti-violence #Beatme campaign to end domestic abuse. Nobel Laureate, and young Pakistani woman Malala Yousafzai was also appointed as United Nations Messenger of Peace this month. Her mission will particularly focus on girls' education, and her designation means she will be fulfilling the function of role model for other young girls in the future. This edition includes inspiring messages from women in the media scenario, voiced at a panel discussion on the challenges they face, and on how to pave the way forward. Also featured are first-hand stories from young women having benefited and gained skills from various UN initiatives such as UNDP's Youth and Social Cohesion Project, UNESCO's Girls Right to Education Programme, or the UNHCR Deutsche Akademische Flüchtlings Initiative.

In light of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, proclaimed by World Leaders for 2016-2025, this issue's special feature puts the spotlight on nutrition in Pakistan, and concerted efforts towards tackling malnutrition. The Nutrition Decade marks a new vision, momentum, and direction in global action to address challenges, and initiatives such as the Scal-

ing Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, a collaborative movement under the leadership of Nutrition Section of the Ministry of Planning Development and Reform, are emphasized as important ways to start accelerating efforts. A joint WHO-SUN Movement mission visited Islamabad this month and held meetings with the political leadership influencing the work on nutrition in Pakistan. The members of the mission were pleased to note high political commitment from all state actors and reiterated their continued support in tackling the malnutrition burden in the country.

Further, we share information on the several development activities undertaken by different UN agencies in the areas of education and literacy, health, urbanisation, water sanitation, labour, industrial development, drug and crime prevention, gender equality, and refugees. We have also commemorated a number of important UN observances in the past few months, including World Autism Day, World Malaria Day, and World Day for Safety and Health at Work. This edition includes stories about our activities to promote these days, and our efforts to achieve the SDGs behind them.

I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the UN Communications Group and the UN Country Team for their continued support for this magazine and for working in partnership to communicate and help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in Pakistan.

Vittorio Cammarota

Director, United Nations
Information Centre (UNIC)



International Women's Day

8 March



Women's rights are human rights. But in these troubled times, as our world becomes more unpredictable and chaotic, the rights of women and girls are being reduced, restricted, and reversed.

Empowering women and girls is the only way to protect their rights and make sure they can realize their full potential.

Historic imbalances in power relations between men and women, exacerbated by growing inequalities within and between societies and countries, are leading to greater discrimination against women and girls. Around the world, tradition, cultural values and religion are being misused to curtail women's rights, to entrench sexism and defend misogynistic practices.

Women's legal rights, which have never been equal to men's on any continent, are being eroded further. Women's rights over their own bodies are questioned and undermined. Women are routinely targeted for intimidation and harassment in cyberspace and in real life. In the worst cases, extremists and terrorists build their ideologies around the subjugation of women and girls and single them out for sexual and gender-based violence, forced marriage and virtual enslavement.

Despite some improvements, leadership positions across the board are

still held by men, and the economic gender gap is widening, thanks to outdated attitudes and entrenched male chauvinism. We must change this, by empowering women at all levels, enabling their voices to be heard and giving them control over their own lives and over the future of our world.

Denying the rights of women and girls is not only wrong in itself; it has a serious social and economic impact that holds us all back. Gender equality has a transformative effect that is essential to fully functioning communities, societies and economies.

Women's access to education and health services has benefits for their families and communities that extend to future generations. An extra year in school can add up to 25 per cent to a girl's future income.

When women participate fully in the labour force, it creates opportunities and generates growth. Closing the gender gap in employment could add \$12 trillion to global GDP by 2025. Increasing the proportion of women in public institutions makes them more representative, increases innovation, improves decision-making, and benefits whole societies.

Gender equality is central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the global plan agreed by leaders of all countries to meet the challenges we face. Sustainable Development Goal 5 calls specifically for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and



girls, and this is central to the achievement of all the 17 SDGs.

I am committed to increasing women's participation in our peace and security work. Women negotiators increase the chances of sustainable peace, and women peacekeepers decrease the chances of sexual exploitation and abuse. Within the UN, I am establishing a clear road map with benchmarks to achieve gender parity across the system, so that our Organization truly represents the people we serve. Previous targets have not been met. Now we must move from ambition to action. On International Women's Day, let us all pledge to do everything we can to overcome entrenched prejudice, support engagement and activism, and promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

António Guterres
Secretary-General
of the United Nations



Women in the changing world of work: Planet 50-50 by 2030



Across the world, too many women and girls spend too many hours on household responsibilities—typically more than double the time spent by men and boys. They look after younger siblings, older family members, deal with illness in the family and manage the house. In many cases this unequal division of labour is at the expense of women and girls’ learning, of paid work, sports, or engagement in civic or community leadership. This shapes the norms of relative disadvantage

and advantage, of where women and men are positioned in the economy, of what they are skilled to do and where they will work.

This is the unchanging world of unrewarded work, a globally familiar scene of withered futures, where girls and their mothers sustain the family with free labour, with lives whose trajectories are very different from the men of the household.

We want to construct a different world of work for women. As they grow up, girls must be exposed

to a broad range of careers, and encouraged to make choices that lead beyond the traditional service and care options to jobs in industry, art, public service, modern agriculture and science.

We have to start change at home and in the earliest days of school, so that there are no places in a child’s environment where they learn that girls must be less, have less, and dream smaller than boys. This will take adjustments in parenting, curricula, educational set-

tings, and channels for everyday stereotypes like TV, advertising and entertainment; it will take determined steps to protect young girls from harmful cultural practices like early marriage, and from all forms of violence.

Women and girls must be ready to be part of the digital revolution. Women hold currently only 18 per cent of undergraduate computer science degrees. We must see a significant shift in girls all over the world taking STEM subjects, if women are to compete successfully for high-paying 'new collar' jobs. Currently just 25 per cent of the digital industries' workforces are women.

Achieving equality in the workplace will require an expansion of decent work and employment opportunities, involving governments' targeted efforts to promote women's participation in economic life, the support of important collectives like trade unions, and the voices of women themselves in framing solutions to overcome current barriers to women's participation, as examined by the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. The stakes are high: advancing women's equality could boost global GDP by USD 12 trillion by 2025.

It also requires a determined focus on removing the discrimination

women face on multiple and intersecting fronts over and above their gender: sexual orientation, disability, older age, and race. Wage inequality follows these: the average gender wage gap is 23 per cent but this rises to 40 per cent for African American women in the United States. In the European Union, elderly women are 37 per cent more likely to live in poverty than elderly men.

In roles where women are already over-represented but poorly paid, and with little or no social protection, we must make those industries work better for women. For example, a robust care economy that responds to the needs of women and gainfully employs them; equal terms and conditions for women's paid work and unpaid work; and support for women entrepreneurs, including their access to finance and markets. Women in the informal sector also need their contributions to be acknowledged and protected. This calls for enabling macroeconomic policies that contribute to inclusive growth and significantly accelerate progress for the 770 million people living in extreme poverty.

Addressing the injustices will take resolve and flexibility from both public and private sector employers. Incentives will be needed to recruit and retain female workers;

like expanded maternity benefits for women that also support their re-entry into work, adoption of the Women's Empowerment Principles, and direct representation at decision-making levels. Accompanying this, important changes in the provision of benefits for new fathers are needed, along with the cultural shifts that make uptake of paternity and parental leave a viable choice, and thus a real shared benefit for the family.

In this complexity there are simple, big changes that must be made: for men to parent, for women to participate and for girls to be free to grow up equal to boys. Adjustments must happen on all sides if we are to increase the number of people able to engage in decent work, to keep this pool inclusive, and to realize the benefits that will come to all from the equal world envisaged in our Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Executive Director, UN Women



Advancing women's rights in Pakistan



Over the last 25 years the role of women in Pakistan has changed. In some university

programmes where there were few women in the past, today we see more women than men graduating. Millions more women now travel to workplaces, whereas before their work was confined to their home or village fields. More women have leadership roles in the private sector, in civil service, foreign service, sports, the military, and the arts. A larger share of women have more choices than they used to. But this progress co-exists with extreme inequality among the genders in all parts of Pakistan.

There is more than a 40% difference in income levels between the genders, and women bear the burden of unpaid work, estimated to be ten times greater than that borne by men. Unfortunately, there are many more examples: lower levels of education among women, and inequalities regarding nutrition and health. As women are entitled internationally and through Pakistan's constitution to equal rights, these differences are the most widespread human rights concern in Pakistan, in addition to representing a threat to the future development of the whole country.



For people to enjoy their rights it is important that they know them. However, the effect of harmful gender norms, high levels of poverty, and low levels of education mean few women have this awareness. In tandem, these factors make it more difficult to implement the reforms needed to improve the current situation. A result is that despite the positive changes taking place, Pakistan lags behind other countries in terms of substantially advancing women's rights.

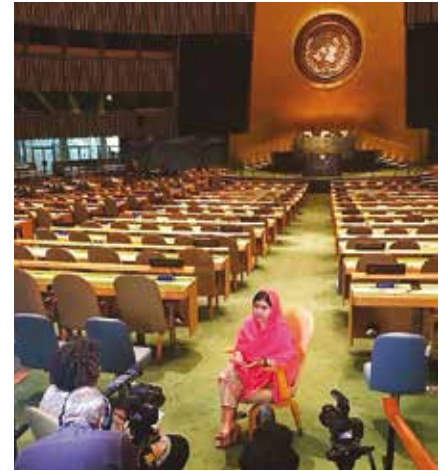
One disturbing example is widespread gender based violence in Pakistan, illustrating the urgent need to transform social attitudes and behaviours, so that there is an acceleration of actions at the policy, legal, and administrative levels to reduce it. Crimes against women increased by 21% between 2013 and 2014. In line with the findings of the Pakistan Demographic and

Health Survey (PDHS) 2012/13, statistics indicate that 32% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 have experienced physical violence. If violence against women continues, no society can meet its goals.

Pervasive gender inequalities across Pakistan mean too many women, men, and children are missing out on the opportunities they have rights to; and the more they miss out, the more difficult it becomes to reverse the situation. But experience internationally and in parts of Pakistan shows that promoting and protecting the rights of women and strengthening efforts to achieve substantive equality between women and men can be transformative. This is what Pakistan needs in order to meet the goals it has set for itself through its commitments to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

Neil Buhne
Resident Coordinator
and Humanitarian Coordinator,
United Nations Pakistan

Malala Yousafzai designated youngest-ever UN Messenger of Peace



United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres today designated children's rights activist and Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai as a UN Messenger of Peace with a special focus on girls' education.

"You have been to the most difficult places [...] visited several refugee camps. Your foundation has schools in Lebanon, in the Beka'a Valley," said Mr. Guterres at a ceremony in the Trusteeship Council chamber at UN Headquarters, in New York.

"[You are a] symbol of perhaps the most important thing in the world, education for all,"

he highlighted. Ms. Yousafzai, who was shot in 2012 by the Taliban for

attending classes, is the youngest-ever UN Messenger of Peace, and the first one to be designated by Secretary-General Guterres since he assumed office in January this year.

Accepting the accolade, Ms. Yousafzai underscored the importance of education, especially education of girls, for advancing communities and societies.

"[Bringing change] starts with us and it should start now," she said, adding: ***"If you want to see your future bright, you have to start working now [and] not wait for anyone else."***

UN Messengers of Peace are distinguished individuals, carefully selected

from the fields of art, literature, science, entertainment, sports or other fields of public life, who have agreed to help focus worldwide attention on the work of the global Organization.

Backed by the highest honour bestowed by the Secretary-General on a global citizen, these prominent personalities volunteer their time, talent and passion to raise awareness of UN's efforts to improve the lives of billions of people everywhere.

If you speak out, you can help people – UN Messenger of Peace Malala

Following the official presentation, Secretary-General Guterres and Ms. Yousafzai conversed with youth representatives from around the world on the theme of girls' education.

Taking a question from a young speaker in the audience, Ms. Yousafzai said

the most difficult time she faced had been from 2007 to 2009 in the Swat Valley, **“because we were at a point of making a decision about whether to speak out or remain silent. And I realized that if you remain silent, you are still going to be terrorized. So speaking out, you can help people.”**

While recovering from the Taliban attack, she realized that **“extremists tried everything to stop me [and the fact that they didn’t] is clear evidence that no one can stop me. I have second life for the purpose of [pressing for] education and I’ll continue working on [this issue].**

Ms. Yousafzai went on to say that brothers and fathers must also support women and girls in the global effort to ensure education for all and, more importantly, to **“be who they want to be.”** Indeed, she said that her father always told people not to ask him what he did for Malala, **“but ask what I didn’t do – I didn’t clip her wings.”**

Summing up the conversation, Mr. Guterrers called Ms. Yousafzai’s life **“a remarkable example of solidarity.”** Yet, he said, Pakistan is also such an example. **“We live in a world where so many borders are closed; so many doors are closed, but Pakistan has received seven million refugees with open borders, open doors and hearts – a symbol of generosity.”**

He hoped this spirit could serve as an example that **“it is not by closing doors that we will all be able to move forward.”**

“Friends of UN Women Pakistan” commemorate International Women’s Day



In commemorating International Women’s Day, UN Heads of Agencies along with ce-

lebrities, personalities, high-level government officials, activists, Ambassadors, and High Commissioners joined UN Women’s new campaign: #WomensDay “Friends of UN Women Pakistan.” This initiative uses the same tone and feel as the #BeatMe campaign, with 78 “Friends” from around the country who lent their name, faces, and powerful words in solidarity and support.

Each day from 1 to 16 March, UN Women Pakistan posted new pictures on their social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). UN Agencies and supporters reposted the pictures to their official and personal accounts, in order to enhance impact and raise awareness on women’s roles and rights. The campaign started a dialogue with and amongst a wider audience, in and outside of Pakistan, and inspired even more social influencers to want to engage with UN Women Pakistan. With regards to measured impact through the Pakistan Facebook page and Facebook shares by some of the high profile Heads of Agencies and celebrities, UN Women Pakistan

exceeded 200,000 views and reactions. Combining all social media outreaches, this figure was close to half a million, if not more.



Women lawmakers committed to a planet 50:50 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA



On March 8, UN Women, Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP),

and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) celebrated the achievements of local women and renewed pledges at an event in the Chief Minister's residence in Peshawar.

Ms. Meraj Humayun Khan, Chairperson of the WPC and Member of Provincial Assembly, spoke of the on-going, worldwide struggle for women's recognition started in New York in 1909. She added: "We must revisit our development plan and implementation strategies to create opportunities for women to join in the whole process of development - and there is no shortage of talent in the province."

The Honorable Dr. Mehar Taj Roghani, Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Assembly, congratulated Chairpersons of the Provinces, WPC, and Provincial Commission on the Status of Women for leading the gender equality agenda. Dr. Roghani announced her pledge to advocate for a Standing Committee for Women within the Provincial Assembly, and revision and endorsement of the 1998 of Rules of Business through a gender lens.

He informed the Domestic Violence Bill is in the final stages of review and a bill on acid crime is nearing completion by the women machineries and will



be tabled soon. Speaking of opportunities available for women, she added: "Women can do anything provided chances are given to them, and we are going to give them more spaces to excel in various roles."

Mr. Jamshed Kazi, Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan stated: "KP and FATA have many strong versatile women and girls, who fight everyday battles to break taboos and stigmatized social roles, the majority remain 'unsung heroes.' Recognition of more and more local women and girls at home, and abroad are wins for Pakistan, and suggests gender stereotypes are beginning to lose their potency."

Ms. Stefanie Burri, Head of Cooperation, SDC said: "I have had the privilege of meeting brilliant, inspirational women leading the struggle for equal gender rights. These are women who lead by example by shining bright in the fields of science, politics, sports,

and so many more. At the same time, they have the support of Pakistani men - support that must grow in numbers and intensity."

The '2017 WPC Awards' were distributed, acknowledging women 'change-makers' from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Women being honored included: Yasmin Jaferi (performing arts, posthumous), Rafia Qaseem Baig (Pakistan's first female to join the Bomb Disposal Unit), Rukhshanda Naz (human rights), Zatoon Bano (Pashto and Urdu literature) and Begum Naseem Wali Khan (past leader of a political party from the 1970s).



Corporates from Sialkot empower local women



On March 14, UN Women and local partner Baidarie organized an event that brought together 30 informal women workers and local government representatives, Trade Unions, media, civil society, and CEO signatories to the Women Empowerment Principles (WEP).

A group of corporates from Sialkot engaged in initiatives to enhance economic opportunities and empowerment of local informal women workers. They reaffirmed their commitment towards Planet 50:50 by the year 2030, and this year's Women's Day theme: 'Women in the Changing World of Work'. Mr. Jamshed Kazi, Representative, UN Women Pakistan, commended them for their support in advancing equality, and applauded the 17 corporations who signed CEO

Statements of Support to the WEP. He added that through the Benetton supported project 'Empowerment of women garment workers in Sialkot', 1,500 informal women workers will be linked to jobs in the formal sector. Mr. Arshid Mehmood Mirza, Executive Director, Baidarie, remarked on the dire state of affairs for women workers in Punjab, where their workforce participation rate is much lower than their population ratio. He pushed for additional fo-



cus on initiatives which are tangible and lead to women's socio-economic empowerment.

Ms. Hina Noureen, President, Baidarie, highlighted the issues faced by women engaged in the informal sectors, including lower-paid and skilled occupations with little or no social protection, and frequent harassment and violence in life and workplace.

Ms. Zaka, Member, Women Entrepreneur Committee SCCI, Trustee Sialkot Dry Port Trust stated her committee facilitates job placement and internships for girls and women.

Mr. Ali, Deputy Director, Labour and Human Resources Department Punjab, announced that by amending the Factories Act (1934), the Punjab Government has made it compulsory for all Executive Boards to have fair representation of women; no discrimination in wages between women and men, and day-care centers to be established in all factories.

Ms. Zarrin, Government College Women University, Sialkot added that 5,000 girl students are at the university and some are with the Leather Product Development Institute, developing skills that will help them get jobs. She called for Government and private sector to provide more opportunities.

Ms. Kanwal, UN Women project beneficiary shared: "At work, women and girls have a collective responsibility to act and behave in a dignified manner becoming a role model for others".

In his remarks, Mr. Muhammad Usman, Chief Guest and Secretary Punjab Commission on the Status

of Women reiterated the Government's resolve to provide equal opportunities for development, particularly to women through the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act (2010), the Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act (2016) and the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women. He announced an initiative to increase the current 5% quota of women employed with government offices to 15%.

The event concluded with a theatrical performance by Azad Theater aimed at male family members to give more space to women in order to empower them, and women's resulting contribution to productive households and societies.

Dr. Khurram Anwar Khawaja, Managing Director, Anwar Khawaja Industries (Pvt) Ltd, signatory to WEP said about the Principles: "Signing the WEP has introduced new dimensions to our corporate vision. With a renewed passion and commitment for gender responsiveness employment practices, we are welcoming more and more women workers into our manufacturing chain whose practices and operations are regulated by the basic principles and values of human dignity, respect of the workforce and equal opportunities for all". Khawaja Musharraf Iqbal, Managing Director K.M. Ashraf & Sons (Pvt) Ltd, another signatory to WEP said: "Becoming a WEP signatory has definitely led us to emerge and evolve as a business entity having a softer and more responsible image. Not only we have opened our doors to the women workers to

work in a harassment free atmosphere having all the legally admissible rights and privileges, but also they are being provided spaces to rise to the level of supervisory and managerial tiers in our group. This process has begun from our home; my mother, wife, daughter and daughter-in-law, are all an integral part of family decisions. We foresee K.M. Ashraf & Sons (Pvt) Ltd will assume a leadership role in the corporate sector as a gender responsive equal opportunity employer".

Izhar By Film Fellowship: 25 short films on social and political rights of women screened



On March 30, at the National Library of Pakistan, Islamabad, the Izhar By Film Fellowship (IBFF),

an initiative of Morango Films with support from UN Women held a screening ceremony featuring the top 25 short films produced by Pakistani trainees who participated in the first-ever fellowship programme on social and political rights of women.

As part of the programme, the trainees, guided by renowned mentors, learnt how to use filmmaking as a medium for storytelling and evoking the spirit of responsible citizenship. Then, the aspiring filmmakers developed and submitted their individual 60-second documentaries, of which the best 25 were showcased at the event.

Eminent panelists discussed the power of filmmakers in selecting what to 'report' and 'showcase'. The need to be sensitive to cultural and religious concerns, as well as determining what the public considers to be important social issues was also highlighted.

Following deliberations by the jury members including renowned music video and commercial film directors Amina Khan and Sohail Javed; Founder of Morango Films Abrar Ul Hassan; Co-Founder of 60SIFF and Morango Films Affan Alam; and Social Media Director Laiq Qureshi. The best 10 fellows of IBFF were announced



in this order: Rafay Latif from Sindh - 'Shukria' [Thank You]; Rani Wahidi from Balochistan - 'Ehtaram' [Respect]; Raiha Akram from Punjab - 'All Eyes On You'; Ebaad Shams from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - 'Importance'; Talha Adil from Sindh - 'No Strings Attached'; Gulzar Nayani from Sindh - 'The Gaze'; Ramla Yaqoob from Punjab - 'Meri Pyari Beti' [My Lovely Daughter]; Ali Azmat from Sindh - 'Careless'; Wajahat from Gilgit-Baltistan - 'Agahi' [Awareness]; and Ahmed Hassan from Islamabad - 'Zameer' [Conscious]. The top 3 fellows received scholarship grants of Rs 100,000, Rs 50,000 and Rs 25,000 respectively.

Awards were also presented to the following 3 filmmakers under the category of 'film with the best message': Sarah Rehman from Sindh - 'The Transit'; Nida Ramzan from Punjab - 'A Vow', and Abuzar Mir from Islamabad - 'Barabar' [Equal]

Abrar ul Hassan, Founder Morango Films, expressed his delight saying: "It is overwhelming to have received such impactful films made by the aspiring

youngsters, who have endeavored to depict aspects of rights of women in a very realistic way."

In delivering the closing remarks, Sanjeeta Thapa, Chief Guest and Deputy Representative, UN Women Pakistan, commended Morango Films and said, "It is heartening to see the overwhelming response to the fellowship and strong messages that have been shared with us through these films. As advocates and champions for gender equality, your messages can and do impact the way people perceive the roles and rights of women."

This collaboration between UN Women and Morango Films falls under UN Women Pakistan's project on "Women's Peace, Security, Rights and Voice: safe public spaces, community outreach and empowerment, and political awareness and advocacy" with the support of the Government of Australia.

Groundbreaking step in tackling violence against women in Multan, Punjab



“You are safe now!” announced Mr. Salman Sufi, Director General and Chief Minister of Punjab’s Strategic Reforms Unit (SRU), addressing Punjab’s women. On March 25 in Mati Tal Road, in collaboration with the Social Welfare and the Bait-ul- Maal Department, the SRU

effectively deal with incidents relating to gender-based violence. Mr. Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Chief Minister of Punjab inaugurated the landmark event by unveiling the foundation stone, followed by a visit of the Centre’s facilities. He said: “With this Centre, we will bring protection to the vulnerable segments of our female population. We will protect their honour and their dignity”.

and brave to come here and report their problems. We will continue to do awareness work so that more women will dare come to us. It really is a revolutionary facility that women who feel unsafe should make use of”. Four female medical officers have been handpicked to treat victims. “We stand ready to help and support women in their most difficult and vulnerable situations”, said Dr. Maryam, while Dr. Ayesha, Dr. Baira and Dr. Aqsa nodded their heads in agreement.

Prosecutors Ms. Bushra Sharif and Ms. Naila Danish will be representing clients at the centre’s court: “We not only look forward to protect and defend these women and bring the perpetrators to justice, but also to create awareness about women’s rights and to empower the victims” said Ms. Danish. “Many of these women face threats and fear of repercussions from their families, but we will provide them protection” Ms. Sharif added.

Three more VAW Centers are foreshadowed in other Punjabi districts this year. Through UN Women’s Essential Services Program, technical support will be provided to SRU in 2017-2018 for strengthening Centres to effectively respond to gender-based violence survivors in line with international guidelines and protocols.



has launched the most comprehensive system in South Asia to address Violence Against Women (VAW). The Violence Against Women Centre is a converging justice delivery system, bringing all facilities under one roof, a historic initiative following the Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act, 2016. The 24- hour Centre is female-run by doctors, nurses, psychologists, police, and prosecutors; only lab technicians and radiographers are men. Prosecutors and a court are also included, and all staff members are trained to ef-

Mr. Jamshed Kazi, Country Representative of UN Women, congratulated the Government of Punjab and said: “With the establishment of this center, Pakistan has taken a significant leap towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality and curbing Violence Against Women”. Police Officer Mrs. Shabana has just joined as investigation officer and is confident that the facility will have a positive effect. “The reporting rate on VAW is very low now, but I believe that after the establishment of this Centre, women will feel more comfortable



FAO Pakistan marks International Women's Day



“No one can ignore the contribution of women in any situation and any environment and that is why Pakistani women need to be given the opportunities to explore their full potential”. Ms. Naima Hassan, Stress Counsellor for the UN staff in Pakistan said, while speaking at the ceremony held to mark International Women's Day at the FAO Representation in Islamabad.

The FAO theme for this year's Women's Day was “Step it up together with rural women to end hunger and poverty”.

To highlight the importance of women in the agriculture sector, a video from the FAO Policy Series: Gender, was screened for the attendees of the ceremony, emphasizing the need for agriculture policies to close gender gaps to combat rural poverty, hunger, and

malnutrition.

Ms. Hadia Nusrat, Gender Advisor UN Women, said that it was necessary to first tackle the issue of Gender Based Violence if we wanted to deal effectively and efficiently with the problems of hunger, poverty, and food insecurity.

Ms. Nomina Anis, Nutritionist and Gender Focal Person at FAO Pakistan giving an overview of the importance of women in the agriculture sector said that 45% of the labor force in the agriculture sector is constituted by women who are left behind because they don't have access to the same resources as men do.

Mr. Ajmal Jahangeer, Statistician, gave a presentation that highlighted how malnourishment rates in Pakistan were higher among girls as well as among

women-headed households.

Ms. Shamim Patras and Ms. Nargis Javed, female support staff at FAO Representation had a cake-cutting ceremony to mark the occasion.

Mr. Patrick T. Evans, FAO Representative, Mr. Francisco Gamarro, Deputy FAO Representative, Mr. Nasar Hayat, Assistant FAO Representative (Program) and Mr. Zabeeh Ahmad, Assistant FAO Representative (Administration) also attended the ceremony along with FAO staff in Islamabad.

“#BeatMe,” say Pakistani women to men, in anti-violence campaign to end domestic and sexual abuse



UN Women Pakistan's '#BeatMe' campaign brings an unconventional twist to advocacy on women's rights. In a compelling paradox, the campaign showcases a woman inviting a man to beat her - but at things she is good at. The campaign

rage, although justice for victims tends to be elusive. Launched on social media for 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence in November 2016, the video features notorious Pakistani women with varied skills challenging their counterparts to beat them at their respective expertise.

Verbal abuse is addressed by challenging men to beat women with

tive for UN Women Pakistan says: “The #BeatMe campaign poignantly drives home a universal message that verbal and physical violence against women in Pakistan and beyond is unacceptable - this is not normal, and it cannot continue. If men treat women as badly as they choose to - beating, burning, abusing or killing them - with little or no consequence, it negates all efforts to



features stories of women who have reached their goals despite the patriarchal mindset they face every day, online and in print. It aims to inspire women to reaffirm that they are stronger than they are made to believe.

Violence against women and girls, affecting at least 1 in 3 globally is taking place with alarming frequency and severity worldwide, sparking public out-

words from the likes of Meesha Shafi (singer) and Sana Bucha (journalist). Physical abuse is countered by female athletes such as Samina Baig (only Pakistani woman to climb Mount Everest) and Naseem Hameed (fastest woman in the South Asia games), who invites men to try beating her 100-meter race time.

Jamshed Kazi, Country Representa-

build a safe world in which women and girls can flourish. In every country, we have very resilient, resourceful, talented and brave women and girls. This campaign celebrates their strengths and achievements as being ‘unbeatable’, and acknowledges women’s equality as a driving force for successful societies and nations.”



“For so many men it is okay to beat their wife, because their mother was okay with it!
Real men are those who believe that women are not worthless.
Nobody has the right to tell you that you are not capable of anything.
As a mother, I am going to say - this is the time to raise real men.”

Muniba Mazari, National Ambassador for UN Women Pakistan



“I’m proud that I am a girl so I can stand out, even if I’m standing with boys.
There’s this prejudice, there’s this resistance against women playing football. Of course you can’t just go out on to the field and start playing, especially if you have to dress up in shorts.
I had some resistance from my family. I was looked down upon; I had fingers pointed at me. But we have to grow out of it to get where we are. I did, and I am Pakistan’s Captain right now. You don’t get it easy, I didn’t get it easy. I’m trying to make it better for the younger generation, the grass-root girls. It’s going to be a rough ride but I think I’m going to get there.”

Hajra Khan, Captain, Pakistan’s Football Team



“Whenever I used to meet my relatives, my cousins always used to say the same thing – girls aren’t supposed to run, you’re always running around like a crazy person.
My mother and father supported me but other people around us didn’t like it and used to say – she’s a girl and you send her outside the house.... it’s not good to send girls outside the house. My father was very open-minded. He’d say - she’s not my daughter, she’s my son.
At first people didn’t understand what I was doing, or where I was going.
I used to be in an Abaya [cloak] wearing joggers.
They used to say things like – oh you’re going to play hockey, oh you’re going to play cricket.
When I won at the South Asian games they understood where I used to go and what I used to do.”

Naseem Hameed, Fastest women in South Asia



“When I was kid and my father died, everyone was like how can she do this at the age of 11? How can the daughter of a widow do this, how can a girl from ‘Dir’ do this? I remember they all said to my mum that she couldn’t raise heroes, because a woman cannot be a hero.

I used to practice cricket with my brothers and soldiers. They gave me the quality of camouflage; I was not hiding from anyone but from society. Whenever I left the hostel and played with the boys, I was asked not to play with them because I was a girl. When I started playing ICA, I was in an all-boys team. At that time, no one knew I was a girl. I played for one year and proved that I was good. When they found out I was a girl, it was not shocking to them, but shocking for me because instead of discouraging me they actually supported me.”

Noreena Shams, International Squash Player



“Why can’t we box?

Girls can do everything.

Girls have a higher tolerance level as compared to boys. We are not here to be beaten up.

We have a status and respect that we should be entitled to. When you don’t have power you’re weak, but when you become powerful you should fight people your own size, not those who are weaker.

We have a liberated country, but we don’t have liberated thinking and we don’t have liberated women yet!”

Razia Bano, Member, Lyari All Girls Boxing Club



“When we were going to Mount Everest we did a press conference in Islamabad.

A man there said ‘Samina is so tiny she doesn’t even look like she can climb the stairs, how will she climb Everest?’ When we climb, my brother and I climb together.

Everything that my brother has to do on the mountains, I do it as well. I carry the same load, I set up camps as well. I’m constantly facing the same situations as my brother.

When you throw this thought out of your mind, that there’s a difference between men and women, then nothing is difficult to do. My family supported me and my brother gave me permission. They always trusted me. They believed that I was no less than a man. I’m not physically very strong, but on the inside, I can do anything!”

Samina Baig, High Altitude Mountaineer



Female journalists trained on harassment and digital space



On the eve of Women's Day, UNIC in partnership with the British High Commission

and the National Press Club, organized a day long training session for female journalists on the safety of digital space, legal rights of journalists and harassment at workplace.

Some 60 press club officials and female journalists from Karachi, Hyderabad, Quetta, Multan, Lahore, Islamabad and Peshawar attended the training.

Vittorio Cammarota, Director of the United Nations Information Centre in his introduction remarks welcomed the participants and appreciated their valuable role in the field of journalism.

Sam Heath, Director of Communications at the British High Commission in his welcome note shared with participants that the British High Commission is committed and providing support to the women in Pakistan in their quest for gender equality and the empowerment.

Sadaf Khan from Media Matters for Democracy conducted a session on safety of digital space, while high court advocate and criminologist Humaira Masihuddin conducted in-



teractive sessions on the laws governing the employment of journalists and how to deal with harassment at workplace.

At the event, the United Nations in Pakistan offered to host a working group of female journalists in Pakistan, to help tackle issues around harassment, discrimination and lack of opportunities for female journalists. The British High Commission also announced a commitment by national and regional press clubs to organise minimum quotas for female

journalists.

The training workshop provided an opportunity for female journalists to exchange views with experts and to learn about best practices and technological advancements which can be helpful in their professional lives.

Women in media: challenges and success stories



To mark International Women's Day, a panel discussion on "Women in Media: Challenges and Success Stories" was jointly organised by the United Nations Information Centre and the National Press Club, with support from the British High Commission.

Vittorio Cammarota, Director, UNIC, welcomed the participants and speakers, and shared his thoughts on the background of the workshop. He deemed it a positive sign that a large number of women have joined Pakistani media. He explained that the objective of the event is to create awareness on labour laws and digital safety among women journalists, in addition to sharing inspiring success stories, and identifying key challenges and opportunities for women in media.

The discussion was moderated by Ayesha Tanzeem, VOA Bureau Chief for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Maha Makhdum, Anchor PTV World and Waqas Rafique, Communication Officer at United Nation Food and Agriculture in Islamabad.

Mariyum Aurangzeb, Minister of State for Information Broadcasting, kindly graced the event as the chief guest and took part in the interactive



discussion with the participants. She stressed the need to work with men to ensure women rights in true letter and spirit.

Other panellists who took part in the discussion include: Musadik Malik, Spokesperson to the Prime Minister, Sam Heath, British High Commission, Tanzeela Mazhar, Journalist, Naveed Akbar, Journalist and Senior Vice President National Press Club, Uzma Al-Karim, Head of the Harassment Complaints Committee Geo News, Kay Johnson, Reuters Bureau Chief for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Maliha Hussain, Mehrgarh, Kathy Gannon, Associated Press Senior Correspondent, Myra Imran, Journalist and Vice President National Press Club, Farzana Ali, Bureau Chief of Aaj TV Peshawar, and Kamal Sidiqqi, Director Centre for Excellence in Jour-

nalism Karachi.

The issues of harassment at the workplace and the measures to provide justice for the victims were discussed in length. Participants were briefed that the National Press Club has recently announced a committee to deal with complaints of harassment at the workplace.

The panellists also shared their experiences on the areas that require special attention and how women's rights can be ensured in society and at the workplace.

The event was well attended by diplomats, government officials, journalists, and civil society.



Awareness about laws against harassment at workplace is crucial



Worldwide more women than men are harassed, including those holding high-level positions. According to surveys, 93% of women are harassed at their workplaces in Pakistan and only 7% report it.

A common perception is that women working in Media are more aware and courageous to speak about their rights. But when talking to various female journalists, several were unaware about the complaint process. Many avoided the subject because they were unsure on how people around them would react; especially their superiors. These pressures and a lack of knowledge on the relevant laws prevent women from properly reporting.

As per the law, every organization is bound to constitute a dedicated committee to tackle such cases when they are reported. In addition, the committee should comprise at least three members besides the head, including one woman (but not limited to it). The relevant code of conduct and policies should be displayed at prominent places in languages understood by most of the employees. Either Party can appeal to their respective ombudsman over the committee's decision and the complainant can also



directly approach the provincial or federal ombudsman office. Appeal can be made to the Governor and President on provincial and federal ombudsman decision, respectively. There is a misconception that such laws are only made for working women, but their ambit is broad. Maliha Hussain, Director Mehergarh has explained it saying that the law also considers men and students, and complaint can also be made against people at a workplace if they harass visitors because the complainant

does not necessarily have to be an employee.

Harassment is an extremely serious issue, which should be dealt with extreme confidentiality. This is the reason why separate ombudsman offices have been constituted where specifically harassment at workplace cases are heard.

Some loopholes still persist, although the law was to be put in practice starting in 2010, the relevant offices have not yet been made in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In addition, the ombudsman office is not completely empowered as it can neither take suo motto, nor can it act against any organization that does not fulfill the legal requirements. Moreover, the name of the law (prevention against harassment of women at workplace) reflects that it is only meant to help women.

It was suggested that the government first constitute the relevant offices in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at its earliest so that people working in the provinces can get the same protection that people in Sindh, Punjab and Federal are receiving. The ombudsman offices should also be empowered to take suo motto and to panelize the organization on non-compliance, so that no one can be suppressed by social pressure.

Uzma Alkarim

Head of Harassment Complaints Committee, Geo TV

Kathy Gannon



Kathy Gannon

Senior Correspondence at the Associated Press for Pakistan and Afghanistan



What is your secret to success as a journalist?

I don't think there's any real secret to success in any profession. I think you have to hone your skills as a journalist, and I think you should do that in your home country before you go out and try to embrace your profession in another country. So, that was something I did before I moved to Pakistan. My willingness to travel, my desire to actually talk to people, to try to understand the situation... the foundation I developed in Canada when I started my profession. The real ticket to success is building a strong foundation in addition to the empathy and the

desire to understand the situation, the conflict, what the people involved in the story you are writing are going through. So if I had to share my secret, I think it's just the real desire to have an answer to the question 'why?' and to always be searching.

Is the narrative of a female journalist different from that of a male journalist?

Your gender is a factor, obviously. But I think the way you approach your job is as a journalist, not as a woman journalist. In some cases I have to get beyond the fact that I am a woman. In some areas I have to get beyond the fact that it is in an area of danger. I have covered the Taliban and I was the only journalist that the Taliban led back to Kabul during the bombing – a woman, a Westerner, I have interviewed them. It wasn't always easy. If I had been a man, I'd have gotten the interview immediately. Sometimes I had to wait six hours just sitting there, until finally, they had no choice because they were too humiliated by me sitting outside their door that they agreed to the interview. So I think for me, it's about approaching my job as a journalist.

Any advice for Pakistani women who want to pursue journalism?

Of course, because the culture is so patriarchal in Pakistan, the gender factor is one that you have to address. And my one piece of advice would be: organize yourself. You have much more strength in numbers than you have as individuals. As women journalists, support them. If somebody is having a hard time, get together. Have a way that you can all say, "Hey, listen! This is not acceptable. You do not get to do this just because you think you could treat me that way as a woman. Sorry! Does not happen. I'm a professional. I want to be treated as a professional. You must treat me as a professional. "



Shameem Bano



Shameem Bano

Senior Correspondent/ Senior Vice President, The News, Karachi



What inspired you to become a journalist?

I started at The Nation 1990 as the first Women Crime Reporter. I am the first Court Reporter of Pakistan and I joined at a time when there were no females working in this field. There were some who worked only office hours, from 9am to 5pm. I was the only one who worked until 12am.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

For me the question should be why not? They are equally competent.

How can we create more space for women in media?

It depends on family: how open are they to allowing their daughters, sisters or wives to work in the field of journalism. Journalism requires time and hard work for both men and women. A safe environment should be provided to females. Most families don't like it if their sister, daughter or wife does this job, even those who are highly educated.

How can we tackle these challenges, especially those related harassment?

No matter how hard a woman works she is never rewarded for it. The biggest problem is not that males are against females even females are also against females.

How can we make this field safe for women?

Women should be brave and bold. There should be a proper platform where issues like this can be raised. There should be a proper, strongly implemented law for harassment."

Sana Asif Dar



Sana Asif Dar
Express News, Lahore



What inspired you to become a journalist and why is it important to have female journalists?

Women can do anything. They are in all fields. My eldest sister was the first female lawyer of Jhelum. When she started, people said she couldn't do it because there was no precedent in Jhelum. Women should join professions where there are fewer female practitioners. In our field, men hold all executive positions. Women should come into decision-making positions.

How can we create more space for women in media?

I think family support is very important for women. They leave the profession when they get married or have children. We can't blame their offices for this. Family support is crucial.

What are the challenges for female journalists?

If a good assignment comes up, a man would be preferred over his female colleague to do it. There is a perception that women don't work and leave the job after marriage. Another issue is that of transport. My office provides good facilities, but when I go out in the field I see other women facing great difficulty. They spend half of their salary on transport and also face harassment at the hands of rickshaw drivers, etc.

How can we tackle these challenges, especially those related harassment?

Women should be bold enough to speak up. Usually we are told to keep quiet and ignore harassment, but we can't ignore it. If it happens at your workplace, talk to the concerned person. This happened to me once and I didn't tell my mother but took my sisters into confidence. First of all, talk to the relevant per-

son and do not put yourself in the role of the 'victim'. Know that what happened was wrong, and that the person who did this is still roaming around scot-free.

How can we make this field safe for women?

An organization's policies are very important for making the environment safe. If an organization's head is a good professional, he/she can take measures to create a safe environment. If an organization's head is corrupt, then there is a problem.



Gonilla Hasnain



Gonilla Hasnain
Journalist, 92 News, Lahore



What inspired you to become a journalist?

My entrance in the field of media was a big change for my Christian family, where girls usually either enter the education or the medical sector. But I wanted to adopt a different profession, so I talked to my mother, who helped me to get accepted into a Commerce college, wanting me to go down the banking path. After doing I.Com, my interest developed for journalism. I did my Bachelors and got the opportunity of interning with The News. I took this field as a platform for freedom of expression, from where your voice can be heard, although it is very challenging. Proving myself

as a woman, and especially being a Christian was difficult, but I am happy that I was able to do it by the grace of God.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

Women are really important for this field. Due to an increase in the number of female journalists things have changed a lot. If we go 12 to 14 years back it was a totally different situation compared to now.

How can we create more space for women in media?

My suggestion is to not only have such events on Women's Day, there is a need to keep doing such trainings frequently. There are so many cases of harassment: I too was harassed by my editor. When I told my superior he just said I was not an intelligent girl. So my immediate response was: why have you been paying me salaries for four years if I am not intelligent? Trainings like these are an encouragement for girls who face challenges and who don't know how to deal with such situations.

What are the challenges for female journalists, including those related to harassment?

The biggest challenge is harassment, because people think that this field is a really open one. Unfortunately some colleagues and other people you meet on daily basis still consider women as public proper-

ty, thinking they can treat them the way they want. Of course these are hurtful subjects but they are facts.

How can we make this field safe for women?

Policy makers and United Nations agencies should keep explaining our rights.

Zofeen Ibrahim



Zofeen Ibrahim

Freelance Journalist, Karachi

What inspired you to become a journalist?

I did a Masters in Journalism, got married and went to Karachi. I was new there and didn't know anything about the city. I got into a magazine, met an editor, worked there for some time then switched to Dawn Magazine.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

Females are not needed only in the field of Journalism but in other fields too. We are all equal. At least in my family we were never taught that males are any different from females, or that they have more freedom or anything. My experience says that in Pakistan there are very hard working females because they have to multitask between the home and the office. As a mother I have to take care of my children as well as taking care of my office work, equally.

How can we tackle these challenges, especially those related harassment?

Challenges that include harassment are transport problems. Pick and drop should be provided for females.

How can we make this field safe for women?

There are different steps to control harassment including laws, which should be properly implemented.

How can we create space for females in the field of journalism?

It is important that females should be provided flexible hours, that way turnover rate will decrease. Salaries should be equal and the working environment should be safe.





Myra Imran



Myra Imran

The News, Islamabad



What inspired you to become a journalist?

I've been associated with The News for the last 10 years. I belong to a lower middle class background and went to an Urdu medium school. It was a fight for me to join journalism. My family didn't allow women to work because of Pakhtun and religious influences. I was adamant to pursue my studies and slowly pushed my way forward. I joined the media because it allows you to express yourself. Women are not able to express themselves openly, but I love to do so. I first took up a desk job, but then moved to reporting, where I've been working for the last 10 years.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

It is a fundamental necessity to have women in this field because half of the country's population is female. Women have a specific perspective. In a recent survey by an organization, a man was asked in a flood-hit area what he needed. "I need a shop and a motorcycle," he replied. When a woman was asked the same question, she said she needed a school for her child and a hospital. If a woman reports on war, she brings a specific human angle to her reporting. When you don't give women the share they deserve, you remove an entire opinion. Ninety nine percent of female journalists cover health, women, and children's beats. It is said these are soft beats. These are, in fact, very hard beats. Saying that we don't need women in media is a great injustice.

How can we create more space for women in media?

The first step is to realize the problem, then space is created by itself. In the beginning affirmative measures will have to be taken. Then it will depend on women how much they want to contribute and claim their space. We see there is much willingness. Mass communication departments of universities are full of women. If you think of how much space is being given to them, why they end up leaving the media after working there for a year or so, you'll also find solutions.

What are the challenges for female journalists?

The entire media industry is facing challenges. It is in a very bad condition. Our employment structure is very poor. We

don't see a financial future in this job. I myself have thought about switching because it doesn't pay. These problems multiply when it comes to women. They stay behind others and are kept behind. The mindset is the biggest challenge due to which they are discriminated against. They are not assigned hard beats, not allowed to come forward. Harassment is another big challenge. The feeling that you're being followed or you're being slandered creates insecurities. That too needs to be tackled. This can be done through creating awareness.

How can we tackle these challenges, especially those related to harassment?

First of all, we need to talk about it openly, in all universities. It takes time to change mindsets. Second, we have a strong law against harassment, which is not being implemented. To do so we need to create harassment complaint committees and put the code of conduct at a prominent place in all media organizations. It will gradually bring change.

How can we make this field safe for women?

When you give women psychological safety, their capabilities improve. I'd like to give my own example. Before marriage, I had to fight with my family to work, which was very energy consuming. I married a person of my own choice, who is also a journalist. He encouraged me to work. Then I was able to focus on my work and created my name as a journalist.

Amina Khan



Amina Khan

Sub editor, Express Tribune,
Peshawar



What inspired you to become a journalist?

I entered the field through a friend who inspired me to study Mass Communications, and then specialized in media. After the tragic incident of the Army Public School in 2004, I wanted to speak and write to express myself. I started working with TNN Radio and then joined the Express Tribune.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

Why not? A female journalist can better understand and narrate issues of women in our society. But there are

many pressures and taboos associated with this. People say: “this is not a proper field for a woman to work in”, but I face this pressure and persist. My junior colleagues were seeking inspiration from me, and I wanted to become an example for others to follow.

How can we create more space for women in media?

Space can be created gradually if senior female journalists show their work and courage in facing difficulties, setting good examples for the aspiring younger generations. Social media has gained popularity, and this is a comfortable medium for female journalists to work in.

What are the challenges for female journalists, including those related to harassment?

Buildings and offices in Peshawar are not designed with women workers in mind. For instance, there are no separate restrooms and prayer rooms. These are real difficulties for us.

How can we tackle these challenges, especially those related to harassment?

First we should be made aware of what harassment is, then we can then take the complaints to our editors and seniors. There should be a policy in place in every organization for checking and balancing harassment cases. Management should keep an eye on the office environment and ask women if they are treated well by

their male colleagues. There should be more females in organizations, as women who are alone at the workplace can easily become victims of such issues.

How can we make this field safe for women?

Job security is the first step. Medical benefits and regular salary increments should also be given to women. Our salary scale should be equal to that of male colleagues. Digital security is a new concept for us, which is very important. There should be an increasing number of women joining this field. More training sessions like those attended today at the UNIC should be carried .



Javeria Malik



Javairia Malik
Channel 24, Quetta



What inspired you to become a journalist?

After an attack on Bolan Medical College Hospital, I saw many female journalists in action, and thought I should join this field because I believed I could do it. I did my masters in journalism and applied for jobs. First I did an internship in print media and then I challenged myself and joined electronic media.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

It is very important. I live in a tribal area where gender segregation is strictly enforced. In other areas too female journalists are needed because women cannot talk to men as freely as they can to women.

How can we create more space for women in media?

There is a lot of jealousy in this field. If someone is ambitious, people will try to sabotage their prospects and won't give them space. Everyone should be cooperative instead and realize that a woman has the same rights as a man.

What are the challenges for female journalists?

In my province of Balochistan, women venturing out of the house are not seen well. There are wrong perceptions about the media that lead people to speak ill of women working there. This creates problems for them.

How can we tackle these challenges, especially those related harassment?

Women shouldn't be afraid. The problem is that when something happens, they keep it to themselves. They should have the courage to defend themselves. If they can't handle problems alone, they should confide in others and handle them together.

How can we make this field safe for women?

There should be amendments in press clubs to bring more women in. They should be given trainings on how to ensure they are safer.

Madiha Shah Modi



Madiha Shah Modi

Centre for Excellence in Journalism,
IBA, Karachi



What inspired you to become a journalist?

I'm currently working at the Centre for Excellence in Journalism where we train journalists from all over Pakistan. We cater to all mediums related to journalism: print, broadcast, and digital. Before that I was working at Geo News as a multimedia producer. I have also worked at the Express Tribune and the Business Recorder.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

The question should be why not? They are part of our society so it's important to include women in order to create a gender balance at the workplace. Now we see women everywhere, even in fields where we didn't expect them to ever join: the forces, space engineering, you name it. Even in media their numbers are growing, but their ratio is still very small. We still need to encourage women and give them a fair chance to work in every field.

What are the challenges for female journalists?

Being a woman is difficult in itself, because in our patriarchal system we have household responsibilities. If they join the field and if they underperform, it becomes an excuse to keep them at home because that's considered their priority. It's a big challenge to balance work and home. Women also do not get fair chances, pay-wise, or other opportunities to move forward. In the media, very few women actually make it up to the top. In many jobs men are preferred over women. These are all taboos that we have to break.

How can we tackle these challenges, especially those related to harassment?

It is very important that members of harassment complaints committees are trustworthy. Those harassed,

whether it is men or women should trust the members who should be unbiased and not favor anyone. I have a background of working in media and I myself faced two or three such incidents. We need to encourage people to speak up. There is lack of awareness and a tolerance among women for this wrong behavior.

How can we make this field safe for women?

It depends on society's overall attitude and the guidance we receive from our families. When I was working as a journalist, I was the only woman on my desk. I had extremely nice colleagues who were very protective. It depends a lot on the men around us to make the environment safe. It doesn't depend only on management, but in peer-to-peer interaction. These are small changes that we can implement to see a difference.



Nosheen Naqvi



Nosheen Naqvi
Journalist, ARY New, Lahore



What inspired you to become a journalist?

My family has a background in journalism. My brother was a journalist. He was editor at the Daily Times and also worked at the Daily Khabrein. My husband is also a journalist, so for me entering this field was not difficult.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

Women are not only important in the field of journalism but in other fields too. Due to our lifestyle we are facing problems. As a girl normally wears shalwar qameez, if she dresses in jeans and a shirt she will look different, or if a female is sitting in a crowd of men it raises questions and negative opinions: she should be in her home instead of the office so that kids can be cared for properly. It should not be about gender: if females don't work or they sit at home, there will be financial problems, especially in times of financial crisis like these. Both males and females should work for smooth ongoing.

How can we create more space for women in media?

There is no need to create space, it is already being created compared to 13 years ago. The number of females in this field has increased tremendously and that's a good thing.

What are the challenges for female journalists?

There are so many problems females face. When they want to work alongside men questions are raised such as "what is the need for her to have a job?" My reply is: "should a woman only work when she is needy?" She should work because she is equally competent to a man. The biggest challenge is acceptance. Even now most families don't agree with their

daughters, sisters or wives doing this type of job. The workplace is also a challenge: in most there exist unfair conditions for providing space for women, for example if a girl is cooperative, if she compromises on different things, only then she is accepted.

How can we make this field safe for women?

Management is not friendly at all in such cases. Because our country is the type of country where women are accepted only if they are obedient, no matter how they are treated. If women start working just to support their families or husband, people will think that she is here because of them; if she is wearing nice clothes people will think she is wearing them for people to see her. Our major problem is that people are so judgmental towards women: on what they wear, where they go, who they're with... The problem is acceptance, so government should help in promoting and accepting working women.

Shazia Nayer



Shazia Nayer

Assignment Editor, Capital TV,
Islamabad



What inspired you to become a journalist?

I wanted to do something different, and this field inspires me a lot, that's why I selected it. My family was against my choice but I took a stand, and slowly they accepted.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

Journalism is a responsibility on

top of being a profession or passion. We can talk about people who don't speak for themselves but they need to be understood by others and be told to take a stand. I think we journalist become their voice and take on responsibility for them. There are so many females, not only in Pakistan but also all over the world who are working and trying to support their families. There should be acceptance for these working women.

How can we tackle these challenges, especially those related harassment?

I think we should not remain silent on harassment, we should take action against it. There are so many women whose families are not supporting them. In cases of harassment, unsupportive families just say to leave the job instead of taking some action. If you don't take action it will keep on increasing. I too took action against harassment, which has happened to me so many times. If you don't speak you will be blamed. If you speak, other girls who are not as brave also get courage to fight for themselves.

How can we make this field safe for women?

Working places should be as safe as you would want them to be for your sister, daughter



Rabia Noor



Rabia Noor

Journalist, ARY New, Lahore



What inspired you to become a journalist?

I started journalism at BS Honour. I was studying when I joined an English newspaper as a sub-editor then I became Infotainment Desk Incharge within six months. After one year I switched to electronic media in Waqt TV where I worked for three years as a reporter. Then I moved to ARY News where I worked for five years as a reporter. My parents hoped I

would enter in the medical field. I studied for medicine and had the opportunity to work in a medical institute, but at the same time I also tried the test for mass communication, which I passed... so my parents left me to decide whatever field I wanted to choose.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

Females are needed not only in the field of journalism but also in other fields. There are so many issues which a female journalist can highlight better than male journalists can. For instance most people prefer Gynecologists instead of Male doctors. I feel women journalists can detect and highlight certain issues more clearly and accurately.

How can we create more space for women in media?

I think there is already a lot of space for females because more acceptance now. Females are liked and preferred on TV screens. Females should consider their education as well as grooming of their professional skills and their personality.

What are the challenges for female journalists?

This field is very challenging but adventurous as well. Challenging in a sense that our country faces a lot of problems like bomb blasts etc. so in such cases every journalist, both

female and male, has to go and report. There are so many similar cases. When a woman is reporting she is facing different problems, and different attitudes of different people. This field is adventurous in a sense that you are not doing the same work daily there are several different tasks. This field has both negative and positive aspects.

How can we make this field safe for women?

Management should facilitate females in different ways, for example if a woman is going for reporting then a pick-up and drop should be provided to increase her safety.

Aroosa Shaukat



Aroosa Shaukat
Freelancer, Lahore



What inspired you to become a journalist?

I was always inclined towards journalism. I used to read a lot of print media. I started off with an internship at the Express Tribune and received intensive training on field reporting for 6-7 months.

Why is it important to have female journalists?

Hiring women in this field should not be just to make a point. It is also necessary because women are part of society and they should participate in different professions. A journalist is basically a storyteller. Women should be able to look at society through their own eyes and tell their own story.

How can we create more space for women in media?

We need to acknowledge that women can participate and contribute on an equal level. Those who are already in the industry should determine how they can encourage more women to join, and how they can break taboos and barriers. In addition, if we tell positive stories, it will create an enabling environment.

What are the challenges for female journalists, including those related to harassment?

Harassment is a very generic term, usually associated to sexual misconduct, but it has many different forms. The issue of soft beats is one: women should not only be assigned soft stories, for example on exhibitions or art. If they have the skills and fulfill the criteria, then why not other areas? A very big limitation is that women are not assigned hard beats. In the last 6-7 years I have witnessed women being discouraged and pulling back from jobs.

How can we tackle these challenges, especially those related to harassment?

We need to spread awareness on what harassment is, both to the perpetrators and to the victims. It was discussed today that men are also harassed. It needs to be recognized that anyone using his or her power and authority to intimidate is considered harassing.

How can we make this field safe for women?

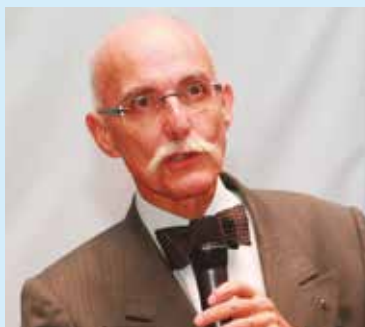
Male and female journalists face similar challenges, but women have specific needs, such as daycare, security for children, travel, etc. If these needs are catered to, it creates a lot of encouragement at the workplace to move forward.



There are few more important professions than journalism. Journalists hold politicians, business leaders and even diplomats to account, and they hold a mirror back to society. Any women in journalism that are harassed in their work, or discriminated against, or don't have their work recognized are a waste of talent and a poor reflection on the profession of journalism. I am delighted that press clubs are committed to working with women journalists to tackle discrimination and harassment, and to bring real gender equality to journalism. Our support for this excellent UN initiative is just a very small element of the work the UK is doing for gender equality. Whether building classrooms in girls' schools, improving maternal health or providing stipends to keep older girls in school longer, the UK is committed to supporting women and girls in Pakistan.

Samuel Health

Head of Communications at the British High Commission, Islamabad



A free, diverse and independent media constitutes one of the cornerstones of a democratic society. The EU is committed to promoting and protecting the freedom of opinion and expression worldwide and condemns the increasing level of intimidation and violence against journalists and other media actors. States must take active steps to enable journalists and other media actors to carry out their work independently, without undue interference and without fear of violence or persecution. The voice of women journalists must be heard equally with that of men, but women media professionals are often subject to particular challenges, including cultural barriers, violence and intimidation, harassment and discrimination. This is the case in many countries across the world and also in Pakistan, where women are underrepresented in the media and often portrayed as weak. It is essential to create a safe space for female journalists in Pakistan and to increase their representation in the media so that freedom of expression can be universally fostered.

Jean-François Cautain

Ambassador of the European Union Delegation to Pakistan



The constitution and the government's policy give women their due rights to end discrimination against them in order to empower them. Women play an important role in maintaining a balance in society and the time has come in Pakistan that society should respond to the importance of women.

Women do not have access to the information about their rights in most cases and society should inform them on the laws regarding their rights, to promote a conducive environment for them.

Marriyum Aurangzeb

Minister of State for Information Broadcasting and National Heritage



The government has taken many steps to safeguard the rights of women in Pakistan. Last year, legislation was strengthened to ensure prosecution of honor-killing and rape cases. However, we recognize that we have to go a long way in creating an equal and just society for half the population of this country. Women are routinely harassed and discriminated against at the workplace. Legislative and policy measures alone cannot solve this problem. Society as a whole needs to change its attitudes towards women. It's a long fight and we are committed to go the extra mile.

Musadik Malik

Official Spokesperson to the Prime Minister of Pakistan



The story of the world is only half-told when it is told only by men. Women need to be at the forefront of the business of reporting, describing, documenting, and explaining the world – otherwise countless voices that we need to hear will remain unheard and our picture of humankind will always be incomplete. All over the globe, there is still a long way to go to achieve gender balance in journalism. Women journalists remain encumbered by unequal opportunities and pay, poor working conditions and sexual harassment.

There is an anemic dearth of women in editorial boards and executive roles in media companies. In Pakistan, over the past couple of decades, there has been a significant rise in the number of women entering media professions, with so many of them making their name among the country's top journalistic talent. There is rich potential in this country for women to become leaders in this field, and it is my sincere hope that Pakistani women will shatter the glass ceiling in media, and build a progressive professional environment that inspires more and more women to enter the field of journalism.

Dr. Stefanie Burri

Director, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Pakistan



We are committed to promoting and facilitating the empowerment of female Pakistani journalists, and I am very proud to announce today the establishment of a working group for women from the media industry. It will be hosted by the UN Information Centre and will provide a platform for exchange, dialogue, learning, advocacy and support. We'll work in partnership with the press clubs, with the federal and provincial government stakeholders, and with member states. We will also seek the contribution of the many well experienced men working in the media industry: it's very important to stress that the advancement of women's rights cannot happen without the full engagement of all of us.

Vittorio Cammarota

Director, United Nations Information Centre, Islamabad



The importance of female journalists is undeniable. The seminar on challenges and success stories of women in media organized by the UNIC, the British High Commission, and the National Press Club (NPC) was very useful because of the participation by press club officials from across the country. It highlighted various measures taken by the NPC for its female members, such as electing a vice president, a joint secretary, and two members in its executive body on reserved seats for women. Another woman was also nominated for a seat in the executive body. We try to address their issues on a priority basis and to ensure that they do not feel inferior to their male counterparts. We want them to have a clean working environment and just as many opportunities as men do.

Naveed Akbar

Vice President, National Press Club



We are encouraged to see more women joining journalism but there is a need to improve the quality of their work. In news channels highly qualified women are made to sit silently with their male counterparts doing all the talking. Women need to be given decision-making positions. They need to raise their voices for their rights. Female journalists face discrimination at the workplace. They're not allowed to work on beats they want to cover. When they go out in the field to do their work, people do not look at them positively in certain parts of the country. We must change our mindsets, break these stereotypes, and establish ourselves as journalists, not women who should just look 'hot' on television.

Farzana Ali

Bureau Chief, Aaj News, Peshawar



People working in the glamorous world of media are in such a unique place to bring about change in society, but many probably don't even realize what a strong position they are in. They can not only make life better for themselves, but also play a crucial role in helping others improve theirs. This can be seen while for instance looking at just one of the many issues faced by a majority of women, sexual harassment. The government of Pakistan has passed 2 laws to curb this stigmatized phenomenon, which progressive-minded senior management can use as tools to create a harassment-free environment. All that is needed is a strong will, implementing the law will do the trick! If you need help in how to comply, go to <http://www.aasha.org.pk> and check out the 'Step by Step Instructions on How to Comply with the Law.

Maliha Hussain

Executive Director at Mehargarh: A Center for Learning



It was a truly inspiring experience for me to participate in the United Nations' event for Women's Day, and to meet some of the world's bravest journalists.

Every country brings challenges for female journalists. Just in the past year, a major U.S. television news channel was faced with multiple allegations of sexual harassment.

So there are a few countries where it is easy to be a woman journalist. Yet, my experience tells me each of us has something to teach one another – no matter our origins or how junior or senior our titles. One reason I love journalism so much is that I am always learning from the people I interact with. This Women's Day was no exception. Pakistan, as we know, presents extraordinary challenges for women. But such challenges also present extraordinary opportunity for change. It is my firm belief that the women in that auditorium will be part of that change.

Kay Johnson

Bureau Chief for Afghanistan and Pakistan at Reuters News



Having a panel discussion about women in media on such a scale was something that was missing from the main stage of the working environment, it was a great first step in really bringing to focus the hurdles and issues women face. Having representatives from government and civil society is the only way forward, and having worked in Pakistan media for almost 4 years it was great to see women coming together on one platform with the government, taking interest in the conversation that was happening. I hope the event really helps to empower women and men in continuing to voice and improve the situation.

Maha Makhdam

Anchorperson at Pakistan Television, Islamabad



As journalists we consider ourselves the voice of the voiceless. But you see women within the media industry who are facing issues of abuse and harassment and not speaking up. It's strange that journalists try to convince victims of abuse to speak up but don't speak about their own abuse. I had the courage to speak about harassment at the workplace. I lost my job and was reviled, but this step has emboldened other women and made a difference.

A lot of our senior colleagues say that a journalist is a journalist and gender doesn't matter. But when you see that women are discriminated against blatantly, it becomes imperative to do something. I feel women in media should support each other. They're not just facing harassment, but a more general disparity. Women are discriminated against when they are given assignments, in their salary structure, and leaves, there are issues when it comes to transport...we have to solve these problems together. Men would never demand paid maternity leave or daycare centres. We should have women leaders. Those women who have the courage to speak up should come forward and become the voice of those who work on desks, who are not famous anchors but are true journalists.

Tanzeela Mazhar

Journalist



As family, friends and colleagues, women have touched my life in one way or the other and I am always grateful for the contribution that they have made in helping me become a better person and professional. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why moderating the Women’s Day event is nothing but a privilege for me, where I get the chance to highlight the many challenges ladies face in our society. The Women’s Day event at the UNIC gave me an opportunity to learn about how Pakistani women in white collar jobs struggle every day to get the job done, knowing that more often than not they will not get the same recognition that her male counterparts enjoy.

Waqas Rafique

Communication Officer, FAO
Islamabad



One of my experiences of working with women in journalism was that they brought value and lots of hard work to our team. We were one of the most diverse teams in any newsroom in Pakistan, and we were richer because of it.”

Kamal Siddiqi

Director, Centre for Excellence in
Journalism, Karachi



Women are not the only ones who face harassment at work. Men do too. However, the kinds of harassment each faces are unique to their gender and require different solutions. Providing these solutions for women is a worthwhile investment because of the diversity and value they bring to the workplace. No company can afford to ignore the perspective of half the world’s population.

Ayesha Tanzeem

Voice of America Bureau
Chief for Afghanistan and
Pakistan

Out of school for a decade: A refugee girl finally finds a school



An Afghan girl had never been to school, but years later found a ray of hope. Tahira Naz's family

and relatives did not want to send her to school due to cultural reasons, and to the fact that formal schools were too far from her home. Her father was also reluctant to send her as she was living in an extended family system, and her male cousin objected. Now she feels overjoyed, as her dream to become a doctor is one step closer from being realized.

Born and raised in Pakistan, 14-year-old Tahira recently enrolled into one of the home-based schools near her house in the suburbs of Peshawar, the capital city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. She now studies in the fourth grade. UNHCR has initiated a non-formal learning programme- in addition to supporting a regular formal education programme- under funding from the IKEA foundation, in the home-based girls school arrangement in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. This programme provides accessible opportunities for Afghan girls who would not otherwise be able to obtain an education, either because their parents prevented them, or because public schools are too difficult to get to. Adolescent girls are able to access education within the home setting and at their convenience. In 2016, 899 ad-



olescent girls were given admission in 30 home-based girls schools in the province. Some 30 female teachers received training on the non-formal accelerated curriculum used in the programme. In addition, all home-based girls schools are equipped with solar panels to ensure uninterrupted electricity.

"I am very happy that I am going to school like other kids," said Tahira, who looks a bit older than her classmates but is visibly very proud to be with them.

Her father works at a shop in a local market. His reluctance has diminished and he is now encouraging her to complete her education.

Her two elder sisters also acquired education years back, when school was nearby their old home in the Kacha

Ghari camp in Peshawar. One of her sisters married a dentist in Nangarhar province in Afghanistan and is now assisting her husband in dentistry.

"I want to become a doctor," she said. She is optimistic about the restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan. Once she becomes a doctor she will work in Afghanistan.

"It is heartening that Tahira has learnt to read and write in only one year," said her teacher.

Nazra's sewing business in village Pak Ismail Khel, Bannu



Patriarchal family systems are normal in conservative areas like Bannu, and women's mo-

bility is restricted to the domestic space. While a complete transition is difficult and time-consuming, culturally sensitive development interventions can play a key role in creating spaces for young women to emerge as sources of economic support for their families, consequently expanding their roles beyond the domestic sphere. Nazra, a 28-year old resident of village Pak Ismail Khel in Bannu is a case in point.

Spending most of her time doing domestic chores, her household income came from her father, a rickshaw driver, and her older brother. However, the sudden death of her brother meant her father's sole income was insufficient for the family. Now the eldest sibling in the family, Nazra felt burdened by a sense of responsibility. She had no skills and no education.

The situation changed when she attended a 20-day tailoring skills training under UNDP's Youth and Social Cohesion Project (YSCP). She learned quickly, and began stitching clothes for her family to save money. Word of her skill spread, and she was soon making clothes for wom-



en in the village.

Nazra now supports her father financially and is paying for her mother's medical treatment. She is acknowledged across the village as an expert tailor and even performs her own maintenance and repair work on her sewing machine, a skill other tailors often ask for, for their own machines.

"I am thankful to UNDP for initiating this skills development course in my village. My father was having difficulties supporting the family after my brother's demise. I am very happy because I am financially supporting my family and paying for my mother's medical treatment" she said.

Building inclusive livelihoods



“In my village, after the father grows old, the eldest brother is responsible for providing financial support to the family,” says Samiullah Khan, a young man aged 23 living in Haibak Sherza Khan village, Bannu district, in Pakistan’s Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. “I felt helpless because I have four unmarried sisters and my younger brothers were hardly making ends meet.”

Despite being the eldest son, Sami was unable to fulfill what he saw as his duty to his family. Born with a medical condition that restricted his physical growth and mobility, Sami could not work as a day laborer, the typical occupation of uneducated men in his village. Over the years, his anger and frustration grew, aggravated by the social and psychological pressures of being unable to support his younger siblings financially.

Disability, whether physical or mental, magnifies the vulnerability of the poor, undermining the ability to earn a livelihood and increasing dependence on others. This situation is compounded by the absence of institutional provisions for disabled people. In Bannu district, where



much of the population is deprived even of basic facilities, disabled people face almost insurmountable problems in accessing opportunities for economic growth and personal development.

Thanks to the Youth and Social Cohesion Project (YSCP) supported by the UNDP, however, Sami’s future no longer seems bleak to him. A major component of this project is to enhance the skills of young people to earn livelihoods and thus provide them with opportunities for economic empowerment, steering them away from possible involvement in the violence and conflict that has wracked this part of Pakistan in recent years.

Sami was identified as a promising candidate for a tailoring course organized by the project. After com-

pleting the training, he was hired by a tailor in his village to work on daily wages. Today, Sami is earning a regular income, which has provided much needed financial support to his family.

The small opening that UNDP’s initiative provided to Sami has opened broader avenues. Now, he is planning to set up his own tailoring business.

“I am thankful to UNDP for providing me with an opportunity to earn my own money – now I am also a pillar of financial support for my family”, he says.

Fighting inequality



“If you are determined to achieve something, success will happen no matter how big the challenge may be.” says Safia, Lady Constable with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police from Charsadda who has been deployed in Swat, an area that was severely affected by military conflict.

As things began to return to normal, almost a decade later injustice and insecurity persisted and this was especially true for women in Swat who had no direct access to justice.

In these circumstances, Safia had a strong resolve to join the Police force as she believed she could be the change that the women in the area so desperately needed. She wanted to change the feeling of distrust towards the Police force that is felt among the people.

“People’s perception of the Police is usually negative, but after joining it, I realised that it is dedicated to providing peace and justice”, said Safia.

Safia has been serving with the KP police for 15 years and has faced many challenges during her professional career, however she never



gave up her determination to provide justice to Swat’s women.

“I was shot with six bullets in an encounter in 2011. The experience has only strengthened my resolve. The KP Police has come a long way in the last 15 years - we have gained respect and become empowered as women police officers” said Safia.

As the women of Swat are gradually becoming more empowered, Safia’s conviction to serve the people of Pakistan has only increased. She believes that every person has an ability to be a change agent and every small effort counts towards making a difference.

The UNDP aims to build effective and capable governance institutions that are accountable and transparent, inclusive and respon-

sive to facilitate the participation of women and the poor.

Women lawyers take the lead in Swat



Ever since she was a child, Samreen Hakeem's ambition was to become a lawyer. Growing up in Swat district in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, she observed how the women around her needed to be made aware of their basic rights. Yet, with virtually no trained female lawyers – and few educated women generally – accessing legal advice and then acting on it was a distant dream in this highly segregated society.

Today, Samreen has realized her dream. A fully trained lawyer, she now provides legal aid in Swat.

Samreen's journey was made possible through assistance from the UNDP's Strengthening the Rule of Law project. Funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, this project aimed to build trust in legal institutions in areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that had been affected by insecurity and fighting between militants and the government. In an area where women had been denied their rights, establishing a cohort of female lawyers who could provide legal assistance to their sisters was a priority.

Samreen was awarded a scholarship to complete her LLB degree. As soon as she completed her education she



was recruited to the legal aid desk by a Swat-based civil society organization, the Holistic Understanding for Justified Research and Action (HUJRA).

"As I became a lawyer I did not possess any book on professional law to study for my pleading and used to borrow books from counterparts," she says. "UNDP once again played a vital role in my career and helped me to establish my own library and provided the most important books which can be utilized on a daily basis."

Recognizing that women face significant barriers in practicing law in this conservative region, UNDP took this assistance a step further. "UNDP also selected me for capacity building trainings which were required at the initial stage as I was not confident to institute my case, conduct cross-examinations, manage files or know how to present myself before the honourable court," Samreen says.

Thanks to this support, Samreen has since delivered more than 100 legal

awareness sessions for over 1,000 women, many of whom had never before had the opportunity to receive legal advice. She has also provided pro bono services for women who cannot afford legal care. She has specialized in family law and has dealt with cases related to violence against women, inheritance, and watta satta, a traditional form of marriage associated to forced marriage and domestic violence.

She says, "I have heard about the problems being faced by working lawyers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but never came across any difficulty myself, because I am an open-minded lawyer who knows and respects the norms of my society. This gives me the courage to continue support to the vulnerable community of Swat." With UNDP support, Samreen Hakeem realized a long-held ambition to provide legal assistance to women in the troubled area of Swat, Pakistan.

A Hope – against all odds



4 QUALITY EDUCATION
معیاری تعلیم

Shaheena, a 10-year-old resident of a small village in the district of Muzaffargarh, recalls the sad moment when she was told to quit school as her family could no longer afford her education.

Leaving school meant helping her family with household activities and care for her newborn brother.

With tears rolling from her eyes, Shaheena's mother recalls that one day, while shopping for a relative's marriage, her daughter kept on insisting to get a school uniform.

Shaheena's village, Bait Baste Dharay, is one of the most deprived villages of the district of Muzaffargarh, where

more than half of the residents are laborers.

Considering the general circumstances, girls reaching the age of 12-13 years often get married in order to lessen the financial burden of their families.

Life, however, took a surprising turn for Shaheena when her father was elected the representative of a local community group facilitated by Plan International UNESCO's implementing partner in the Muzaffargarh District. Shaheena's father could not think of sensitizing other parents to sending their girls to school without first thinking of his own daughter.

Shaheena is now back to school and is among many other girls who have also been re-admitted through community mobilization efforts under the GREP Programme in Muzaffargarh.

UNESCO's Girls Right to Education Programme (GREP) in Pakistan focuses on bringing girls to school, helping them stay there and complete quality primary education. GREP works with a wide range of implementing partners and in close collaboration with the government in all provinces and areas of Pakistan

My School – A Territory under the Banyan Tree



Asha and Bharmi, both under 10 years of age, are residents of Tharparker. This is a poverty stricken district in the Sindh Province. Both Asha and Bharmi must walk every morning to fetch water from a nearby source.

On their way to the water source, Asha and Bharmi always pass by a government girls' primary school under a Banyan tree and wish they had a slate instead of a water pitcher in their hands.

Despite being enrolled in school, Asha's and Bharmi's parents did not consider education for girls was meaningful. Instead, the girls were engaged in household affairs, such as fetching

water, cooking meals, and cleaning.

Tharparker suffers from frequent and prolonged drought. Although it is the district in the province with the largest number of primary schools, most of them remain non-functional due to low enrolment of girls. Lack of community awareness is a major dilemma and Asha and Bharmi's families are not an exception.

'BaanhBeli', a local implementing partner of UNESCO's GREP Programme, is active in the district and undertakes a number of advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns to motivate local communities to send their girls to school.

Asha's and Bharmi's parents joined a consultative meeting organized by BaanhBeli and soon realized they had not done justice to their girls. Asha and Bharmi were sent back to school the very next day and now have bigger dreams for their future.

UNESCO's Girls Right to Education Programme (GREP) in Pakistan focuses on bringing girls to school, helping them stay there and complete quality primary education. GREP works with a wide range of implementing partners and in close collaboration with the government in all provinces and areas of Pakistan

A school teacher's resolution to educate students about proper hygiene



Sumaira is the 25 year old chairperson of UC-4, Gadap Town, Karachi's WASH Club, and a teacher at her local area school, Madinat-ul-Iqra. When the social mobilization team developed under a WASH initiative by UNICEF and UN-Habitat visited Madinat-ul-Iqra, they were impressed by Sumaira and her knowledge about sanitation and hygiene standards.

The team conducted a hygiene session in her classroom, and later on sat with her to discuss in detail the benefits of maintaining proper health and hygiene at not just the school level, but at a personal level as well. She was enthusiastic and forthcoming about her commitment towards the cause and promised the team that she would try her best in raising awareness and changing behaviors of her students and fellow staff members.

Sumaira said: "It is heartening to see that there are people outside our community who care for our wellbeing too, we appreciate the time and effort that has been devoted by the social mobilization team towards increasing the children's knowledge about WASH through



this awareness session and it is my request that such initiatives should be undertaken on a regular basis." Currently, Sumaira is busy creating awareness across her community and encouraging her students to educate their parents and relatives about proper hygiene practices, such that the message trickles down to all levels of the community structure and brings about a collective change.

Scholarship programme gives hope to Afghan refugee girl



18-year-old Tamanna's only support is her mother, who raised her through many

financial and social challenges. Her father was killed in Afghanistan in 2007 and her younger brother has been missing for three years. In 2008 the family returned to Pakistan.

Holding a bachelor degree in social science, Nooria Siddique, mother of Tamanna struggled to pay to educate her daughter after her husband died. She had many jobs, such as tailoring, teaching, a job with an NGO. "I couldn't afford to enrol Tamanna in any school, but I could see light at the end of the tunnel and knew that soon our miseries will lift," she recalls.

Nooria Siddique started working with an NGO in Peshawar as well tailoring and sewing clothes at the Nasir Bagh camp. "I would earn Rs 4000 (USD 40) per month which was not enough to pay for the house rent," she said. When working outside, it was difficult to leave behind three-year-old Tamanna as her step-brother would beat her at home. "After some time I lost my job in the NGO and started teaching at a school which paved the way for me to bring along Tamanna with me," she recalled. "Amid many challenges, I supported my daughter to study," she said. "In a society where women usually rely on men for protection, it was difficult for us to survive without male support. It's



hard to express in words what we have gone through during these years," she says while taking a deep breath.

Tamanna now works as assistant to a dental surgeon in Peshawar, the capital city in the north-west of Pakistan and is studying to be a dental technician at one of the local colleges. "We borrowed money to continue my studies as we couldn't pay for college fee," Tamanna said.

When she heard about the DAFI (Deutsche Akademische Flüchtlings Initiative) scholarship programme, she felt this could change her life. Tamanna applied and was selected. "Now I am relieved as I don't have to worry about fees as this scholarship will cover my expenses for four years," she said.

Founded in 1992 by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and implemented by UNHCR, the programme has awarded over 9,300 refugees in higher education scholarships. In Pakistan, UNHCR has been imple-

menting DAFI scholarships since 1992 and has supported more than 1,200 students.

The scholarship covers a wide range of costs from tuition fees and study materials, to food, transport, accommodation and other necessities. Preparatory and language classes based on students' needs, as well as activities encouraging peer support are some of the other resources available to DAFI students.

When Tamanna first got admission to the dentistry institute, she was hesitant to compete with the male students as she was the only woman in her class. "My male classmates would make fun of me, but I surprised them when I secured the top position in my first semester," she said, beaming with pride. Tamanna's only dream is to become a dental surgeon or a medical professor. "I know becoming a doctor costs a lot which I can't afford. But I believe dreams come true when a person is devoted," she said. "I will make it possible and this is my Tamanna." The name Tamanna means 'desire' in Urdu. During times when she is stressed, she tries to alleviate her past painful experiences through her paintings and calligraphy. She also reads books and bake cakes.

"I want to achieve my goals and extend support to students like me who are in need because I have gone through so much," she says.



Government of Pakistan committed to development of wool sector in Balochistan



On April 6, the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MN-FSR) in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organized a one day workshop on ‘National Wool Development Programme’ at the FAO Representation premises in Islamabad.

Mr. Sikandar Hayat Khan Bosan, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research chaired this workshop, which sought suggestions and recommendations for the best way forward in developing the wool sector in Balochistan, in order to improve the rural economy of the province by implementing a long term sustainable wool development programme in Pakistan. Speaking on the occasion Minister Bosan said: “There is a need to expand and professionalize the wool sector in Balochistan which accounts for 50% of sheep in Pakistan with eventual expansion to other parts of the country. Workshops like this will help bring all stakeholders on

one platform and this will lead to a more unified and complete approach towards uplift of wool farming and relevant sectors”. He also said that the Government with the help of FAO and USAID are progressing steadily in highlighting the issues related to wool production and improving the conditions for local livestock farmers. The wool programme will be coordinated by FAO in close cooperation with the Government of Balochistan and the Federal Government (MN-FSR) as main programme partners and the DGs of Sindh, Punjab and KP at a later stage.

Mr. Patrick T. Evans, FAO Representative to Pakistan, informed the participants that wool has a high potential for development in Balochistan and this important resource will be used to improve livelihoods of rural farmers, including women. He invited the participants to make practical recommendations and financial contribution for development of the wool value chain in Balochistan.

Mr. Ubaidullah Jan Babat, Adviser to the Chief Minister Balochistan on Livestock, Forest and Environment Department, was also present on the occasion along with representatives from government and development sector organizations.

A well-functioning wool value chain in Balochistan will create employment for herders, shearers, wool washers, sorters, graders, balers, spinners, dyers, traders and transporters. Much of this work can be done by women. The proposed program (From Sheep to Shawl) will cover all aspects of the wool value chain from improved and sustainable rangeland management to vaccination, better feeding of sheep, delivery of shearing services and added value activities such as carpet making.

Prime Minister directs the Mayor to establish a food authority in Islamabad



On April 10, while at the launch of the Pilot Street Food Safety Programme (PSFSP) for Islamabad at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) premises in Islamabad, Prime Minister Mr. Nawaz Sharif directed the Mayor of Islamabad and Chairman Capital Development Authority, Mr. Ansar Sheikh to establish a food authority in the city.

Mr. Ansar Sheikh welcomed the collaboration, stating that in Pakistan 300,000 children under the age of 5 die every year from diarrhoea resulting from unhygienic conditions, including food contamination. He highlighted the urgency to control the situation.

To mark the launch, an inception workshop was held at FAO Representation premises in Islamabad with the collaboration of FAO and the Capital Development Authority (CDA), bringing all stakeholders on board to help identify ways to work together and develop a locally tailored food safety policy.

Mr. Patrick T. Evans, FAO Representative in Islamabad stressed that com-

bined efforts are required to make street food a safe option for consumers.

He also said: “We have to work together to make needs assessment, raise awareness, build capacity and effectively monitor in order to improve livelihoods of those involved in the street food business.”

Participants from the health and education sector highlighted that with growing trade, industrialization, urbanization, and economic prosperity eating behaviours and lifestyles have changed from cooking and eating at home to frequent dining out. Most vendors are ignorant of personal and food hygiene and use substandard food additives (colors, flavorings etc.), adulterants and contaminants, that result in serious threats to human health. Food associated diseases are a source of substantial burden on households, hospitals and medical providers, compromising the work efficiency of the population and consequently causing huge economic loss-

es to the country.

Mr. Yousaf Zafar, Chairman PARC, Director General National Agriculture Research Center (NARC), Dr. Azeem Khan and Dr Hasan Orooj, Director General Health, Metropolitan Corporation of Islamabad were also present at the inception workshop.

Salient features of the programme include: mapping of the street food vendors in Islamabad; conducting a field survey to assess the food safety situation of street food vendors; development a food safety training manual for street food vendors; capacity building of street food vendors and other stakeholders; development a food safety policy for Islamabad; establishing Islamabad as a model for the food safety system and recognizing as a resource center for other parts of the country; and dissemination and replication of food safety policy and programs in provinces and regions



Art pieces highlight “zero hunger” in Lahore



An exhibition highlighting the work of young artists from five arts schools of Pakistan was

opened at the National College of Arts (NCA) in Lahore this April, aiming at promoting the cause of zero hunger in Pakistan through visual arts.

The competition named ‘We the Peoples, We the Arts’ was organized last October by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Embassy of Switzerland, in partnership with the UNIC to mark 50 years of SDC’s cooperation with Pakistan. Students from various art colleges were invited to develop sculptures, miniature paintings or painting on the theme of zero hunger.

The final exhibition aims to provide Pakistani students with rare opportunity to gain visibility at an international level. Speaking of the outcome, Stefanie Burri, Head of SDC said: “This provides important exposure to the talented young artists by facilitating their access to the international art and culture markets and networks. We hope that the young artists will make use of the opportunities, recognition and financial support this competition will provide”.

Quddus Mirza, Head of Department, Fine Arts commenting on the art pieces said: “Issues such as hunger, and right to information are a few points every human being associates and identifies



with”, adding that what was creation reveals each artist’s individuality, vigour and vitality.

Haseeb Ullah Zafar, winner of the ‘sculpture’ division expressed his feelings about hunger: “Hunger to me is synonymous with waste. While walking in front of butcher shops, seeing the countless scraps of meat thrown away, covered in dirt, affected me deeply and forced me to think of their wasted purpose. Now not even the animals could consume the decaying flesh. I wanted to build something solid to convey the magnitude of waste. So I built a 4ft tall pillar of figurative flesh.”

Tooba Ashraf, winner of the ‘painting’ division said: “Art has always possessed the power to bring some kind of change to the negativity prevailing in society. For me, the zero hunger competition was a platform where I

was able to use my art to convey my thoughts and emotions to the viewer. I strongly support this thoughtful initiative and hope to see more of such competitions in the future”.

The other winner was Gina Gul, who won the award for the miniature painting.

Vittorio Cammarota, Director, UNIC, highly appreciated Pakistani youth, who have expressed their innovative thoughts through art: “Young people are innovative and creative problem solvers, and they are the key to helping communities and improving the long-term well-being of all citizens. We must continue to encourage initiatives that engage and empower youth, as they are a source of social cohesion that will help Pakistan navigate difficult times and achieve a better future for all”.



Community based disaster risk management and school safety programmes launched in Balochistan



The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Balochistan in collaboration with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS) Pakistan have launched two new programmes aimed at reducing the risks posed by natural disasters in Balochistan: the Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) and School Safety programmes.

The Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE) has provided the financial support for the implementation of these projects in two hazard-prone districts: Nasirabad and Jaffarabad of Balochistan. WFP's CBDRM and school safety programmes will benefit as many as 6,546 people, including school children, teachers, school safety committees, local community members, trainers, and local and district government officials from 40 schools in 14 villages in two districts. The programme initiatives will also benefit more than 3,000 community members by increasing their knowl-

edge on minimizing loss of lives and properties during disasters or emergencies.

In addition, WFP will provide schools with various safety kits; and informative and communication materials, to create awareness on disaster preparedness and response.

The chief guest at the occasion, the honorable Minister Education Mr. Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal welcomed the programmes saying: "The Government of Balochistan is working to improve the lives of the people through providing basic necessities of life including food, education, shelter etc. The Government is also working to raise awareness among the communities to prevent them from natural disasters".

This was echoed by Muhammad Tariq, Director General PDMA, who highlighted the "dire need to spread the CBDRM and School Safety programmes across the province".

WFP Pakistan Head of Policy and Programme Mr. William Affif said: "Pakistan has suffered from consecutive natural disasters and emergencies in the recent past including devastating earthquakes and flooding, causing the unfortunate loss to human and animal lives. These losses can be minimized by educating people on disaster risk management and response strategies".

Nawab Ali Khan, Chief Executive Officer, FOCUS highlighted the impor-



tance of these initiatives in Pakistan, as the communities living in hazard prone areas are suffering from natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides etc. for last couple of years. He further added that "disaster risk management is a shared responsibility".

The Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad is pleased to have contributed to the School Safety Program in Balochistan. "As a long term development partner of Pakistan, it is important for the government and people of Norway to help Pakistan prepare for and cope with a variety of natural disasters. We believe that a smart and efficient way of doing this is to teach children and local communities how to reduce risks, act in emergency situations and respond when disaster hits."



WFP signed an annual work plan agreement with NDMA



The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Pakistan is

proud to expand its partnership with the Pakistan Red Crescent (PRC) over the next two-years, to focus on areas such as Emergency Response, Cash-Based Transfers (CBT), Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), School Safety and Supply Chain, Logistics and Warehouse Management.

“We have been partnering very effectively with the PRC to deliver food assistance in FATA over the past three years,” said Finbarr Curran, WFP Pakistan Country Director and Representative. “This expanded partnership will allow us to leverage each of our strengths to deliver better assistance in new areas of collaboration.”

WFP will benefit from the PRC’s huge network of volunteers from across the country. These volunteers are not only associated with various PRC interventions but can also be engaged in case of any disaster or emergency situation. Since the PRC does not require a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the govern-



ment, joint WFP-PRC emergency response activities will be able start immediately, greatly improving response time.

PRC will benefit from WFP’s vast network of logistics and supply chain. This includes the procurement of food items in-country, as well as from other countries, and its shipment to various locations in the country using different modes of transportation (Road, Air, etc.). WFP & PRC will leverage each other’s storage facility networks and collaborate in the area of warehouse management, logistics and supply chain. WFP & PRC will look into the possibility of integrating disaster risk reduction activities along similar projects, in order to maximize the impact.

In line with SDG 17: Partnership,

the signing of this two-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will improve the effectiveness of both organizations in achieving other SDGs, namely SDG2: Zero Hunger and SDG13: Climate Action.

The Pakistan Red Crescent Secretary General, Ghulam Muhammad Awan said that the PRC is dynamic, self-reliant and committed to preventing and alleviating human sufferings: “Partnering with the World Food Programme will help us to deliver effective assistance in areas of our work”.



UNODC enhances capacities of the law enforcement agencies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



A three-day training course on Drugs and Precursors Identification, organized by the UNODC Country Office Pakistan (UNODC COPAK) and sponsored by the Embassy of Japan, concluded on March 22 at the Pearl Continental Hotel, Peshawar. This was one of the many deliverables under a project for ‘Strengthening Border Security Against Illicit Drug Trafficking and Related Transnational Organized Crime’ (2016-2019), signed between the Government of Japan and UNODC in March 2017. In his opening remarks Mr. Naweed Riaz, International Law Enforcement Advisor UNODC, welcomed the participants and stressed the importance of UNODC’s global mandates, including the countering of transnational organized crime and illicit trafficking, noting the importance of the current training in the context of UNODC’s Country Programme for Pakistan. Mr. Riaz specially thanked the Government of Pakistan for its continued cooperation; and greatly appreciated GoP and its law enforcement agencies for making concerted and highly commendable efforts in interdicting and seizing large amounts of illicit



drugs and illegally diverted precursor chemicals destined for international markets.

The object of this training was to build the capacity of field officers to identify and interdict drugs and precursors trafficking. The participants were also briefed on the overall and prevalent drug situation in the region, with special emphasis on the diversion of precursor chemicals.

In total 22 officials attended the training course. The participants brought a wealth of experience from their respective fields, making it both practical and innovative.

Concluding the event, the Training Certificates were distributed by Mr. Dar Ali Khattak, DIG Investigation, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, who asked the training participants to implement the knowledge thus gained in their respective roles; and stated that it would be mandatory for these trained officials to transfer their new

skills in turn by conducting such training at their own duty stations.

In her closing remarks Ms. Anila Rahim, Programme Officer (Precursors) UNODC, emphasized the importance of interagency cooperation in tackling the issue. She extended special thanks to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police team for their seminal support and cooperation in providing their e-learning centre for this training.



UNODC delivers 100 bullet proof vests to KPK police



UNODC Representative, Mr. César Guedes called on the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Mr. Salahuddin Khan Mehsud at his office in CPO Peshawar on April 11.

During the meeting Mr. Guedes congratulated Mr. Mehsud on his new appointment as the IGP KP and appreciated the work of KP Police in fighting the menace of terrorism as a front line force. He lauded the efforts of Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in effectively responding to the incidents of terrorism, and appreciated the high rate of successful prosecutions in terrorism related cases.

Mr. Guedes briefed the IGP KP on UNODC's commitment through its continued support to the law enforcement agencies in KP and highlighted the importance of equipping the CTD Police personnel with necessary safety equipment to strengthen their personnel security while contributing to enhance the operational capacity for patrolling. On this occasion Mr. Guedes handed-over 100 bullet proof vests to KP Police under the agreed framework of UNODC Country Programme II



(2016-2019).

Mr. Mehsud informed the delegation that KP police has been focusing on capacity building of its personnel to enable them to discharge their duties more effectively for improving the governance related challenges presently faced by the province. He further mentioned that in order to address the training needs of the KP Police, six specialized training schools have been established in different parts of the province, where training is conducted round the year to keep the police personnel abreast on the emerging crime types. He proposed to the UNODC delegation to extend all possible support to strengthen the training capacities of these schools to enhance operational efficacy of the Police. Additionally, Mr. Mehsud also sought UNODC's support for

improving the capacity and tactical maneuverability of CTD personnel. Lastly, Mr. Mehsud was highly appreciative for the technical support rendered by the UNODC to KP Police and assured his continued support in all mutual endeavors.

Why raising awareness about human trafficking and migrant smuggling matters



Under the EU funded Global Action to Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO. ACT) project, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), conducted a two-day police and community awareness training on human trafficking and migrant smuggling in Peshawar on April 17.

Over the last three decades Peshawar has dealt with a large influx of Afghan refugees and the Jalozaï refugee camp is also in close proximity. Taking this into account, the organisers felt that raising awareness about Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM) needed to be highlighted.

The training, chaired by the Additional Director of the FIA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zone, Mr. Imran Shahid, forms part of a series of awareness raising workshops that will be rolled out for police and civil society in areas particularly affected by these two crimes. 25 police officials and 25 civil society representatives took part in the training, of which main aim is to provide education on the crimes of TIP and SOM, particularly the ad-



verse impact on victims and prevention and protection measures that should be in place.

Experts from the FIA, UNODC and civil society delivered the session that included the sharing of the latest trends on TIP and SOM. In addition, experts highlighted the importance of applying the correct sections and articles under Pakistani law

Concluding the event, Mr. Shahid said that he appreciated the efforts of UNODC and stressed the need for greater coordination between the police and the FIA. He also pointed out that criminal networks had become increasingly good at luring vulnerable people into being exploited and that much more needed to be done in terms of awareness raising to help prevent TIP and SOM. He noted that UNODC, in coordination with the FIA, had drafted two new laws currently awaiting Senate approval on TIP and SOM. He went on to explain that human trafficking within Pakistan

accounts, on an annual basis, for millions of people being forced into bonded labor at brick kilns, in agriculture, the carpet industry and was keen to stress that the majority of the victims are women and children.

Highlighting the role of civil society, Mr. Shahid concluded by saying that “civil society plays a vital role in helping to raise awareness to prevent TIP and SOM as well as in the rehabilitation process. Much more needs to be done in terms of raising awareness amongst a broader section of society, including local communities, policy makers, local government representatives and the media”.



UNPLUGGED programme for Pakistani youth



It consists of a handbook for teachers, explaining and guiding them on ways to interact with students for the transfer of required knowledge and skills. There is also a workbook for students which provides information about drugs, case studies, stories, and questions related to drug use and its negative effects.

Has the Unplugged programme been piloted in Pakistan?

César Guedes: UNODC in collaboration with the provincial education departments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have already piloted the Unplugged programme in eight public schools in four districts of the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces including Lahore, Rawalpindi, Peshawar and Abbottabad for children aged between 10-16 years.

In this programme 16 teachers from public schools were trained on the Unplugged module by an International Unplugged trainer. The trained teachers from the selected public schools then passed on the knowledge gained to the students in their respective schools, and around 700 students participated in this programme.

Cristina von Sperling Afridi: After the successful pilot of the Unplugged programme by UNODC, the Karim Khan Welfare Foundation (KKAWF) will now implement this programme in schools in private and public sectors.

Cesar Guedes
Country Representative, UNODC

Cristina Von Sperling Afridi
Chairperson, Karim Khan Afridi Welfare Foundation

What is the Unplugged programme and how do you think that the students in Pakistan can benefit from it?

César Guedes: The Unplugged module has been developed by the European Union Drug Abuse Prevention Programme and has already been successfully piloted and evaluated in EU countries.

The Unplugged programme involves training and resource materials to be delivered to young teenagers at school based on a social influences approach to promote positive health behavior generally, and substance abuse prevention specifically.





What is the future of Unplugged programme?

César Guedes: UNODC will continue to provide technical assistance in the implementation of the Unplugged programme and similar drug prevention programmes for youth in schools and other settings through government and civil society organizations.

Cristina von Sperling Afridi: KKA-WF is starting the programme in public schools in Gujrat and Islamabad and have plans to scale up the intervention and bring this programme to not only public schools in other cities but also in private schools.





European Union confirms need for strong international collaboration to counter terrorism



In their resolve to support the efforts of the Government of Pakistan to counter terrorism threats, the European Union and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Country Office Pakistan have launched a three-year technical assistance programme for strengthening the criminal justice response in Pakistan towards the issue.

The project will improve investigative processes and promote the use of forensic evidence during the prosecution stages of terrorism related cases. It will also strengthen the co-ordination between the KP Home Department, Police and Prosecution, the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police.

With the financial support of 7 million euros by the European Union, “Pakistan’s Action to Counter Terrorism with a special reference to Khyber Pakhtunkhawa” (PACT) project was developed by the NACTA on behalf of the Government of Pakistan, in collaboration with the UNODC.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Sheikh Muhammad Umar, Director Gener-



al, NACTA appreciated and recognized the role of the international community, particularly the European Union and UNODC in working closely with NACTA for building its capacity for an effective response to combat terrorism.

“More than ever there is a need for strong international collaboration to counter terrorism. This will remain a top priority in the EU’s security dialogue with Pakistan. PACT is a logical “next step” in this longstanding solid partnership, said H.E. Jean-François Cautain, EU Ambassador to Pakistan in his key remarks.

The UNODC Country Representative Mr. Cesar Guédes highlighted the importance of the project and mentioned that “UNODC has been collaborating with the Government of Pakistan for over 37 years, and for the first time it would be providing assistance in this area by working closely with the relevant stakeholders at both provincial and

federal levels in partnership with the European Union.”

Mr. Choudhry Muhammad Asghar, NACTA member as a Chief Guest, on behalf of Mr. Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan, the Honorable Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control appreciated the close working relation of European Union and the United Nations with the Government of Pakistan in making collaborative efforts for eliminating terrorism.

The Government of Pakistan is in the process of implementing a National Action Plan against terrorism and the objectives of the signed project would directly contribute towards its execution.



5th Islamabad literary festival 2017



The three-day Islamabad Literature Festival kicked off on April 14, bringing together authors writing in diverse languages, genres and traditions. The festival features talks, discussions, mushairas, book fairs, book launches, readings, debates, theatre, and music.

Mr. Neil Buhne, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, attended the launch of the book “The Corporate Governance Landscape in Pakistan” by Sadia Khan. He actively engaged with the audience as a panelist to discuss the implications for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and human development in relation to corporate governance structures and policies in the country.

Mr. Buhne emphasized that corporate governance has a strong impact on the business environment in the country, which in turn has implications for investment, which ties in with overall development. An important aspect of the discussion was female representation on boards of businesses, and Mr. Buhne noted that the book contains a recommendation that about 35% female representation on boards



was ideal to emulate the case of Norway, which is a global leader in human development.



Promising Community of village Saidpur



Located in a panoramic valley of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the Saidpur Sharqi village lies at a distance of 30 km from the district headquarter Muzaffarabad. Home to 200 households largely dependent on agriculture, the Saidpur Sharqi village enjoys a good state of girls' education.

Saidpur Sharqi's only government girls' primary school was built in 2009 and it functions well with three teachers and 70 girls enrolled. Nevertheless, the local community continues to work towards the improvement of girls' education in the village and strives to improve it.

With support of UNESCO's local implementing partner 'Saaiban', the School Management Committee (SMC) consulted local communities and jointly identified shortage of suited furniture a necessary point of improvement in the school premises.

Within one week teachers and community members mobilized PKR 42,000 to purchase school furniture. However, it soon became clear that this amount was not enough for procuring readymade furniture from the market.

The community, therefore, decided to purchase local timber and made 22

benches by engaging a local carpenter. In addition, 6 plastic chairs were purchased for school teachers. The school is now fully self-reliant and serves as an example for neighboring schools.

UNESCO's Girls Right to Education Programme (GREP) in Pakistan focuses on bringing girls to school, helping them stay there and complete quality primary education. GREP works with a wide range of implementing partners and in close collaboration with the government in all provinces and areas of Pakistan

Revival of a failing school



Tajpur, an agricultural village of mud houses situated in Jaffarabad, Balochistan province, is home to 60 households. The village has witnessed three consecutive years of floods between 2010 and 2012 that destroyed the entire local infrastructure.

Tajpur's only government girls' primary school building one of the few cemented structures in the village was used as a shelter for the local community. However, as time passed there were no attempts to evacuate the building and reestablish the school.

The last enrolment register of the school showed an enrolment of 36 girls; all of them, including many others, were out

of school. School teachers also migrated to some other areas and remained absent.

'GEO', UNESCO's local implementing partner in Jaffarabad, launched its social mobilization campaign in April 2016 and started activating the local community, district education officials, religious leaders, councilors, and local influentials to revive the only girls' school in the village. The community mobilization and advocacy activities bore its first fruit when two teachers reported back to school in September 2017 and the school was formally reopened. 61 girls were instantly enrolled and began attending classes as the school became fully functional.

Teachers are now trying their best to revive academic activities. A 'mother group' has been formed in the village in addition to a 'child club' in the school. Besides the academics, girls are now joyfully participating in arts and other curricular activities in the school. UNESCO's Girls Right to Education Programme (GREP) in Pakistan focuses on bringing girls to school, helping them stay there and complete quality primary education. GREP works with a wide range of implementing partners and in close collaboration with the government in all provinces and areas of Pakistan



Governor inaugurates Balochistan basic education programme



The Balochistan Basic Education Programme (BBEP) was inaugurated by the Governor of

Balochistan, H.E Muhammad Khan Achakzai at a ceremony held in Quetta on April 26. The Minister for Education, Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal, Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, H.E Jean-Francois Cautain, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan, Ms. Angela Kearney and many senior officials, donors, and development partners were present on the occasion.

BBEP is part of the overall Education Reforms that the provincial government embarked upon under the Balochistan Education Section Plan (2013-2018). Its objective is to provide quality education for all children and young people, also aiming at establishing a stronger, more accountable and transparent education governance system in the province.

“Education is our priority in Balochistan,” said Governor Muhammad Khan Achakzai. “Quality education not only strengthens an individual, it also strengthens the people as a nation. The education reforms in Balochistan must not ignore children of communities living in rural areas. The Programme is a comprehensive system for improving the education sector which covers multiple aspects of



the sector including revision of text books, training of teachers, upgrading of existing schools and constructing the new ones. We are grateful to the European Union and UNICEF for their contribution and interest in the education of children of Balochistan.”

BBEP is being implementing by the Department of Secondary Education, with support from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and a generous financial contribution from the European Union which has provided 7.4 million Euros for a period of three years.

“Education is one of the key priorities of the EU in Pakistan, where 32 per cent of our Multi-Annual Indicative Programme is earmarked for Education Sector,” said the Ambassador of the European Union, Jean-Francois Cautain. “In Pakistan, we are currently supporting the governments of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh to provide better access to quality education for boys and girls alike.” While the Government of Balochistan’s education sector reforms

have started showing results, more needs to be done as 35 per cent children between the age of 5 to 16 in the province are out-of-school of which 70 per cent are girls. The primary attendance rate is 42 per cent and only 27 per cent of the children who start school, complete grade 5. A significant number of schools, especially those for girls, lack safe drinking water and sanitation facilities. Finally, too few children learn enough while at school. UNICEF Representative, Angela Kearney said “Educated children, boys and girls, are the future of Balochistan and UNICEF with generous support from the European Union, is helping the provincial government to implement the education sector reforms to ensure a bright future of the people of this province. The Education Management Information System (EMIS) for which UNICEF has provided technical and operational assistance, is now fully functional and accessible to general public to acquire vital educational statistics from across the province.”



National Assembly and UNICEF will work together for the development of children and women



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Parliamentary Secretariat and UNICEF Paki-

stan share and work on common objectives to promote the welfare of children and women in Pakistan. To strengthen this mutual partnership, a Letter of Agreement (LoA) with a joint work plan was signed between the Parliamentary SDGs Secretariat and UNICEF Pakistan Country Office.

Speaking at the occasion the Honourable Speaker, Mr. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq highlighted the Parliamentary Taskforce's leadership role and the importance of partnerships to move Pakistan's development agenda forward. He said, "The Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs is taking ownership in achieving the development targets in Pakistan with the help of its partners like UNICEF and GAVI. We want to build this Secretariat into a proper institution that will have a broader scope of work to achieve the SDGs in Pakistan."

The Agreement will streamline the work of both partners to engage with parliamentarians and deliver on the Prime Minister's commitment to achieve the SDGs in Pakistan. This partnership will also help to strengthen the oversight role of parliamentar-



ians through evidence-based policy making and stronger accountability to achieve the SDGs. UNICEF Pakistan looks forward to an even stronger role of parliamentarians to improve the lives of children and women in Pakistan.

Under the joint work plan, UNICEF Pakistan is working in partnership with government at federal and provincial levels, donors like GAVI - The Vaccine Alliance, civil society, research institutes and private organizations on issues such as nutrition, routine immunization, water and sanitation, quality education, child protection and Monitoring and Evaluation, among others.

"I congratulate the honourable speaker for his leadership on SDGs and Ms. Maryam Aurangzeb for her vision, commitment and continued

dedication to the development agenda for the children and women of Pakistan. From MDGs to SDGs, it has been a long journey and Madam Aurangzeb and the Parliament of Pakistan have been at the forefront of efforts in achieving development goals for the country" said Ms. Angela Kearney, UNICEF Representative Pakistan

"The Parliament of Pakistan appreciates the support of its development partners in translating our commitment to the SDGs into key development results to improve the lives of children", said Honourable Ms. Maryam Aurangzeb while talking at the signing ceremony.



Fight stigma. Speak out about depression



On World Health Day, the World Health Organization (WHO) called on individuals and

communities to speak out about depression and to fight the stigma surrounding it. The slogan was “Depression: let’s talk”, as talking about depression helps to break down stigma and encourages more people to seek help.

Currently, more than 300 million people around the world are living with depression, an increase of more than 18% between 2005 and 2015. It can affect anyone, anywhere, especially populations experiencing humanitarian crises. In the Eastern Mediterranean Region, as many as 1 in 5 people are affected by depression and anxiety in countries affected by armed conflict, insecurity, and displacement.

Dr. Fikri, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, says: “Despite common misperceptions, depression is not a sign of weakness but stigma and discrimination are preventing people from seeking the care they need. Effective treatment is available through talking therapies and antidepressant medications, or a combination of both.

In many countries there is little or no support available for people with mental health disorders. Investment in mental health makes financial and so-

cial sense, and failure to act is costly. If untreated, depression can be debilitating and even lead to suicide, which is the second leading cause of death among 15- to 29-year olds.

“Governments can improve mental health services, families and communities can provide social support, civil society groups can raise awareness and individuals can seek help and treatment and talk to others about how they feel,” urged Dr. Fikri.

Mental health services are also being provided in some countries by non-specialist general practitioners under the supervision of national specialists, trained through the WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme, introduced in more than 90 low- and middle-income countries around the world. This scaling up of mental health services and care is crucial, especially for the most vulnerable populations experiencing humanitarian crises, conflict, and displacement.



World Malaria Day-2017



A seminar on World Malaria Day 2017 was organized by the Health Department of FATA in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) in Peshawar Garrison Club on April 24. The seminar was attended by health professionals from the Health Department, Doctors/Paramedics, WHO Sub Office staff and personnel from Print and Electronic Media.

Dr. Mohammad Assai Ardakani, Acting WHO Representative in Pakistan was the Chief Guest of the event. Dr. Jawad Habib, Director Health Services FATA, appreciated WHO's Response for the Provision of medicines to be used for the treatment of Leishmaniasis.

Dr. Assai, Acting WHO Representative in Pakistan informed that on World Malaria Day, WHO is calling on countries and their development partners to provide universal access to malaria prevention tools for everyone at risk. It is also an occasion to celebrate progress in the Malaria fight and highlight the need for continued investment and political commitment. Since 2000, Malaria prevention has played a pivotal role in reducing cases and deaths, primarily through the scale-up of insecticide treated nets.



Dr. Assai spoke on the malaria situation in Pakistan and highlighted that 66 districts are at high risk in Pakistan. In 2016 there was no mortality reported as per the Director Health Services FATA report and the morbidity was 84002 in FATA. FATA and Balochistan are the highest endemic regions in the country, sharing more than 80% of the country's burden. In 2016, both FATA and Balochistan have seen a rise in annual index as compared to 2015.

He emphasized on effective control of malaria in FATA and Balochistan as this will have a measureable impact on the country's goal to achieve "Elimination by 2030". He opined that the major underlying causes responsible for spreading malaria were poor living conditions, internal conflict, low literacy, population movement, and

bad environmental situation, adding that malaria is a preventable and curable disease.

Among the 5 parasite species that cause malaria in humans, *P. falciparum* and *P. vivax* pose the greatest threat to the human kind. The WHO Global Technical Strategy for malaria 2016-30 calls for reduction in malaria case incidence and death rates of at least 40% between 2015 and 2020.



WHO Pakistan responds to Leishmaniasis outbreak in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



A two-day training workshop on diagnosis, treatment, and management of Leishmaniasis

organized by the Department of Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO) was held on April 10 in VIP House Peshawar.

Dr. Shabina Raza, Director General Health Services (DGHS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa welcomed Dr. Mohammad Assai Ardakani, Acting Representative of WHO in Pakistan.

The DGHS KP informed that the Department of Health is working in close collaboration with WHO Pakistan. She was pleased to see the presence of medical technicians along with doctors attending this capacity-building programme.

The DGHS KP, appreciated the WHO's Response for importing medicines from France to be used for the treatment of Leishmaniasis in KP, FATA, and other provinces of Pakistan.

Dr. Mohammad Assai Ardakani, Acting WHO Representative in Pakistan informed that 50,000 Glucantime injections were procured from the pharmaceutical companies via WHO Headquarters for Pakistan. He appreciated the Social Health Insurance scheme launched by the Provincial Health Department that in the future hopes to reduce the burden of dis-



ease and facilitate access for the poor to comprehensive health care services. He added that Glucantime is an expensive medicine, and therefore for a long term solution the medicine should be registered with the Drug Authority of Pakistan. From January 2014 to February 2017, 22,112 cases of Leishmaniasis have been reported in KP.

Dr. Mohammad Assai Ardakani visited Khyber Teaching Hospital Peshawar along with Dr. Shabina Raza, DGHS Peshawar, and launched the Leishmaniasis treatment campaign at the Dermatology Unit of Khyber teaching hospital using the imported medicines. Dr. Nek Dad Afridi, Director Khyber Teaching Hospital, Peshawar along with Professor Dr. Azar Rash-

eed welcomed the delegates. These training workshops are to be organized in other provinces too. Dr. Mohammad Assai Ardakani visited Khyber Teaching Hospital Peshawar along with Dr. Shabina Raza, DGHS Peshawar, and launched Leishmaniasis treatment campaign at the Dermatology Unit of Khyber teaching hospital using the imported medicines. Dr. Nek Dad Afridi, Director Khyber Teaching Hospital, Peshawar along with Professor Dr. Azar Rasheed welcomed the delegates.

These training workshops will be organized in the other provinces as well.

A poem on World Malaria Day

*When the summer starts they appear (Mosquitos)
Oh My Allah! What should I do, either take me, or kill the Mosquitos
When Sun sets, and the dark appears, they spread everywhere,
Oh Allah! Because of this enemy no one can sleep,*

*When they found me un-covered parts of my body, they suddenly attacked,
When I tried to hit them, they escape and I hurt myself,
Oh My Allah! What should I do? Either eliminate them or me.*

*They fly in the house like a dark cloud,
They surround my bed like jet planes,
They sing in my ears like rhymes,
If I expose my head, they bite my ears.
When they see me in the bed a smile appears on their face
Oh My Allah! What should I do? either eliminate me or them.*

*They come to my bed and buzz around my feet and my head,
They became happy when they find my body un-covered,
I feel myself helpless and can't do anything,
This enemy is never satisfied on sucking of my blood,
After sucking my blood they fly away
Oh My Allah! What should I do? Either eliminate them or me.*

*Because of this enemy I can't sleep in bed,
They search me in every nook and corner
Sometimes I take off my shirt and sometimes my jacket
I wonder where I should hide from them,
They've destroyed me, oh My Allah! Destroy them
Doctor advises to avoid their bite,
Otherwise you will suffer from malaria,
They will definitely bite when you are laying unprotected.
Insecticide spray is a gun for it
When they bite it ends in Malaria,
Oh My Allah! What should I do? Either take me, or kill the Mosquitos*

*Because of these mosquitos I am restless,
As I always have battled with these mosquitos every evening,
Would there be any one to look into this problem,
To provide freedom form this menace
If this is the situation soon I will have high grade fever
"Tofan" says how can I sleep in such a situation?
Oh My Allah! What should I do? Either eliminate them or me.*

Mr. Nooran Shah Tufan, Pushto artist and poet



About the poet: Mr Nooran Shah Tufan is a Pushto artist and poet, working in local radio and television programmes. He belongs to the Mohmand Agency FATA of Pakistan. The main spirit and his inspiration was to convey the message and raise awareness in the Pashtun Community about Malaria Morbidity and Mortality so that they can protect themselves from mosquitoes. He always sees large numbers of family and community members suffering from malaria, and frequently visiting health facilities located far away from their villages, where there is dearth of facilities to treat malaria.



Fostering use of biomass technologies



The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in collaboration with the Alternative Energy Development Board (AEDB) organized a workshop to collect feedback from stakeholders on biomass policy. Recognizing the need for tapping all possible energy sources available to Pakistan, especially renew-

focus on utilization of biomass energy in industries. The consultative stakeholder workshop had over 70 participants including representatives from AEDB, NEPRA, Provincial Energy Departments, private sector, academia and several other stakeholders. The event was chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of AEDB Mr. Amjad Ali Awan. He stressed that such events are important opportunities for sharing

mental benefits in the country. He linked promoting biomass with the achievement of several sustainable goals and highlighted the importance of biomass as part of the larger bio-economy with volume of over 2 trillion dollars globally. The UNIDO Representative to Pakistan Mr. Esam Alqararah informed the audience of the role of UNIDO in promoting clean and sustainable energy solutions such as biomass for industrial and other applications. He highlighted the im-



able sources such as biomass, UNIDO is implementing a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project titled, "Promoting Sustainable Energy Production & Use from Biomass in Pakistan", aiming to promote the market-based adoption of modern biomass technologies for industrial and rural energy applications and focusing on the introduction of biomass gasification technology. UNIDO is providing technical assistance for the development of concrete policy recommendations for policies and regulations relevant to the promotion of modern biomass technologies for both existing and future policy regimes with particular

knowledge, experiences, and expertise to influence the policy making process. He highlighted the importance of biomass energy technologies both as a means to address the energy challenges in the country and an important opportunity to save fuel and diversify its energy mix to include clean indigenous energy sources. Mr. Neil Buhne, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan described biomass as a 'huge resource' for the country with immense benefits not just in energy and economic terms but also as a driver to bring about several social and environ-

importance of having an enabling policy and regulatory framework as a means of unlocking the market potential for biomass in Pakistan. The finalized policy recommendations will be submitted to AEDB for making the necessary changes in the existing policies, regulations and procedures related to biomass. The quality standards will be used by the Customs department of the Federal Board of Revenue to ensure that only gasifiers complying with the stated standards are imported in the country.

A national policy for renewable energies in the industrial sector



Within the framework of one of its ongoing projects entitled “Sustainable Energy

Initiative for Industries in Pakistan” funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) organized a two-day workshop in Islamabad, to present recommendations for improvement in national policy framework on Renewable Energy and Energy efficiency for industrial sectors in Pakistan.

Officially opening the first of the series of two workshops, Dr. Baqar Raza, MD of Pakistan Council of Renewable Energy Technologies, appreciated UNIDO’s efforts on coming up with support for the most important dimension of the Renewable Energy development in the country. He stressed upon the importance of developing conducive energy policies to promote Renewable Energy technologies that could alleviate the energy problems of the country.

Mr. Abdul Ghaffar Khattak, CEO National Productivity Organization (NPO) applauded the initiative taken by UNIDO and GEF in promoting the adoption of Energy Efficiency in industrial sector. He highlighted the partnership between UNIDO and



NPO in spearheading the energy efficiency efforts in the industrial sector of Pakistan. He appreciated the personal interest taken by UNIDO Country Representative, Mr. Esam Alqararah, in realizing the common objectives of industrial sector development in Pakistan. Mr. Esam Alqararah shed light on the role of UNIDO during its 40 years of presence and highlighted some of its hallmark achievements in assisting the sustainable development process of Industrial sector in Pakistan.

The workshop was widely attended by stakeholders, from the industry and Government officials from relevant Ministry and line departments. Present among the prominent dignitaries were the officials of various relevant ministries as well as representative of various organizations such as Alternative Energy Development Board (AEDB), National

Productivity Organization (NPO), National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA), Pakistan Council of Renewable Energy Technologies (PCRET), Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA), and provincial Energy departments, as well as representatives for various Chambers of Commerce and Industries. UNIDO experts presented their findings on current institutional policy framework on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in Pakistan along with the detailed account on policy regimes of other countries in the region. They identified the barriers and provided the recommendations for the improvements in national RE and EE policy framework.



UNIDO join forces with Industries, Commerce and Investment Department



In the framework of the Punjab jobs and competitiveness programme, the government of

Punjab signed a cooperation agreement with UNIDO to provide technical assistance for the development of industrial clusters in Punjab province and to support their further integration into global value chains.

The purpose of CDI is to create an enabling environment for growth and prosperity of industries, to create an improved quality of life through the economic uplift in Punjab and to upgrade technology and enhance productivity, quality, and profitability of local industries. The lead on the implementation of the CDI for the Government of Punjab is with the Punjab Small Industries Cooperation (PSIC) as a government institution.

A Cooperation Agreement has been signed to this effect between Industries, Commerce and Investment Department (IC&ID), Government of Punjab, and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Lahore on 26 April, 2017. Mr. Muhammad Mujtaba Paracha, Secretary IC&ID, Government of Punjab and Mr. Esam Alqarah, UNIDO Representative in Pakistan, signed the TFA on behalf of their respective organizations for the implementation of "Cluster Development Initiative (CDI):



A way forward to economic growth". The Cluster Development project is a part of a joint initiative of the World Bank Group and the Government of Punjab under the Punjab jobs and competitiveness program. The signing ceremony was witnessed by Mr. Vincent Palmade, Team Leader, World Bank Group, Mr. Khalid Saleem, MD Punjab Small Industries Corporation and other officials. UNIDO has been engaged as a partner implementing agency for the CDI project based on earlier interventions in the area of trade-related capacity-building and development of industrial clusters both in Pakistan and globally.



Workshop on multinational enterprises, social policies and fundamental principles and rights at work



The International Labour Organization (ILO) in close collaboration with the Employers'

Federation of Pakistan (EFP) organized a three-day workshop on Multinational Enterprises, Social Policies and Fundamental Principles & Rights at Work (FP&RW) in Lahore on March 16. The workshop was supported by the Government of Japan through the Project on "More and better jobs through socially responsible labour practices in Asia."

CEOs, directors and other representatives from the export-oriented sports-goods manufacturers in Sialkot, representatives from brands, trade bodies, business associations and the Chamber of Commerce and Industries as well as representatives from ILO's constituents attended the workshop. Members of the Task Force established under the Project were also present.

This workshop strengthened the participants' understanding of the key elements of Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy Declaration, with particular focus on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FP&RW). These concern Freedom of Association and the



Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining, Abolition of Forced Labour, Non-discrimination and Equality and Elimination of Child Labour. Furthermore, the participants discussed how the principles of the International Labour Standards relate to business and the workplace and the further steps needed to be able to apply these principles within company operations and the supply chain. The ILO Helpdesk for Business on International Labour Standards was also introduced to the participants. Other topics included the importance of social dialogue in industrial relations and ways to effectively support business partners to improve compliance with FP&RW.

The workshop was concluded by a panel discussion on challenges solutions to apply the FP&RW principles and the development of individual (company) and collective ac-

tion plans defining the way forward.

Chief guest Ms. Ingrid Christensen, Country Director, ILO Country Office for Pakistan thanked the participants for their active involvement in the workshop. She emphasized that integrating the FP&RW is not only an obligation but can also impact business positively, including being more competitive, and achieving higher productivity, profitability and business sustainability. "Certificates of participation" were awarded to all the participants.



Improving compliance with and reporting of core labour standards



The International Labour Organization (ILO) in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Overseas

Pakistanis and Human Resource Development organized a tri-partite consultation workshop attended by more than 30 participants to contribute to greater understanding of the core international labour standards (ILS) in Lahore on April 17-19.

The workshop was organized within the framework of projects on Labour Standards financed by the European Union. The Standards discussed at the workshop concerned Child Labour, Forced Labour, Freedom of Association/Collective Bargaining & Non-Discrimination and Equality in Employment and Occupation, and aimed at creating awareness about ILO's Labour Standard setting processes and supervisory systems. It helped the Provincial Tripartite Consultative Committee (PTCC) members from Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and representatives from Gilgit Baltistan and the Islamabad Capital Territory to continue discussing the reforms required for strengthening the labour market governance in the country.

Mr. Suhail Aamir, Federal Secretary, Ministry of OPHRD welcomed ILO's support, saying that "these workshops are providing opportunity to federal and provincial governments to analyse la-



bour market governance and plan improvements with reference to the core ILO Conventions and related labour laws regime in Pakistan. This is important for the country, particularly in terms of sustaining the increased economic gains from the Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) which allows increased access of several eligible categories of Pakistani products through incentives of duty-free exports to EU markets from 1st January 2014 for ten years term. The scheme is conditional upon Pakistan to ensure compliance with 27 International Treaties on human and labour rights, governance, and environment; including the eight Core Labour Standards.

Mr. Majyd Aziz, President, Employers Federation of Pakistan emphasised the need for bettering the compliance and reporting of Core Labour Standards as a matter of priority, besides the fiscal and energy reforms that are required for Pakistan's potential increase of export and especially continuity of GSP+, which hinges on the effective compliance of the core labour standards.

Mr. Zahoor Awan, General Secretary, Pakistan Workers Federation called on the provincial and national governments to urgently bring labour legislation in conformity with ILS. Moreover, the governments have to adopt necessary measures to strengthen institutional mechanisms to effectively address violation of workers' rights and implement labour laws to arrest widening gaps in establishing decent work.

ILO's Country Director, Ms Ingrid Christensen, welcomed the participants and re-affirmed that ILO would keep supporting the federal and provincial governments and social partners in their journey towards fostering decent work and as part of this, bettering the labour market governance. She also hinted that the outcome of these provincial workshops would be presented at a roundtable conference in Islamabad and from there it would feed into a national Labour Protection Framework that MOPHRD is taking the lead on with technical support from ILO.

World Day for Safety and Health at Work



This year's World Day for Safety and Health at Work focuses on the critical need for

countries to improve their capacity to collect and utilize reliable occupational safety and health data. Dr Francisco Santos-O'Connor, ILO Senior Specialist in Occupational Safety and Health for Asia, explains the importance of optimizing the collection and use of these data.

According to the latest ILO estimates, 1.4 million work-related deaths occur annually in Asia and the Pacific out of the 2.3 million worldwide. This means the region accounted for 70 per cent of the global fatal occupational accidents and 60 per cent of the work-related fatal diseases. Most work-related deaths and non-fatal accidents occur in low- and middle-income countries of the region.

However, in reality, the situation in Asia-Pacific could be even worse as the problem can only be estimated due to the lack of data. Official reporting requirements are based on multiple criteria which change over time and do not cover all categories of workers (such as self-employed and informal workers).

In fact, no country reports all work-related diseases. Even countries with well-established report-

ing practices often do not report all cases, particularly non-fatal injuries or occupational diseases. Yet, such information and analysis is pivotal for devising effective and evidence-based policies and preventive measures both at country and enterprise levels.

Improved OSH data can help secure working environments for all workers. It draws attention on high risk activities and most vulnerable categories of workers. It enables labour inspectorates to carry out their preventive mandate by It gives countries the means to monitor and assess the needs for and the impact of their OSH policies.

Over the past century, measures have been developed to improve OSH reporting and new technologies can facilitate access to timely sources of information on occupational safety and health data.

The ILO and its member States started to work on improving OSH data comparability in 1923, when industrial accident statistics were placed on the agenda of the First International Conference of Labour Statisticians. Moreover, ILO OSH Conventions require ratifying member States to establish mechanisms to collect reliable OSH data and the ILO has also developed tools to support this work.





Government of Japan announced USD 7 million to UNHCR, WFP



The government of Japan has announced a contribution of USD 7 million to UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and World Food Programme (WFP) to support the Afghan Refugees and host communities in Pakistan.

The official announcement was made by the Minister for States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) Lt. Gen. (Rtd) Abdul Qadir Baloch and the Ambassador of Japan in Pakistan H.E. Mr. Takashi Kurai during a press event held in Islamabad.

The Government of Japan has allocated USD 3 million to UNHCR for implementation of its priority interventions in the provision of legal assistance to refugees in the country and its programmes in the areas of education healthcare and vocational training. This generous contribution by the Government of Japan will, in addition to providing legal assistance to an estimated



22,500 refugees in Pakistan, support an estimated 50,000 persons from the refugee population and the communities hosting them in accessing health care and education, as well as some 210 youths who will be undergoing vocational training courses throughout Pakistan.

The Government of Japan has allocated the remaining USD 4 million to WFP to support 82,389 beneficiaries including 42,874 children of 6-59 months of age and 39,515 pregnant and lactating women over the period of six months. It will enable WFP to procure a total of 1,097 metric tons of locally

produced quality “Ready-to-Use supplementary foods” that will be distributed in four districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province i.e. Peshawar, Nowshera, Hangu and Kohat, identified as the districts hosting the highest number of Afghan refugees and host communities.

Speaking at the occasion, the Minister for States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) Lt. Gen. (R) Abdul Qadir Baloch said: “The interventions are in line with the Government of Pakistan’s priorities to ensure adequate nutritious food provision to Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan. The Government of

Pakistan is committed to maintain food security and protection of the Afghan population living in Pakistan. The Government of Japan has been an active partner of the Government of Pakistan in supporting the refugees and returns

nities as well as Afghan refugees. Japan has been assisting Afghan refugees in Pakistan and their host communities for more than ten years with the grant aid of more than USD 200 million. I hope this grant aid will be fully utilized and

WFP Country Director and Representative Mr. Finbarr Curran said that: “the Government of Japan has been a key partner in ensuring food security and nutrition for temporarily displaced Pakistanis as well as Afghan refugees. This con-



which contributes to the peace and stability in the region. The Ministry of SAFRON will be working in close liaison with UNHCR and WFP to provide continuous support to Afghan refugees and host communities in Pakistan”.

Ambassador of Japan, H.E. Mr. Takashi Kurai said: “The Government of Japan attaches great importance to supporting Afghan refugees and their host communities which have provided shelters so much needed to them for more than three decades. With this grant from people of Japan, assistance will be provided to host commu-

put positive impact, particularly, on the young generations and thus the future of Afghan refugees and host communities”.

The Acting UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Indrika Ratwatte expressed gratitude to the government and people of Japan for demonstrating their commitment and supporting the uprooted people: “Japan has always been a strong supporter of the global humanitarian efforts,” Ratwatte said, adding with this contribution, WFP and UNHCR will be able to provide meaningful support and assistance to those in need”.

tribution will provide timely support for the triparty agreement, between Governments of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, for the sustainable return of Afghan refugees to their country of origin. WFP foresees that the investment in nutrition will have a positive long term impact on the economic development of both countries”.

Pakistan has been home to millions of Afghans for more than 37 years and continues to host the world’s largest protracted refugee population.



25 years of higher education for refugees



The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the Government of Ger-

many marked 25 years of the German-funded Albert Einstein Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI), that provides means for refugees to pursue a higher education.

Since 1992, the programme has provided financial support scholarships to refugees to study at universities and colleges in the countries where they have sought refuge. DAFI is the only global programme helping refugees access higher education.

In Pakistan, some 1,200 Afghan refugee students have benefited from the scholarship. There are currently 115 DAFI scholarship holders studying at different universities across Pakistan. Enrolment process for the 2017 scholarships programme begins in August.

The DAFI scholarships have made a substantial contribution to the education and development of many young, talented refugees, enabling them to expand their horizons and explore their full potential.

Riaz Dermal, Director of Water Supply, Sewerage and Environmental Affairs in Kabul, Afghanistan, a former DAFI student says: "As a refugee it is always challenging to pursue higher education, DAFI eased my tension in



carrying out higher studies smoothly."

Sadrudin, Agriculture Specialist at Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) in Kabul, Afghanistan was also a DAFI scholar in Pakistan. "The socio-economic vulnerabilities caused by continuous conflict in Afghanistan were such that without a scholarship I would not have been able to pursue higher education." Sadrudin added: "The academic achievements in life have subsequently paved the way for me in getting a position with reputable organisations. I owe my success to DAFI scholarship that I had received."



Achieving accurate knowledge of urbanization



A validation meeting of experts working on the national State of Pakistani Cities report was held

by UN-Habitat in Islamabad on April 20 to mark the culmination of provincial consultative meetings held throughout the country. Data for the State of Pakistan's Cities Report has been compiled with full support from all the provinces of the country and they have expressed their intention to produce the State of Provincial Cities Reports as well. In addition, the consultations have reaffirmed the support of all Provinces for increased public participation and for their plans to take greater account of environmental concerns and be more inclusive particularly in addressing the needs of women, youth and the disabled. Spearheaded by the Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) with technical assistance of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and funded by the Government of Australia, the report will support planners, administrators, and decision makers by provision of information to help them design effective urban solutions without leaving out vital segments of urban society.

Mr. Syed Abu Akif, Secretary for Ministry of Climate Change highlighted that "Urbanization is one of the key challenges faced by Pakistan today, but it also offers greater opportunities which can be tapped through calculated measures. However, insufficient knowledge of the urban dynamics is resulting in lack of timely service delivery, resource allocation, and



urban solutions by cities' authorities. To tackle this issue, the Government of Pakistan is spearheading the development of the State of Pakistan Cities' Report, with support from all the provinces, to present a well-informed analysis of the state of urbanization across Pakistan comprising of economic alongside social, demographic, political and cultural aspects. This data will be vital for planners, policy makers and legislators in responding to the urbanization challenge."

The validation meeting brought forward interesting findings presented in the provincial meetings. It highlighted that with the exception of Quetta where joint and extended families still prevail, the average household size has decreased in all the other cities, suggesting a trend towards smaller families. Another trend that emerged was that women's participation rate in the labour force in all ten cities has increased. Moreover, those unable to find jobs in rural areas and those looking for better opportunities continue to be accommodated in the cities in increasing numbers. It is not only the existing cities that are growing but more settlements are becoming urbanised, particularly along

the transport routes emanating from the cities. It was hence validated that for cities to be able to perform as engines of growth, more emphasis will have to be put on enabling strategies that provide better housing, infrastructure, and access to finance.

The State of Pakistan Cities Report will provide urban information and updated data on first level major cities of Pakistan, establish appropriate key urban indicators and baselines, analyse development trends and challenges and present potentials for investment and growth. It will build the capacity of relevant stakeholders for evidence-based decision making and monitoring in urban sector. The report will have an extensive policy impact created at city, provincial, and national levels particularly in relation to urban service delivery, land and housing, role of cities in economic development, including their potential growth capacities and challenges, and will support the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities, as well as the New Urban Agenda.



Nearly 600 million children will live in areas with extremely limited water resources by 2040



Some 600 million children, or 1 in 4 children worldwide, will be living in areas with extremely limited water resources by 2040, according to a UNICEF report released on World Water Day.

The report, “Thirsting for a Future: Water and children in a changing climate”, looks at the threats to children’s lives and wellbeing caused by depleted sources of safe water and the ways climate change will intensify these risks in coming years.

“Water is elemental; without it, nothing can grow. But around the world, millions of children lack access to safe water -- endangering their lives, undermining their health, and jeopardizing their futures. This crisis will only grow unless we take collective

action now,” said UNICEF Executive Director Mr. Anthony Lake.

According to the report, 36 countries are currently facing extremely high levels of water stress, which occurs when demand for water far exceeds the renewable supply available. Warmer temperatures, rising sea levels, increased floods, droughts and melting ice affect the quality and availability of water as well as sanitation systems.

Population growth, increased water consumption, and higher demand for water largely due to industrialization and urbanization are draining water resources worldwide and in Pakistan. In an effort to build resilience of communities to better cope with the future risks of water scarcity, UNICEF

Pakistan is working with federal and provincial governments and NGO partners to build and rehabilitate facilities that can ensure efficient management of water supply. The sector partners also collaborate to raise awareness on the issue. Moreover, UNICEF supports the government on all levels to ensure national and provincial water and sanitation policies and strategies make provisions for risk informed decisions in order to secure reliable water supply services in communities, households, schools and health centers.

When children have no choice but to use unsafe water, it exposes them to potentially deadly diseases like cholera and diarrhoea. Many children in drought-affected areas spend hours every day collecting water, missing out on a chance to go to school. Girls are especially vulnerable to attack during these times.

The poorest and most vulnerable children will be most impacted by an increase in water stress, the report says, as millions of them already live in areas with low access to safe water and sanitation.

“In a changing climate, we must change the way we work to reach those who are most vulnerable. One of the most effective ways we can do that is safeguarding their access to safe water,” Lake said.

Community mobilization to install solar water supply in D.I. Khan



6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



صاف پانی اور صفائی

Shortage of clean drinking water is an emerging development challenge in Pakistan, especially in rural areas where almost 90 percent of the local population lacks access to uncontaminated water. The World Bank recently revealed that Pakistan was among the 17 countries currently facing water scarcity. The issue is especially important in areas where people already contend with the absence of health, education, and basic infrastructure. Grassroots mobilization therefore serves as an effective tool for initiating and implementing locally em-

bedded interventions to improve access to clean drinking water.

In village Ruknao in union council Zandani of Dera Ismail Khan, people's use of contaminated canal water resulted in the spread of water-borne diseases. UNDP worked in 2016 under the Youth and Social Cohesion Project (YSCP) to complete a tube well installation project. UNDP provided a solar water pump that local community members incorporated into their construction of a water storage tank.

The local village youth group organized

by UNDP formulated an action plan to ensure community ownership and scheme longevity. The president of the youth group said "we aim to provide basic services through collective action. We just needed an opportunity to organize ourselves and UNDP provided exactly that." The group aims to provide clean drinking water to the whole village under a plan called Paani ghar, or "water home" that requires all households to pay a monthly 30-rupee maintenance fee.



WASH committee changing practices in Marvi Town, Hyderabad



UN-Habitat is working in Qasimabad- Hyderabad, with funding from UNICEF for the sake of better health, reduction in diarrhoea and polio cases, and better hygienic con-

and fulfilling the task mentioned by the UN-Habitat team. "Manage your waste in dustbins as the sweeper may take it easily, and do not throw your garbage on the streets," this is the message that was delivered by the WASH Committee to the locals of Marvi town. As the message spreads gradually across the

activities related to health and hygiene. Thanks to their efforts Marvi town looks completely different: garbage and stagnant water no longer plague the streets, showing that the behaviour of the community is changing collectively. The local WASH Committee is united under one platform, and is motivated to



ditions overall. For the goals mentioned above, the team has made a community based WASH Committee, and local school based WASH Clubs respectively. These groups are supposed to support the project activities of PATS/CLTS/SLTS. The WASH Committee is proactive

locality, a change in the behaviour of people could be witnessed: they now practice proper usage of dustbins and also place them outside their homes in the early morning so that a sweeper can collect them while on duty. The WASH Committee has also taken part in ongoing campaigns and ac-

solve sanitation and hygiene problems in their locality like cleaning of blocked manholes, collection and proper disposal of waste, and access to clean safe drinking water among others.



UNICEF launches adolescent empowerment pilot in SINDH



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



مقاصد کیلئے شراکت داری

Adolescents from various youth associations of Sindh came together on March 14 in Karachi, Sindh at a colourful ceremony organized by UNICEF and the Rural Support Programme Network (RSPN) to celebrate the launch of “Improving Adolescent Lives in South Asia”, an intervention funded by the IKEA Foundation.

The project of which main focus is to support a reduction in child marriage particularly among adoles-

cent girls will be implemented in a number of Union Councils in Ghotki and Khairpur Districts for a period of three years. It is also envisaged that improving access to information and equipping adolescents with life skills as key interventions will strengthen the capacity of adolescents to form and express their opinions with confidence, thereby promoting and protecting the right of the child to participation and freedom of expression. In addition, parents and communities will be

capacitated to understand adolescents’ rights and support their realization through enhanced access to community-based structures equipped to strengthen the protective environment for children.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recently published a General Comment on Realizing the Rights of Adolescents. The Committee highlights that adolescence is a life stage characterized by growing op-



portunities, capacities, aspirations, energy and creativity, but also significant vulnerability. It observes that the potential of adolescents is widely compromised because states parties do not recognize or invest in the measures needed for them to enjoy their rights, and provides guidance to states on the measures necessary to ensure the realization of the rights of children during adolescence, cognizant also of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In line with the Committee's recommendations, UNICEF is confident that this intervention will provide avenues at the family and community level for adolescents to strengthen dialogue on important matters affecting their lives and will continue to advocate for initiatives such as these to be scaled-up by key government stakeholders in the years to come.

UNICEF is dedicating growing attention to adolescent programming, because children in the second decade of life are agents of change and a key asset and resource, who can positively contribute to their families', communities' and country's life. "This year, UNICEF commits to supporting government counterparts and civil society organizations in Sindh to improve adolescents' lives with renewed zeal, because our youth is representing the foundation of present and future social and economic prosperity in the province" said Angela Kearney, the UNICEF Country Representative in Pakistan.

Approximately 30 boys and girls from youth associations in Ghotki and Khairpur participated in the event and committed to act as champions in promoting peer-to-peer dialogue and mentoring on key life skills and rights, with the guidance and support of RSPN and UNICEF. Challenges faced by adolescents were highlighted through art, songs and theatre performances, while the significance of a protective environment wherein all boys and girls can grow and thrive, was emphasized.

The event, fully hosted and presented by adolescents, was attended by officials from the Social Welfare, Youth, Health, Local Government, Education, Planning and Development, Police Department, Child Rights Commissioner for the Provincial Ombudsman's Office, district administration Khairpur and Ghotki District as well as a number of civil society organization and youth groups.

Changing hygiene behaviours by involving youth

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



بہتر صحت

UNICEF, UN-Habitat, and a community based organization – Aman Social

Organization (ASO) joined hands to educate the people of Karachi about WASH, polio eradication, importance of vaccination and hygiene behaviour change. To ensure that the messages are effectively delivered to selected communities in the city, the partnering organizations decided to involve youth in the awareness campaign.

In continuation of this endeavour, a Health and Hygiene Youth Cricket Tournament in Karachi's polio high-risk UC4 (Gujjro) Gadap Town was organised. During the tournament's semi-finals, Muhammad Din, a match winner for his team, stated, "It's not just the love of the game. It's also the love of my community. I am a local star, a source of pride and respect. I want to use this respect to raise awareness among my people, whether it is about polio and other health-related issues, or staying away from drugs, or highlighting the importance of education."

Through youth engagement, local community stars like Muhammed are encouraged to look at themselves as leaders in their communities. They learn about the advan-



tages of safe drinking water, and regularly washing hands with anti-bacterial soap to fight off the polio cases in their community. They also learn that children can be protected from the paralyzing virus by improvement of WASH services and behaviour as well as taking the Oral Polio Virus vaccine. These youth leaders then go back to their communities bearing the positive messages.

"We are pleased to join hands with UN-Habitat for a healthier future of our community," Chairman Aman Social Organization and Local Govt., Lala Abdul Raheem. "We are glad to be part of a drive in which we can help prevent major diseases. We believe in this community and will strive for a better Pakistan in days to come."

"Aman Social Organization and Sindh Government's commitment to children showcases that an investment in children is an investment in the future of Pakistan. This support will increase our outreach to communities with critical awareness raising messages in support of WASH improvement for polio eradication efforts," said Ikram Yaqoob, UN-Habitat Representative in Sindh.



Photo exhibitions on Sustainable Development Goals open in Peshawar and Lahore



To raise awareness on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and efforts for development in the country, the United Nations Pakistan organized a photo exhibition titled “Pakistan Sustaining Development: Human Stories through Photography” in both Peshawar and Lahore. This looks at the lives of Pakistani people through the lens of the United Nations SDGs, and includes 102 photos from all over Pakistan. The exhibitions were jointly organized by Agency France-Presse (AFP), the European Union and the

United Nations with support from the Embassy of France in Pakistan and UK Aid. At the event in Nishtar Hall, Peshawar, Mushtaq Ahmed, Managing Director Tourism Corporation said project such as this provide an ideal forum for emerging photographers, and artists to work together and provide great inspiration for new artists. Muhammad Luqman, Director General, Sustainable Development Goals stated that the attainment of the goals is everyone’s responsibility. He described how the Government

of KP has already started efforts, and added that the goals are a mission and need priority in the development portfolio. André de Bussy, Counselor for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, congratulated the initiative that he said reflects beautifully the diversity of Pakistan but also visualizes the common humanity and spirit of all people. At the event in Lahore City Heritage Museum, Lahore, Martine Dorance, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, stated her hope that the exhibition



will offer people an opportunity to learn about the support provided to the people of Pakistan by various agencies, funds and programs of the United Nations.

Humayun Mazhar, Director Lahore Museum, said: “The significant achievement of United Nations Pakistan in the Sustainable Development Goals set for different sectors of life in Pakistan which among others focus on economic inequality, climate change, education and ending poverty are indeed laudable on their part that warrants a continuous support

of international bodies in the global cause”.

Bernard Francois, Head of Cooperation EU Delegation said that the EU has worked closely with the country for many years, and will continue this strong partnership in cooperation with the UN.

Speaking at both events, Amélie Herenstein, Bureau Chief Agency-France Press for Pakistan and Afghanistan maintained that the exhibition specifically focuses on the human angle of the story, showing the reality of life for millions of Paki-

stanis, and documents their extraordinary resilience in the face of tragic events such as floods.

Vittorio Cammarota, Director of the UN Information Centre explained that feeling pain and sharing the joy of others is an experience only the eyes can capture, so photography is an ideal visual language for this purpose, and the exhibition gives a human face and feel to the issues.



United Nation's decade of action on nutrition



A joint WHO - Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Mission visited Islamabad, Pa-

kistan on April 10-12. The mission was led by Ms. Gerda Verburg Global SUN Coordinator and Assistant UN Secretary General, Dr. Francesco Branca, Director of the Department of Nutrition for Health and Development, World Health Organization, and Dr. Ayoub Al Jawaldeh, Regional Advisor on Nutrition, Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, World Health Organization. During their stay, the Nutrition mission held meetings with the political leadership influencing the work on nutrition in Pakistan, and also held meetings with the various Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) networks operating in Pakistan.

The members of mission were pleased to note the high political commitment from all the state actors involved in Nutrition action, appreciated the government's leadership towards implementation of interventions, and reiterated their continued support in tackling the malnutrition burden in the country.

Ms. Gerda Verburg, Dr. Francesco Branca and Ms. Saira Afzal Tarar, Minister of Health, participated in a talk show titled "Health is Wealth" on April 11 at the UN Information Cen-



tre, Islamabad, organized by Pakistan Television. All three speakers highlighted the importance of urgent action to address the high malnutrition burden, the challenges, and the way forward for priority interventions. Ms. Saira Afzal Tarar spoke at length about the current status of nutrition, and the Ministry of Health's future strategy to reduce the number of malnourished children in Pakistan. Ms. Gerda Verburg emphasised gender equality in regard to nutrition, calling on parents to avoid undermining the nutritional needs of female members of the family. Dr. Branca also highlighted the importance of having a well-balanced and nutritious diet, which can contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of children, who are the future of Pakistan.

The mission also aimed to sensitize relevant stakeholders on the recently launched "UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025". WHO Country Office in Pakistan, in collaboration with National Nutrition Programme

organized a one-day consultative workshop attended by Government Stakeholders, UN Partners and Donors, Academia, and INGOs on the topic, on April 12 in Islamabad.

Ms. Gerda Verburg, emphasized the importance of nutrition programming, which should be an integral part of every health program in Pakistan.

Dr. Assai Ardakani, Acting Representative of WHO in Pakistan suggested health systems need to be strengthened: undefined catchment populations and absence of medical records need to be addressed while paying special attention to Social Determinants of Health.

Dr. Baseer, Director of Nutrition, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination delivered an overview of Nutrition in Pakistan, and assured the complete commitment of the Ministry of Health Pakistan in addressing the issue.

Nutrition situation in Pakistan: key challenges and WHO's recommendations



Pakistan currently ranks 145th on the Human Development Index. 50 per cent of its population is aged under 20, with more than half living on less than a dollar per day, making the food security situation worse. Pakistan's progress in child nutrition and health has been slower than in other south Asian or Eastern Mediterranean Region countries. The country's 2011 National Nutrition Survey (NNS) reveals high levels of stunting (43.7%) and wasting (10.5%) in children under five; and almost 5 per cent are overweight. Half of women of reproductive age are anaemic, and the population suffers from a significant lack of vitamins and minerals, along with multiple pregnancies from an early age, leading to low birth-weight new-borns. Malnutrition increases Pakistan's health care costs, reduces productivity and slows economic growth.

While the country registers significant improvements on economic growth, poverty reduction, and improved access to sanitation, many challenges remain. Healthcare and education systems have low public spending, and insufficient political and financial investment in human resources and structural reforms negatively impacts decision-making processes and policy implementation. Regional disparities and growing socio-economic inequal-



ities also jeopardize progress in development, particularly for the poorest and most marginalized.

Positively, political support is increasing at the highest levels, a multi-sectoral nutrition strategy is being formulated, and provincial platforms are being established to ensure effective coordination at all levels. Nutrition actors are joining forces to address the underlying causes of malnutrition, generating awareness and cooperating to realize coherent nutrition-related policies, plans and interventions. Still, limited impact has been realized, as resources are still far inferior to what is needed.

Nonetheless, a number of national policies and strategies are underway, along with several nutrition sensitive programme responses, and key programmes implemented at large scale. Nutrition programmes and coordination are functioning very well. Currently, NGO agencies, donors and the UN support several programmes. WHO in particular has provided technical sup-

port to the provinces for capacity building of health care providers on a range of issues in 2016.

Recommendations for the future include tackling the burden of chronic malnutrition during childhood, which requires political commitment for nutrition specific action. Nutrition-sensitive and specific interventions are needed to urgently address the double burden of malnutrition in Pakistan, and establishing a local-level tracking of nutritional status for monitoring and programme evaluation is recommended.

The link between maternal and child undernutrition in Pakistan underscores the need for sustained investments in education and empowerment of girls, provision of opportunities for women for gainful employment. There is also a need to ensure that the Ministry of Health's essential care practice guides include effective nutrition interventions. Working with WHO teams to include effective nutrition actions in other programmes' agendas is advocated.



Scaling Up Nutrition at global level and in Pakistan



The Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) Movement is a renewed effort to eliminate malnutrition, based on the principle that everyone has a right to food and good nutrition. The Movement's vision is to, by 2030, ensure a world free from malnutrition in all its forms. Led by governments and supported by organisations and individuals, collective action ensures every child, adolescent, mother and family can realise their right to food and nutrition, reach their full potential and shape sustainable and prosperous societies. The Movement is unique in that it brings different groups of people together – governments, civil society, the United Nations, donors, businesses and scientists. It is transforming the way in which people work together by empowering people to put in place effective systems and to increase investments. SUN Countries and their supporters are working towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the World Health Assembly targets on maternal, infant, and young child nutrition by 2025, in addition to relevant targets for preventing and controlling non-communicable diseases.

Currently 59 countries and 3 Indian States are committed to Scaling Up



Nutrition. Pakistan has been a key member of the Movement since December 2013, inspiring new ways of working collaboratively across sectors and with all relevant stakeholders to end malnutrition in all its forms.

In Pakistan, provincial SUN Steering Committees are Government-appointed and SUN Secretariats are at different stages of operationalization. In 2015-2016, Provincial and regional SUN Focal Points were appointed. The UN Network has developed a workplan and proposal for effective coordination. The Donor Network, UN Network and Civil Society Alliance rally behind national nutrition policies. The SUN Civil Society Alliance is active at the national as well as sub-national level. The SUN Business Engagement Strategy has been endorsed and the Academia and Research Network has been created.

The Government has approved nutrition-specific and health-integrated nu-

trition projects in the provinces, along with ensuring nutrition inputs into Pakistan 'Vision 2025' and Five-Year Plan, through technical support by partners, particularly the UN. Pakistan's Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy is currently being formulated, as is the case for the National Fortification Strategy and Standards. A nutrition budget analysis is planned by civil society organisations and capacity-building to ensure nutrition-sensitive policies and strategies is ongoing.

Pakistan has developed a financial tracking mechanism, with the help of the UN Network, to track nutrition-related budgetary allocations in public and private sector programmes and activities, also at the sub-national level. However, similar to other countries, only public sector allocations are available online, and reported on. Off-budget allocations still remain a big challenge.

Pakistan's road to good nutrition



The world is facing a nutrition crisis. Despite significant progress in reducing hunger over the past two decades, 795 million people around the world still go to bed hungry every night, and more than 2 billion wake up deficient in crucial vitamins and minerals. In 2015, 156 million children under the age of five were stunted (too short for their age, a sign of chronic malnutrition) and 50 million were wasted (much too thin for their height, a sign of acute malnutrition). Globally, 1 in 3 people are affected by a form of malnutrition. In addition, food systems are rapidly changing leading to unprecedented changes in people's diets. As a result, 42 million children are overweight before even reaching their fifth birthday and so are a staggering 1.9 billion adults. Unhealthy diet is now the leading risk factor for the global burden of disease among both men and women. Every country is affected by this nutrition crisis, including Pakistan. Pakistan's 2011 National Nutrition Survey (NNS) reveals high levels of stunting (43.7%) and wasting (10.5%) in children under 5; in addition, almost 5% of children under five are overweight. Half of women of reproductive age are anemic and the population suffers from a significant lack of vitamins and minerals. The developmental, social and health impacts of this burden are serious and often long lasting. Malnutrition increases Pakistan's healthcare costs,



reduces productivity, and slows economic growth. It perpetuates the cycle of disease and poverty in the country. However, momentum is building up. Political will at the highest levels is increasing, a multi-sectoral nutrition strategy is being formulated and provincial platforms are being established to ensure effective coordination at all levels. Nutrition actors, including government, development agencies, implementing partners, nutrition working groups, and research institutions are coming together to address the underlying causes of malnutrition. They are mobilising mass media to generate awareness in the community and are working together to realize the substantial impact of coherent nutrition-related policies, plans and interventions.

Building on the success of the 2014 Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) and in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025. Unprecedented in nature, the Nutrition Decade marks a new vision, momentum and direction in global ac-



tion to address nutrition challenges. The Decade represents a unique, collective opportunity for achieving better nutrition for all people, at all times of their lives, through access to affordable, diversified, safe, sustainable, and healthy diets.

As a member of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement since 2013 and with the support of the World Health Organization, stakeholders are accelerating efforts to address all forms and causes of malnutrition, and effectively translate the ICN2 commitments and Sustainable Development Goals into concrete, nationally-determined policies and programmes, ensuring coherence between national, regional and international policies across multiple sectors.

WHO and the UN agency family, as well as the SUN Movement stand ready to accompany Pakistan on its road to good nutrition.

Gerda Verburg

Assistant Secretary-General and Global Coordinator, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement

and Dr Francesco Branca

Director, Nutrition for Health Development Department, WHO



Interview with Gerda Verburg



Gerda Verburg

Assistant Secretary General and
Coordinator, Scaling Up Nutrition
(SUN) Movement



What is the SUN movement all about?

The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement was initiated by the UN, along with civil society, academics, the private sector and development partners under the recognition that nutrition is crucial for human and economic development, and the basis for a healthy and prosperous life. However, it is not only about food: the sanitary environment, clean water, and access to education are all key pillars which also determine a child's future. You need a lot of different sectors to work together to fight undernutrition, but also the rising global incidence of overweight and obesity.

The second point is that, back in 2010 people realized that multiple stake-

holders are also needed to overcome the malnutrition challenge. Country ownership and leadership at the highest political levels is crucial for success.

And last but not least, if you want to improve nutrition, of course policy action by politicians is needed, but you also need the contribution of civil society, people within the communities, and the private sector. Academia, the UN and donors all need to support implementation. So, you need all players to come together to agree upon how to move on and then act in order to get results that are scalable. This is the idea that underpins the SUN Movement.

How do you start with addressing the problem of nutrition when you are in a certain country?

How are the facts and figures gathered? What are the challenges you see?

Firstly, I would say that it starts with behavioral change and therefore all people within the community, both men and women's inputs are needed. We need men because they are brothers, they are fathers, they are leaders, and they are religious leaders, so they need to champion the idea of behavioral change and taking care of young children, because they can pave the way towards healthy communities, and a prosperous future for this beautiful country.

Secondly, Pakistan has endorsed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals were developed by all countries in the world, dealing

with education, poverty, water sanitation, the position of women, peace, prosperity, all the important things in life. Pakistan was one of the first signers of these goals and is implementing them. For each SDG you need nutrition as a foundation. So, you cannot end poverty in this beautiful country without investing in nutrition, you will not make it possible for children to have a better education or to reach their cognitive potential if they don't get the right nutrition. Society will not innovate, nor will sustainable peace be achievable if a country does not invest in this.

I am pleased to share the leadership of the Government of Pakistan, but also that of the different stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, the UN, and donors, is commendable. They are ready to join forces and work together, specifically to focus on implementation and results, because that is what is crucial now and progress will quickly follow.

There is one unique thing in Pakistan that I want to mention. The country is one of the only SUN Movement member countries that has a platform of academia comprised of universities and leading thinkers. They stand ready to support implementation, the government and different stakeholders to really improve nutrition, to train people, to educate people and to build future leaders.

What are your views about taking men on board on issues related to the maternal nutrition?

It is why we in the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement say, “focus on women, adolescent girls and children, but to do this you need the men to support them and to support the family and to support future generations”. Men can be examples. They are often decision makers, and reaching them is crucial so they become nutrition champions. I think that the majority of men want to see their family and community thrive and prosper. We count on all men to contribute, to give their wives, daughters and adolescent girls an opportunity to reach their full potential. In turn, this will create a brighter future for the country, its economic potential and human capital. Human capital is the most important capital for any country.

As I already emphasized, we need all men to be involved in the effort. We need brothers to be responsible brothers. We need fathers to raise their daughters as equals to their sons.

Let's talk about the nutrition as maker and a marker for development.

It is excellent that the Ministry of Health leads on key nutrition interventions, such as Vitamin A supplementation and the protection and promotion of breastfeeding. But we also need the food and agriculture sectors to help transform the food system. A country like Pakistan, with significant agricultural production, can work to create healthier and nutritious food; create jobs in rural areas, provide school meals that help keep children in school. Such programmes can also help children to exercise and encourage brain development rather than listening to their stomach alone. Good

nutrition is not only the lack of food but it is the lack of diverse foods. Pakistan can help create an environment for all its children to thrive.

Another topic is sanitation, not only in schools but in households too. Is there enough clean water available? For instance, it is crucial that there are separate toilets for boys and girls, especially in secondary school because girls have distinct needs. Without this, the chances of girls dropping out of school increase significantly.

The rise of processed and fast food has become a lifestyle choice. How can we spread awareness about right food and nutrition? How can the private sector help?

The use of mobile phones is widespread across Pakistan.. This can be leveraged to ensure messages around good nutrition, shared with vast audiences and positively influence peoples' behavior. The private sector can play a key role here. The involvement of a variety of private sector companies, not only the food companies, is crucial in Pakistan. Those companies whose sole business model is to produce unhealthy, addictive foods need to re-think their approach. All businesses in Pakistan should be currently thinking about how they are part of the effort to invest in the future of Pakistan and providing everybody with the right nutritious food for a fair price. It's not easy but every country including Pakistan has to have this constructive but also critical dialogue, and we completely support the need to have this important exchange. I am really strong on inviting private sector companies to step up but also to make a healthy business case when it comes to good

nutrition.

This needs to be supported through effective government regulation. Pakistan for example has imposed a tax on sugary drinks. I encourage policy makers to go a step further and consider providing clear information on food labels around key nutrition facts. Particularly with unhealthy products so that consumers know the negative health effects of high fat, high sugar, and high salt products.

Learning from each other is very important. Please tell us about that.

We are visiting not only Pakistan but have also visited Nepal for instance. I have been in Indonesia and northern countries, so I am traveling to see how SUN member countries can showcase their experience and progress. One of the representatives in Kenya, told me that women are brought up as second class citizens. If we are brought up with a feeling and recognition that we are equal human beings, life is so much brighter and prosperous. I am very blessed as I was born and raised in family of 10 children. I have 7 brothers and my parents told us that we were all equal. For that reason, my brothers had to learn to cook, wash the dishes, clean the windows etc. and I was born and raised on a farm so I can milk cows by hand. That is equity, my seven brothers are proud of their sister because of where I am and what I am doing, and they praise themselves and say: “Well, we have invested in our sister to bring her where she is today”, so it's a shining example.



Interview with Dr Francesco Branca



Dr Francesco Branca
Director, Nutrition for Health and
Development, WHO

in turn affects reproduction. There are issues of overweight, an epidemic that is also increasing in low and middle countries. Pakistan is no exception with 40% of women overweight in urban areas.

What areas in Pakistan are proving most challenging, particularly in regards to the demography of the country?

There are differences between urban and rural areas. People with low income are more affected by food insecurity and malnutrition because their access to food and services is limited. But we have seen an incredible potential by policy makers in communities to react to these problems, policies to tackle the issue are being created. An example is in reducing inequality, where Pakistan shines amongst others: there is a very important social program which is reaching several million families and is really helping in reducing inequality, and improve nutrition and access to education. This way the country can build upon its human capacity, which is the future of the country.

What is maternal malnutrition? Are people aware of the issue enough, and how crucial it is?

Maternal nutrition is paramount in ensuring good health and nutrition for the future generation. A stunted

mother is more likely to give birth to an undernourished child, so this creates an intergenerational cycle of malnutrition. Children who are stunted will also be likely to have more chronic diseases such as diabetes or heart disease, which will persist lifelong. Hence, sound early nutrition is absolutely crucial.

Simple measures can be undertaken to ensure this, such as the provision of iron and folic acid supplements, which should be taken before the pregnancy, and at the early pregnancy stage, to maintain good health for mother and child. But the early age at which pregnancies occur is another challenge. Girls who marry too soon and have children too early, basically face a physical competition between their own growth and that of the child. Both the health of the mother and that of the child will be put in jeopardy.

We mentioned earlier the phenomenon of stunting and wasting. Could you tell us a bit more?

In Pakistan, the majority of families, around 58%, don't have access to an adequate diet and are lacking energy, but also vitamins, minerals and all the other nutrients required for a healthy body. Pakistan is a low and middle-income country, so income is the main reason for this. There has been a nutrition transition, whereby the system of food is



What are the nutrition challenges globally and in Pakistan?

Worldwide we are faced with a double burden of malnutrition. 156 million children are stunted, and over 40 million children are wasted. Both these conditions of under nutrition are extremely problematic for future development.

Pakistan is also facing these issues, and with high prevalence. 44% of children under 5 in Pakistan are stunted, and about 4 million children are affected by acute malnutrition, or wasting. At the same time, vitamins and mineral deficiencies give rise to conditions such as anemia, in women which

changed. There are also more people living in urban areas and those who do increasingly rely on processed food. If this processed food is high in fats, sugar, and salt this is a disaster. So, we are creating even more badly nourished people because its quality is actually not conducive to good health.

What are the risks of not having right food and relying more on processed and fast foods? What steps government should take to address?

It is a combination of two factors: people's behaviour and the food environment. If the only food you can afford is not good quality, no matter how good your education you will need to settle for that. But if you had the best available food and don't appreciate it because for instance, marketing on unhealthy food is high, you can also make the wrong choice. It's a combination of good education and marketing. If unhealthy food is promoted through marketing, particularly to children, the right choices will not be able to be made.

Fixing this won't work without government regulation. Pakistan for example has imposed taxation on sugary drinks. Maybe even more than this can be done, through labeling for example, and having clear information on the products.

Confusion between being overweight and being healthy is usually taken as a cultural phenomenon. How can public awareness be fostered?

The difference between how we show culture and its actual shape is widely debatable. Different parts of the world have different role models. From our point of view, we need to explain what the value of having a healthy weight is, or what the value of having healthy growth is. It's not about extremes but about getting the best out of a good body shape; having a healthy diet; having an active life and all that is related to health and wellbeing. There are positive cultural values which are also related to emotional wellbeing.

During your visit to Pakistan, what the areas that you thought needed more attention?

First I would like to praise the health Minister for her focus on equal nutrition. This is really paramount, and we at WHO attach high importance to that.

The early six months of exclusive breast feeding and the two subsequent months of breast feeding (even beyond, if possible) are surely very important for a child and can possibly prevent overweight and under nutrition. These are the areas where I have seen a lot of attention and challenges, in addition to infant health. 38 % of children here are exclusively breast fed which is the global average, but with the benefits attached to it, we should aim for 90% at least. Pakistan is probably the largest country to use bottle feed for children in this part of the world.

There are positive surprises that will lead us to for solutions. For example, Pakistan's good approach towards putting more taxation on

sugar, sweets and beverages will likely discourage their wider use in the country. This example can be followed by other countries. Regarding breast feeding, if Pakistan finds a way to promote that, it will also be a positive example for other countries.

The Health Minister wants to work more on baby-friendly hospital environments, so all hospitals could be made appropriate for breast feeding.

We know that the government of Pakistan is committing to create breast-feeding rooms in public institutions, which is an important commitment. Other countries will take them as an example and do the same. Collectively we will see advancement in nutrition, and that's what we want.



Reducing malnutrition in Pakistan



In efforts to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to improve the nu-

trition situation in Pakistan, the World Food Programme (WFP) supports the government's initiatives to reduce different forms of malnutrition, with a special focus on the most vulnerable groups: pregnant and lactating women, and children under five, prioritizing the first 1,000 days, from conception to two years of age.

Under the governance, policy and advocacy component, WFP Pakistan has been supporting Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) a collaborative movement under the leadership of Nutrition Section of the Ministry of Planning Development & Reform. WFP is also supporting the government in the development of Pakistan's Multi-sectoral Nutrition Strategy. WFP is chairing the SUN UN Network, co-chairing the Business Network in collaboration with the Micronutrient Initiative (GAIN) and MI and supporting the SUN Academia & Research (SUNAR) Network as part of the advisory group. In addition, the National Fortification Alliance (NFA) and Provincial Fortification Alliances (PFA) are being supported by WFP through the Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination, and provincial governments. With the support provided by WFP, the Pakistan National

Food Fortification Strategy was formulated and national standards for Wheat Flour Fortification were revised. As part of the National Fortification Alliance (NFA), WFP in collaboration with the Ministry and Provincial Departments of Health and the Micronutrient Initiative is striving to prevent micro-nutrient deficiencies, especially iodine deficiency, in Pakistan by supporting the Universal Salt Iodization countrywide.

Under the research component, Cost of the Diet, Nutrition in Cities, Filling the Nutrient Gap, Economic Consequences of Malnutrition in Pakistan have been carried out by WFP that will strengthen future nutrition sensitive and specific interventions in Pakistan. In addition, a broad evidence building component within the stunting prevention programme assessing the food/nutrient based approach within the primary health care system in Sindh and operational research for nutrition outcomes through social safety nets in Rahim Yar Khan, are underway. All these are an effort to support the stakeholders with the best evidence for informed programme planning and implementation. To prevent and treat acute malnutrition, WFP is supporting the Government in implementing Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme in partnership with UNICEF and WHO since 2009. WFP supports treatment of children under five years of age with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and malnourished pregnant



and lactating women. Children are provided with Acha Mum, while women receive Maamta (Lipid-Based Nutrient Supplement) produced in-country.

WFP is also taking care of a preventive approach and in collaboration with Department of Health, Sindh WFP is implementing a stunting prevention programme with emphasis on provision of complementary feeding to children and pregnant and lactating women within the primary health care system in Sindh. The programme is also being scaled up in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Balochistan.

WFP has built technical capacity in producing the specialized nutritious foods (SNFs) for children and pregnant and lactation women to treat and prevent malnutrition. SNFs are widely used in Pakistan in WFP development and emergency programmes and also being exported abroad and are a way forward for filling the gap in the vulnerable population for having nutritious food.

Nutrition in Pakistan



Every year, one in three child deaths are caused by malnutrition in Pakistan. With a quarter of the

population being undernourished, malnutrition has severe impacts on human development. UNICEF Pakistan has worked tirelessly to reduce the problem through policy and programmatic support. Over the past few years, UNICEF has supported the creation and implementation of nutrition strategies, guidelines and interventions.

UNICEF's continued support to Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Pakistan has led to the creation of SUN units in KP, FATA, PAK, and GB. These units will assist in coordinating oversight of multisector plans that will ensure an improved nutritional status, particularly for the most marginalized women and children. UNICEF also provided training on tracking of financial investments in nutrition so that SUN secretariats can ensure plans are translated into actions.

Major achievements in the area of Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF), which encompasses breastfeeding and post breastfeeding diets in the first two years of a child's life, were supporting the development and endorsement of National IYCF Strategies and a Pakistan IYCF Communication Strategy. These strategies pave the way for changing nutrition behaviours and feeding practices across Pakistan.



To promote breastfeeding practices, UNICEF supported the creation of a series of radio advertisements and an innovative video for use by Lady Health Workers with women in rural settings which standardizes messages on breastfeeding with attention-grabbing graphics. UNICEF also supported the creation of a breastfeeding room in the National Assembly of Pakistan and will further support these at subnational level. In 2016, more than 31 million children under five were provided vitamin A supplements (VAS) during National Immunization Days across the country. This wide coverage is achieved through the implementation of the programme coupled with highly successful polio campaigns. Additionally, VAS Guidelines developed with UNICEF support are in their final stages and will assist in refining programmes that will reduce vitamin A deficiency in Pakistan.

Fortified and therapeutic foods are required for treating children suffering from acute malnutrition. Through the

Community Management of Acute Malnutrition programme, UNICEF screened 1.3 million children, treated 49 000, and supported Stabilization Centres to treat the severest cases of malnutrition. Trainings were provided to 4000 government staff members to facilitate capacity building and ensure appropriate government take over of nutrition support programmes.

This year the new National Nutrition Survey will be conducted with UNICEF's support to provide a current snapshot of nutrition in Pakistan. Evidence will be generated on complementary feeding practices in children with UNICEF collaboration to enable informed policy, planning and programming at country level. A national advocacy campaign focusing on breastfeeding will also roll out.

UNICEF is pleased to work with all levels of government to improve the health and well-being of children and their mothers across Pakistan.



Integrating nutrition, food security and livelihoods



The Food Security Working Group organized a two-day training in Islamabad to help address the gaps and challenges faced by partners in integrating nutrition in food security and agriculture in Pakistan.

The training, entitled “Enhancing capacities for better integration of nutrition within food security and livelihoods intervention in protracted crisis settings”, was made possible with the financial assistance of ECHO.

Mr. Francisco Gamarro, Acting FAO Representative in Pakistan and Mr. William Affif, Head of Policy and Programmes at WFP, jointly opened the training.

Mr. Ahmed Raza, Nutrition and Food Systems Officer from FAO headquarters in Rome, along with Dr. Noureen Aleem Nishtar, Nutritionist from the Food Security Working Group conducted this training for participants from UN agencies, national and international NGO, and government officials working in Pakistan involved in food security, agriculture, livelihoods, health and/or nutrition programmes.

There is strong evidence to suggest that linkages between food security and nutrition need to be considered in the design and delivery of emergency response to address malnutrition and food insecurity. Over 9 million children under five are affected by stunting - the third highest population of stunted children in the world. The 2011 National Nutrition Survey (NNS) shows that since the last survey in 2001, stunting and wasting rates for children under five have unfortunately increased from 42% to 43.7% and 13% to 14%, respectively, while for underweight the prevalence rate remains unchanged at 31.5%. At the end of the training, participants developed a shared understanding of the linkages between nutrition, food security and agriculture, and identified opportunities for collaboration across sectors. Ms Shohreh Naghchbandi, Technical Assistant, ECHO Office in Islamabad, in her closing remarks expressed her confidence that this training would be helpful in better understanding the complexity of undernutrition and how to address it through an integrated approach. The Food Security Working Group is co-led by FAO and WFP. It provides a forum for strategic needs analysis, coordination of response planning and dissemination of timely information to maximise the benefit of humanitarian assistance the affected populations. More than 300 organizations are members of the Food Security cluster in various capacities, including international, national and local NGOs, government authorities and National and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities and line departments, including Agriculture and Livestock, donors and UN agencies.



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Australia announces funding to improve nutrition in Pakistan



The Australian Government has announced additional support worth one million dollars to the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) Pakistan to

affordable, and safe measure to lower the burden of micronutrient deficiencies.

According to the National Nutrition Survey of 2011, more than half of women and two thirds of children in Pakistan are suffering from micronutrient deficiencies which pose a serious public health problem, resulting in slow physical and cognitive development in children, inferior school performance and decreased productivity in adults. The

food security and improved nutrition by achieving the goals of the Sustainable Development Goal 2.”

Mr. Jurek Juszczyk, the Acting High Commissioner to Pakistan, said: “the Australian Government has supported the National and Provincial Fortification Alliances of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh since June 2015. Today I am proud to announce that we are extending our support for



improve nutrition, eliminate hunger, and attain food security by fortifying food.

The announcement follows the official launch of the National Fortification Strategy, supported by the WFP Pakistan, the National Fortification Alliance (NFA) and the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (MNHSRC), which aims to lay out key actions for overcoming micronutrient deficiencies in Pakistan, also known as “hidden hunger”. The strategy states that the addition of vitamins and minerals to common foods is an effective, af-

problem translates into an annual economic burden of around 3.5 billion dollars, equivalent to around 2% of Pakistan’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Honourable Minister of State for National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination, Mrs. Saira Afzal Tarar, endorsed the strategy, stating that: “interventions proposed in the Food Fortification Strategy are in line with the Government’s priorities to improve status of nutrition for its people. The Ministry is working in close liaison with its valued partners to eliminate hunger, attain

another year”.

WFP Pakistan Country Director and Representative, Mr. Finbarr Curran said, “the Government of Australia has been a proactive partner in working with us and the Government in addressing food security and nutrition in Pakistan. We are very confident that this wide-ranging food fortification strategy will have a positive and long term impact on the economic development of Pakistan”.



The Assistant High Commissioner – Protection Volker Türk visits Pakistan



Volker Türk, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and Daisy Dell, Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific visited Pakistan on April 26-28. During their visit they met with Government officials including Lt. G. (R) Abdul Qadir Baloch, Minister of States and Frontier Regions, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Law and Justice. The delegation also met with the UN Country Team, donors and partners during the mission. They visited UNHCR Vol-

untary Repatriation Centre in Chamakani, Peshawar, a school upgraded under the Refugee Affected and Hosting Area (RAHA) programme. Mr. Türk also visited a refugee village where he held a discussion with urban refugees from Haji Camp.



Creating gender equality is must to eliminate discrimination against women



The United Nations has appreciated the steps taken by Pakistan in empowering women and fostering gender equality in the country.

Ms. Sangeeta Thapa, Deputy Country Representative of UN-WOMEN and Vittorio Cammarota, Director, UNIC participated in an exclusive talk-show

on the occasion of International Women's Day at Radio Pakistan. Ms. Thapa said that Pakistan is playing a vital role in removing gender differences through effective legislations and constitutional tools. She lauded the growing number of girl students in Pakistan as a result of effective policies to encourage female education in the country. She said a number of women are playing a pivotal role in bringing in a technological and digi-

tal revolution in the country. She also stressed the need for creating gender equality to remove discrimination against women. Mr. Cammarota said that girls and women have the right to decide about their future, whether it be regarding marriage, educations, or jobs. He also appreciated Radio Pakistan's active role in creating awareness about women's rights.



United Nations approach for stabilization in crisis



Aadil Mansoor, Assistant Country Director, Crisis Prevention and Recovery of UNDP Pakistan

in an exclusive interview with Radio Pakistan discussed the United Nations' work in crisis prevention and recovery, stating that it focuses on

increasing the resilience of communities to natural and manmade disasters, mitigating their impact, and preventing conflict through rehabilitation and early recovery. He further informed that the United Nations has implemented and monitored emergency situations and programmes on drought, flood and earthquake relief assistance and also has facilitated early re-

covery coordination, provided relief and rehabilitation for Temporarily Dislocated Persons (TDPs) and the communities in crisis affected areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Federally administered Tribal Areas (FATA).



Nutrition is the core foundation for all SDGs



Assistant Secretary General and Co-ordinator for the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Ms. Gerda Verburg and Dr. Francesco Branca, Director, Department of Nutrition for Health and Development in WHO spoke about health and nutrition issues in Pakistan in the UN Perspective programme with Special Correspondent Javed Khan Jadoon stating the mutual motivation between them and stakeholders consequent to their meeting, adding that the focus should be on



the implementation of proper nutrition among people. Ms. Verburg said that nutrition is of crucial importance for children to develop brain and body, and that without it people will not be productive. She added that Pakistan is among the leading countries to have signed the Sustainable Development Goals. Dr. Branca appreciated that Pakistan, which has moved into

middle income group of countries, has sanitation facilities in 95 percent of schools which is very heartening. He said that we cannot just rely on providing more food to the people but that adequate water and health care are also essential, calling for all necessary support in terms of right food for a right condition of life.

PTV talk show, “Health is Wealth” with UN mission on nutrition



Ms. Gerda Verburg , United Nations Assistant Secretary General, Coordinator of the SUN Movement, and Dr. Francesco Branca , Director of WHO’s Nutrition for Health and Development, both visiting Pakistan on an official mission, participated in a PTV World talk show, “Health is Wealth” with Shabnum Riaz . The Minister of State for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Ms. Saira Afzal Tarar was also present.

The speakers discussed at length is-

sues regarding malnutrition, including several forms of undernutrition, as well as overweight and obesity which impairs people’s productivity and, in turn negatively affects national growth. In this sense, malnutrition represents an often invisible impediment to the successful achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

They revealed that an estimated 45% of all under five mortality is linked to malnutrition (Black et al. 2013). It results not only from a lack of sufficient and adequately nutritious and safe food, but from a host of intertwined factors, among others healthcare, education, water, sanitation and hygiene, access to food and resources, women’s empowerment.

Ms. Verburg stated that Pakistan is a



member of the “Scaling Up Nutrition Movement” and it is encouraging to see that the leadership in government, several ministers and other stakeholders such as civil society, private sectors, the UN, and donors are ready to join forces to work together, especially focusing on implementation and results, a very important and crucial aspect for quick progress.

Challenges and implications of the nutrition on national development



Radio Pakistan's programme "UN Perspective" featured participations from

Alba Cecilia Grazon, Head of Nutrition, United Nations World Food Programme, Islamabad and Dr. Abdul Baseer Khan Achakzai, Director and National Program Manager, Ministry of National Health Services.



The importance of good nutrition for development was highlighted in their contributions. Dr. Achakzai stated that Vision 2025 includes Scaling up Nutrition and zero hunger challenges towards the achievement of sustainable development goals. Federal and provincial gov-

ernments have taken positive steps by allocating funds and initiating nutrition programmes in all provinces, focusing on food insecure and vulnerable districts.

Nutrition and the economic consequences of under-nutrition in Pakistan



On April 26, a talk on Radio Pakistan was held to discuss Nutrition and the economic consequences of undernutrition in Pakistan with guest speakers Mr. Muhammad Aslam Shaheen, Chief Nutrition/ SUN Focal Point Pakistan, Ministry of Planning,

Development & Reform Islamabad, and Ms. Cecilia Garzon, Head of Nutrition, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

The "Cost of Doing Nothing" about undernutrition in Pakistan is staggering, with a conservative assessment estimate of US\$ 7.6 billion in economic activity lost annually. This is largely preventable through collaborative multi-sector planning and implementation and modest long-term investment. The human, social, and economic returns will provide the necessary boost for Pakistan's economic development and a path to realize the current Vision 2025.

Further analyses must identify the most promising policy options, bring-



ing together a series of multi-sectoral cost-effective interventions for both short and long-term results. Various initiatives by the Government of Pakistan to address the issue were also discussed during the talk.

International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination – 21 March



We all have a role to play and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

highlights our collective responsibility. After all, racial discrimination destabilizes societies, undermines democracies and erodes the legitimacy of Governments.

By acting together to end discrimination, we can lift humanity as a whole. As societies become multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multicultural, we will need greater political, cultural and economic investments in inclusivity and cohesion in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

We can build communities that recognize that diversity is not a source of weakness, it is a source of strength and richness. Let us stand up against intolerance and eliminate discrimination. Let us join forces in our global campaign Together for Respect, Safety and Dignity for All.



International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members – 25 March



Only 92 States — just half the membership — are party to the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, and merely 30 have ratified the 2005 Optional Protocol, which extends protection to United Nations personnel delivering humanitarian, political or development assistance. I urge all countries that have

not joined these instruments to do so without delay.

On this International Day, let us stand in solidarity with all detained staff and pledge to work together to ensure that all United Nations staff have the safety they need to help the world's most vulnerable.

International Day of Nowruz 21 March



Nowruz is a new beginning. A new year. A chance to be with family and friends. The United Nations family celebrates Nowruz because this holiday has a meaning for the entire world: a reminder of all that we have in common — and the richness of our diversity. It is a time to learn about each other and our world. It is a chance to renew our pledge for peace, friendship, human rights and human dignity. Let us mark this new beginning with fresh resolve for our world.



I thank the brave women and men working in mine action for their life-saving work. I commend the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action for its needs-driven, people centred approach. And I applaud the United Nations Mine Action Service, now in its 20th year, for its leadership, courage and commitment to peace. Peace without mine action is incomplete peace. I urge all Member States to keep this issue at the top of the inter-

national agenda when negotiating peace, when seeking to prevent harm during conflicts, and when deploying emergency humanitarian responses in war zones. Mine action establishes the foundations for lasting recovery and development.

World Autism Awareness Day – 2 April



On this World Autism Awareness Day, let us all play a part in changing attitudes toward

persons with autism and in recognizing their rights as citizens, who, like everyone else, are entitled to claim those rights and make decisions for their lives in accordance with their own will and preferences. Let us also renew our promise, engraved in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to leave no one behind and ensure that all people can contribute as active members to peaceful and prosperous societies. In this World Autism Awareness Day, let us all play a part in changing attitudes

toward persons with autism and in recognizing their rights as citizens, who, like everyone else, are entitled to claim those rights and make decisions for their lives in accordance with their own will and preferences. Let us also renew our promise, engraved in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to leave no one behind and ensure that all people can contribute as active members to peaceful and prosperous societies.

As the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities points out, legal capacity and equal recognition before the law are inherent rights that persons with autism enjoy on an equal basis with other members of our societies.

In the exercise of those rights and their freedom to make their own choices, let us ensure that we make available the necessary accommodations and support to persons with autism. With access to the support they need and choose, they will be empowered to face the key milestones in every person's life, such as deciding where and with whom to live, whether to get married and establish a family, what type of work to pursue, and how to manage their personal finances.

When they enjoy equal opportunity for self-determination and autonomy, persons with autism will be empowered to make an even stronger positive impact on our shared future.







SAMAR MINALLAH KHAN
ANTHROPOLOGIST, DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER

“Women are human beings first. It’s time to stop treating them as inanimate objects that can be bartered to settle disputes or killed for so-called ‘honour’. ‘Honor’ is in giving them the respect and dignity they truly deserve”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



INA LEPEL
AMBASSADOR OF GERMANY IN PAKISTAN

“Let’s work together to close the gender gap in all spheres of life! Empowering women and girls will help unlock Pakistan’s full potential”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



PERRY CALDERWOOD
CANADA’S HIGH COMMISSIONER TO PAKISTAN

“The full participation of all people – women and men – is essential for any society to achieve its full potential”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



MARGARET ADAMSON
AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER TO PAKISTAN

“Women remain the largest untapped reservoir of talent and economic productivity in the world, and by investing in women and girls, all countries can accelerate successful and peaceful social, economic and political development”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



DR. BRIGITTA BLAHA
AUSTRIA’S AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN

“Pakistani girls and women have many talents and have shown courage and strength, often under difficult circumstances. We have to pursue what we want, otherwise we will not get it; we have to ask or the answer will always be no; we have to step forward or we remain in the same place. We are united by the desire to be in a better place tomorrow than we are today”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



KHAWAR MUMTAZ
CHAIRPERSON, NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, PAKISTAN

“This day, the women of Pakistan renew their commitments to eradicate violence and assert their rights. With courage and determination, women resolve to move ahead”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



NAWAB SANAUULLAH KHAN ZEHRI
CHIEF MINISTER OF BALOCHISTAN

“On this International Women’s Day, the Chief Minister of the Government of Balochistan ensures his personal commitment and support for pro-women legislation and its implementation in the province”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN

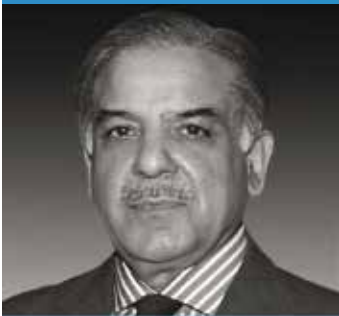


MARVI MEMON
MEMBER OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, CHAIRPERSON BETAZIN’ INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMME

“Respecting, treasuring and honoring women would ensure that those attitudes are forever avoided which lead to mental and physical violence against their person and character”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



SHEHBAZ SHARIF
CHIEF MINISTER OF PUNJAB

“Empowering women continues to have my personal commitment. As an equal and valued member of society, women are critical for building an inclusive, prosperous and a more harmonious nation”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



SHAISTA PERVAIZ MALIK
SECRETARY, WOMEN PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS, PAKISTAN

“Inclusive democracy is the real democracy. Women’s full representation in all spheres, especially at the policy and decision-making levels is imperative to achieve sustainable development of a country”

#UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



SYED MURAD ALI SHAH
CHIEF MINISTER OF SINDH

“Equal participation of women is essential for the sustainable development of our society. Sindh Government has taken a number of steps for ensuring women’s participation and empowerment. The empowerment of women also requires that we start this change from our home, where each individual has to contribute in this goal”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



MERAJ HUMAYUN KHAN
CHAIRPERSON, WOMEN PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS
KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

“I am a strong woman. I am not afraid to do what needs to be done. Life gets its meaning from my courage and my struggle. Change can come if we only get up and start a struggle”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



KAMRAN MICHAEL
FEDERAL MINISTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, PAKISTAN

“It is our national duty to protect the interest of every Pakistani woman and provide them with equal opportunities without any discrimination. The Government has taken several legislative, programmatic and administrative steps for the well-being of women which demonstrates our strong political will and commitment towards women’s empowerment”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



MARIYUM AURANGZEB
MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION, BROADCASTING
AND NATIONAL HERITAGE

“The women’s empowerment term is a confidence builder. In true spirit, women’s empowerment needs to be devolved to the mindsets of each individual in our society”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



JEANNETTE SEPPEEN
NETHERLAND’S AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN

“Pakistani women make the largest contribution to the economy, but their labour [mostly in household work and farming] is not accounted for. Let’s join forces to increase their access to financial services”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



AHSAN IQBAL
FEDERAL MINISTER FOR PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT
AND REFORM

“Over the years, the objective of 8th March has evolved to not only celebrate achievements of women and show our mutual respect towards them but also to serve as a rallying point for continued efforts in area of women empowerment. Pakistan has come a long way when it comes to empowering women socially, politically and economically. I believe with our collective efforts we will be able to create such a society in Pakistan that can provide equal opportunities to all its citizens to get ahead in life, irrespective of their gender”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



BEGUM HAMEEDA WAHEEDUDDIN
MINISTER, WOMEN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, PUNJAB

“In this modern era, economies are being forged with the ideology of gender equality, and I feel honoured to be a part of a movement that is replacing obsolete concepts with strategies of change. Our aim towards empowering women in Pakistan will inevitably lead our nation towards prosperity and, with incremental and perpetual improvements, we have begun the journey towards reaching that very objective”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



KISHWAR SHAHEEN AWAN
MEMBER/COMMISSIONER,
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, PUNJAB

“NCHR is paying its tribute to the women of Pakistan who contribute to the betterment of our society. We will always be part of the process for women’s empowerment”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



NEELUM KHAN TORU
CHAIRPERSON, PROVINCIAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS
OF WOMEN, KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

“To all the fabulous women whom I know and who know me, and to those who don’t as well. Let it be understood that you are Gods gift to your family, your friends, your community and most of all to your nation. You are strong, beautiful, compassionate beyond comprehension. You are resilient and you will stand up for your rights today and always. We will be strong and we will face ADVERSITY and walk DAUNTLESS. Let’s acknowledge and celebrate our successes, even though while slogging each minute of everyday we don’t realize we are winning!”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



SALMAN SUFI
DIRECTOR GENERAL, CHIEF MINISTER PUNJAB’S
STRATEGIC REFORMS UNIT

“Punjab Government lists women empowerment as a top priority concern for its citizens as demonstrated through the Strategic Reforms Unit’s Women Protection Act. It promises to empower, protect and serve its women through the establishment of an implementation mechanism for the Act in the form of the Violence Against Women Centres (VAWC) initiative. The VAWCS will ensure that the rights of women are safeguarded in a nuanced manner”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



MR. MARC P. GEORGE
AMBASSADOR OF SWITZERLAND IN PAKISTAN

“Gender inequality is one of the greatest obstacles to sustainable development, economic growth and poverty reduction. International Women’s Day reflects the efforts and achievements of women all around the world for equal rights. On this occasion, I would like to pay tribute to the courageous and dynamic women of Pakistan for their ongoing commitment to end social, economic and political inequalities. It is an opportune moment for Switzerland to reaffirm its commitment to reinforce and ensure all-inclusive rights for women within our development agenda”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



NEIL BUHNE
UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR, PAKISTAN

“If Pakistan is to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals it has committed to, it is crucial to deliver on women’s rights. We have so many brave and intelligent women who have made this country proud and we have a responsibility to protect the rights of all women and girls”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



THOMAS DREW
UK HIGH COMMISSIONER TO PAKISTAN

“Women’s Day celebrates the achievements of women worldwide, whilst recognising the challenges that many still face. This year the UK is focusing on women in the workplace. Education and training are at the heart of women’s empowerment. Real progress can be made towards achieving gender equality when women are strongly represented in their respective fields. That’s why the British High Commission, through UK Aid, has in Pakistan enabled 3.1 million girls to stay longer and learn more in school and trained over 30,000 poor and vulnerable women in a variety of workplace skills. I wish everyone a happy, thoughtful and empowering Women’s Day, every day”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



JAMSHED KAZI
UN WOMEN, COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE, PAKISTAN
(IDENTITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN)

“While highlighting the challenges and celebrating the achievements of Pakistani women, we mustn’t forget to empower the men. Empower them to learn to respect women as their equal in every way. Empower them to unlearn misconceived notions of male supremacy, domination, and resist the harmful societal pressures of being the sole provider and protector or failing as a man. Men of quality do not fear but embrace equality, where there are no losers and where everyone wins”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



PATRICK EVANS
FAO REPRESENTATIVE, PAKISTAN
(FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION)

“Women are the future of a peaceful developed Pakistan and they need to come out from the shadows into the light to help lead this country forward”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



IGNACIO ARTAZA
UNEP COUNTRY DIRECTOR, PAKISTAN
(UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME)

“Pakistani women and girls are rising stars, creating new frontiers of excellence in all walks of life. Harnessing their potential is the key to achieving the SDGs and Planet 50-50 by 2030. #gogirls”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



BELLA EVIDENTE
COUNTRY PROGRAMME MANAGER, UN-HABITAT PAKISTAN
(UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME)

“The increasing leadership and economic role of Pakistani women in the country’s urbanization process has brought a positive transformation in the society”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



VIBEKE JENSEN
UNESCO REPRESENTATIVE, PAKISTAN
(UN EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION)

“Women are the catalyst of societal change; we need to empower them”

UN WOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



DR. HASSAN MOHTASHAMI
UNFPA REPRESENTATIVE, PAKISTAN
(UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND)

“On this international women’s day, we at UNFPA pledge to amplify our efforts in order to ensure access to family planning information and services for all women. We firmly believe that the women’s ability to make informed decisions with regards to their sexual and reproductive health choices will contribute to socio-economic wellbeing of women and young people in Pakistan”

UN WOMEN

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CESAR GUEDES
UNODC COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE, PAKISTAN
(UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME)

“The true essence for Pakistan’s success lies with empowered women and men working together as equals with the goal of securing a society that provides opportunities for all”

UN WOMEN

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VITTORIO CAMMAROTA
UNIC DIRECTOR, PAKISTAN
(UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION CENTRE)

“On International Women’s Day, we are establishing a working group for women working in the media industry: an open space for exchange, development and protection”

#UNWOMEN

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DAVID HALE
AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN

“America will continue to fight for women’s rights and equality in our own country and around the world. We will seek to empower all women to pursue their dreams to live, work, and thrive in safe communities that allow them to protect and provide for themselves and their families”

#UNWOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



ANGELA KEARNEY
UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE, PAKISTAN
(UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN’S EMERGENCY FUND)

“The girls of Pakistan have so much to contribute to a stronger, more equitable society. Let’s work with girls not just as a vulnerable group - but as powerful agents of change in their own right”

#UNWOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



ILLANGO PATCAHAMUTHU
COUNTRY DIRECTOR, WORLD BANK, PAKISTAN

“Women have contributed significantly to the advancement of Pakistan’s development aspirations. For us, women in the workplace means smart economics. Pakistan aspires for high economic growth rates and that can only be achieved if more women join the workforce. At the same time, more girls need to be schools and supported”

#UNWOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



ESAM ALQARARAH
UNIDO REPRESENTATIVE, PAKISTAN
(UN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION)

“In promoting women in ‘Green Industries’ we are focusing on the leading role of women entrepreneurs in managing environmentally sustainable and innovative SMEs and start-ups. Women in Pakistan are incredibly innovative and creative”

#UNWOMEN

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DR. MOHAMMAD ASSAI
WHO REPRESENTATIVE, PAKISTAN
(WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION)

“On this International Women’s Day, I would like to reiterate that WHO is committed to attain highest standards of health and wellbeing for women and girls in Pakistan through promoting healthy life course, enabling them to contribute constructively and positively to the society”

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AHMAD SHAHZAD
CRICKETER

“Empower and nurture women as equals, they are the real champions of life”

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ALI ZAFAR
ACTOR, SINGER, SONGWRITER, MUSICIAN

“The very fact that nature put it upon a woman to nurture a child for nine months before he/she steps into the world, speaks of her greatness. How can she ever be any lesser. For all she could be, she would be greater”

#UNWOMEN

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ALI AZMAT
SINGER, SONGWRITER, MUSICIAN, ACTOR

“Without women I’m nothing - not a son, nor a husband or a brother and father.... the best relationships in the world”

#UNWOMEN

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AMIR KHAN
PROFESSIONAL BOXER, WORLD CHAMPION

“A real man doesn’t fight against women, he fights alongside them”

#UNWOMEN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



#UN WOMEN

“One who brings new life to this world is truly unbeatable. Respect women”

ALI KHAN
SINGER, PRODUCER

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



#UN WOMEN

“Women have the power to change our hearts. They are sensitive on a level that us men can never be”

ALI NOOR
MUSICIAN

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



#UN WOMEN

“I have had my moments of despair just like everyone else. Then, I remind myself that these ‘moments’ are like unwelcome guests. I can’t and don’t entertain them. Rather, I turn them away. I regain focus and control. You cannot let these negative thoughts consume you. It’s simple, what you put in, you’ll get in return. Also, don’t forget the power of projection. If you imagine yourself in positions and places you want to be, then you have a BIG chance. So, dream big and finish big. Don’t limit yourself!”

ARMEENA KHAN
ACTRESS, MODEL

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



#UN WOMEN

“Women are the protectors of men. We give birth, nurture, guide and inspire them”

ATIYA KHAN
SUPER MODEL

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



#UN WOMEN

“It is no longer the age to just stand behind a successful man. Stand beside him and watch the wonders you’re capable of”

AYESHA OMAR
ACTOR, MODEL, SINGER

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



#UN WOMEN

“Women shouldn’t be ashamed of being labeled as too strong, too assertive or too independent. They may be the shoulders of their parents, sole bread earner, their children’s hope or even an inspiration and example to other women, and not just a humble spouse. The man who loves you should love you because of all that you are, and not for all that you are not”

ANAM TANVEER
ACTRESS

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



#UN WOMEN

“The biggest failure of a man is that he doesn’t realize that a woman can be, and is his success. Let her walk besides you never behind, or you would be looking back rather than ahead”

ANGELINE MALIK
ACTOR, DIRECTOR, PRODUCER

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



#UN WOMEN

“Women are unbeatable. We are strong. We are passionate. We are intelligent. We are hardworking. We are capable. We are women!”

BINA SHAH
WRITER, COLUMNIST

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



#UN WOMEN

“The more I travel, the more inspired I am by the women who - against all odds - defy so-called conventional ‘wisdom’, the antiquated patriarchal societal structures of yesteryear. These women have a fire, a voice that cannot be suppressed”

CYNTHIA RITCHIE
FREELANCE PRODUCER

#WomensDay PAKISTAN

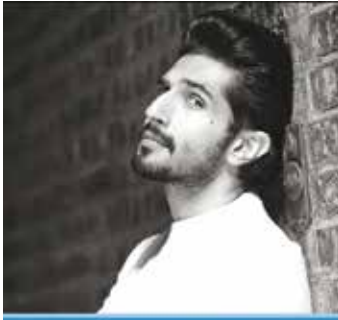


#UN WOMEN

“I have always looked up to my mother. She made me believe that struggles will always lead to success no matter what. She made me believe that no one is lesser to any one. There is a reason why we don’t have super-heroines, we call them super-heroes be it a man or a woman”

FAIZAN SHAIKH
ACTOR

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



BILAL ASHRAF
ACTOR, MODEL

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"I lost my elder sister [an aspiring filmmaker] to an illness. It was her faith in me that kept me going. In my life, whenever I need to overcome any challenge, I turn to my core - it's a female voice. It's the voice of my late sister"

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FAROOQ HASAN
ACTOR, DIRECTOR, ANCHOR, BANKER

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"My mother and sisters sacrificed a lot for me to reach where I am today. I salute the women of Pakistan who work exceptionally hard to support their families in every possible way"

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HASSAN RIZVI
CHOREOGRAPHER, DANCER

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"Women are not only the glue of a family but also the strength. It wasn't until the birth of my kids that I truly witnessed it for myself. We may have the muscle but they've got the power"

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KOMAL RIZVI
SINGER

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"There is no greater power or emotion than love. No human should be subjected to violence or unkindness - join me in making women unbeatable"

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



HIRA TAREEN
MODEL, ACTOR, DJ, DESIGNER

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"You can beat me to an idea, you can dance to my beat. You can beat around the bush or you can make my heart beat. You can beat the system but you can't beat me"

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



MOHAMMAD JIBRAN NASIR
LAWYER, ACTOR

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"Men who are insecure about losing to women keep competition away by hiding behind patriarchal notions of morality. Man up and face the women!"

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HASSAN SHEHERYAR YASIN
FASHION DESIGNER

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"I am a huge advocate for women empowerment and strongly feel that it is a man who may end up losing a battle but it is a woman who truly conquers and rules. She always wins no matter how rough her path is. Respect to all the women out there, especially single mothers. It's a difficult world and I believe that you are a survivor"

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MANSHA PASHA
ACTOR

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"The fact that we still have to talk about why women are equal to men and why they deserve equal rights, shows how far we are from the finish line. As human beings, we must learn to truly respect one another"

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HUMAIMA MALIK
ACTRESS, MODEL

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"It is beautiful how women are being talked about; their rights, struggles, worries and everything that makes a woman's life. Whatever positivity or negativity this particular issue is surrounded with is irrelevant as there is movement, and with movement comes progress. Every woman on the face of this earth, regardless of her continent, shares in their struggles and worries collectively. It is a matter of acknowledging, accepting and moving forward in togetherness. A togetherness that includes women and men"

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MASARRAT MISBAH
BUSINESS WOMAN, PHILANTHROPIST

#UN WOMEN #WOMEN

"Women are no less capable than men"

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MAWRA HOCANE
VI, MODEL, ACTOR

UN WOMEN

“Be fearless.
Be fierce and be absolutely unapologetic for who you truly are.
There lies in you unfathomable strength.
Work towards self-awareness, and discover your own unique talents and qualities”

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NOREEN KHAN

TV/RADIO PRESENTER BBC ASIAN NETWORK, ENTREPRENEUR

UN WOMEN

“Believe in your own abilities, focus on your goals and never compare yourself to anyone. If you think you're inferior to the opposite sex then this will only become an obstacle for you. Zone in on yourself and get out there and make things happen!”

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MOMINA MUSTEHSAN
ENGINEER, MATHEMATICIAN, MUSICIAN

UN WOMEN

“I feel proud that women in Pakistan – more now than ever – aren't just wanting equal rights, but are proving that they deserve equality by contributing to society as much as men, and working hard towards building their own identities.
I also feel proud that men are becoming more supportive of empowering women”

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OMAIR RANA
ACTOR, THEATRE DIRECTOR

UN WOMEN

“The only person allowed to discriminate against a woman, is someone whom a woman did not bring into this world”

#WomensDay PAKISTAN



MUNIB NAWAZ
DESIGNER

UN WOMEN

“The thinking of any man, who thinks lower of a woman, is a representation of his own sense of being. Real men respect and uphold women”

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QUATRINA HOSAIN
JOURNALIST

UN WOMEN

“Success is not a destination. It's a journey. Celebrate each achievement and keep travelling”

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MUNIBA MAZARI
NATIONAL AMBASSADOR FOR UN WOMEN PAKISTAN

UN WOMEN

“While we women are busy playing our predefined roles in daily lives as mothers, sisters, daughters and wives, we somehow forget to love ourselves, we forget our worth and we don't realize that there's so much more we can do for ourselves and for people around us”

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REHAN SHEIKH
ACTOR, DIRECTOR, WRITER, PRODUCER

UN WOMEN

“I always believed that if not superior to men, women are more than equal. The world would be a far better place to live in if there were more women in positions of power and leadership”

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SADIA HAYAT KHAN
ACTOR, ANCHOR, PRODUCER, DIRECTOR, CEO

UN WOMEN

“It's high time men back our voices. A safe nurturing world is what we need to create. Together”

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VANESSA O'BRIEN
BANKER TO MOUNTAINKER

UN WOMEN

“No-one can take away the knowledge, skills, and experience you acquire throughout your life. Your knowledge, skills, and experience inform your decisions as you move forward. So go ahead – take the biggest step you can”

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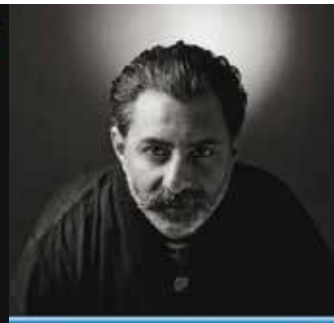


SHAISTA LODHI
TV PRESENTER

“I empower women by encouraging them everyday to be the best”

UN WOMEN

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YOUSUF BASHIR QURESHI
DESIGNER, ARTIST

“In my dictionary there is no queen. I only see them as king makers”

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SHAMOON ABBASI
ACTOR AND MODEL

“The strength of a woman cannot be determined by the hardship she faces, but is defined by the way she survives them, again and again, and still remains the same”

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ZAHIR RAHIMTOOLA
CEO AND FOUNDER, LABELS

“It is sad that though women all over the world work harder than men, yet they get the rough end of the stick. Until and unless there is respect for women the world will be plagued with disparity even in the developed world”

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SHOAIB MALIK
CRICKETER

“Real men of substance always treat women as an equal, whatever the field”

UN WOMEN

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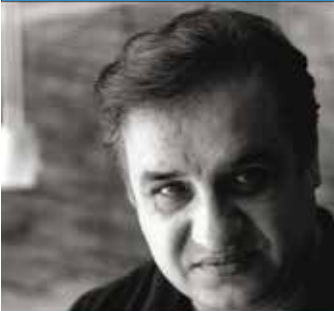


ZHALAY SARHADI
ACTRESS

“Men and women are two sides of the same coin. Without the other, each is meaningless. We have separate varying degrees of strength and the combination of both brings about success, harmony and thus happiness”

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SOHAIL HASHMI
ACTOR, DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, RJ

“I am born from a woman. It is a gift that I cannot repay. Let us all have respect for women in remembering that fact”

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ZARA TAREEN
ACTOR, PHOTOGRAPHER, DIRECTOR

“Laying hands on a woman is the lowest of crimes. I dare you to try and beat me with your mind. I am unbeatable”

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The United Nations has a long-standing partnership with the people of Pakistan in support of national development goals. The United Nations has also been providing humanitarian assistance in case of natural disasters and crises. Led by the Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, United Nations works in all eight administrative areas of Pakistan through 19 resident organizations. Straddling humanitarian assistance and sustainable development, the work of the United Nations in Pakistan includes key areas such as education, health, water and sanitation, nutrition, economic growth, employment and livelihoods, resilience against disaster, governance, gender equality and social justice.

The One UN Programme for Pakistan, United Nations focuses on accelerating progress towards achievement of Millennium Development Goals, reducing poverty, promoting opportunities for youth as well as advancing gender equality and human rights both at national and sub-national levels.

United Nations encourages economic growth in Pakistan through supporting policies and programmes that link small farmers to markets, improving working conditions for women and supporting home-based and domestic workers. It will also assist the Government in strengthening democratic processes and institutions at the federal, provincial and local levels. Tackling the effects of climate change and reducing Pakistan's vulnerabilities to natural disasters features especially prominently in the work of the United Nations in Pakistan.

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