

# Media Update

1 February 2016

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## ILO

MEDIA ADVISORY

### Launch of an Online Complaint System for Migrant Workers and Overseas Pakistanis

**What:** The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MoOPHRD) has established an online complaint management system allowing migrant workers and overseas Pakistanis to submit legal complaints in cases where they face injustice during recruitment or employment. The system will allow the complainant to track the status of his/her complaint upon submission. The online system will also increase the efficiency of the current complaints modality and ensure transparency in order to safeguard the interests of migrant workers.

**Who:** Mr. Khizer Hayat Khan, Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development will officially inaugurate the online complaint system along with Mr. Bernard Francois, Head of Cooperation, Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan and Ms. Belinda Chanda, Officer-in-Charge, International Labour Organization Country Office for Pakistan.

**When:** Wednesday, 10 February 2016, 10:30 AM

**Where:** 5th Floor Meeting Room, B-Block, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad

**How to Participate:** If you are interested to attend the event, please send your name, CNIC number and your media affiliation, to [naimaa@ilo.org](mailto:naimaa@ilo.org), not later than **1200 noon 9 February 2016**.



## Labour Migration from Pakistan:

Pakistan has a long history of labour migration to the Middle East, and in South Asia, it is the second largest labour sending country (after India). Between 1971-2015, more than 8 million Pakistanis have officially proceeded abroad for employment. Migration from Pakistan reached a new peak after 2011. During the five years (2011-2015), more than 3 million people proceeded abroad for employment. Out of this total labour migration about 96% have proceeded to the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states - the key country of destination being Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Significant numbers are also proceeding to Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain. In terms of professions, in 2015, of all emigrants from Pakistan, 41 per cent were skilled, 16 per cent semi-skilled and 40 per cent un-skilled. Less than 3 per cent were highly qualified or highly skilled. The emigration of Pakistani women is negligible as only some 8,000 female workers have moved abroad for employment, primarily in the field of health services, finance sector, beautician field and fashion designing.<sup>1</sup>

Migrant workers brings substantial benefits – remittances in origin countries and human capital in destination countries – the official channels for migration are failing to distribute the benefits equitably among employers, intermediaries and workers. Abuses during recruitment and employment are common<sup>2</sup>. It is well known that malpractices including high costs and fees, misrepresentation, failure to meet placement obligations and contract substitution are fairly common among licensed agencies. Unidentified and unregistered sub agents in the recruitment business is another issue which further contributes to migrant workers vulnerabilities, human smuggling and trafficking. To address these issues, a comprehensive, quick and transparent grievance handling mechanism is a need of the time to ensure migrant workers easy access to justice.

The ILO, in collaboration with European Union, is implementing a 3-year project title ***“Promoting the Effective Governance of Labour Migration from South Asia through Actions on Labour Market Information, Protection during Recruitment and Employment, Skills and Development Impact”***. The project aims to promote the management of labour migration from India, Nepal and Pakistan to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), ensure effective protection of the rights of vulnerable migrant workers, enhance the development impact of labour migration and reduce unregulated migration.

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<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BE&OE), 2015

<sup>2</sup> ILO: Labour migration in South Asia: A review of issues, policies and practices, *International Migration Paper 108* (Kathmandu, 2011).

# UN Women

## Press Release

### UN Women promotes Women's Empowerment through Food Tech

**Lahore, 29 January, 2016:** This week UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, organized a skills development workshop on 'Women and Food Tech Sharing Economy: Employability and Empowerment' to enable women to focus on self-efficiency and resourcefulness through innovation. The training took place at Hospitality Inn from 25th to 29th January and was widely attended.

Participants included social entrepreneurs, international and local NGOs, homebased workers (including marginalized and transgender), technology institutes, IT students, food bloggers and representatives from UN agencies in Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi.

Mr. Vimlendu Jha and Mr. Pratik Kumar, social entrepreneurs from India, were invited to facilitate the workshop. Training sessions were based on their successful pioneering social venture in India called "Million Kitchen", a mobile-based home food ordering platform that enables home cooked meals to be delivered at the doorstep. The aim of UN Women's initiative is to introduce and replicate this innovative approach for women homebased workers in Pakistan, and enable them to access new markets and create income generation through ICT, and further create employability, enterprise development and women's economic empowerment.

UN Women brought together a diverse array of stakeholders who discussed, experimented and tested their prototypes throughout the workshop. Participants received training on administration, budgeting and ICT, all leading up to a practicum on Thursday 28th of January where women home based workers successfully sold their home cooked food online.



On Friday 29th of January at the closing session all participants shared their positive experiences, and UN Women's Country Representative Mr. Jamshed M. Kazi said: "For UN Women Pakistan, innovation is not just another buzzword. It is a way of thinking and doing, which we aim to infuse in all other areas of our work, including ending violence against women and women and humanitarian response. The support from the Government of Denmark to enable us to think outside the box and bring along diverse partners from CSOs to private sector, universities and the Punjab government, has been a key ingredient for a successful test run of the "Million kitchen" model."

Ms. Fauzia Viqar, Chair of the Provincial Commission on the Status of Women, Government of Punjab, welcomed the initiative and urged the participants to continue the project.

Ms. Tehzeeb Baqar, Programme Officer of HomeNet Pakistan said the workshop had been different, as usually training for women focus on traditional skills, while this week they had learned to challenge themselves to think in a more innovative way regarding women's skills.

As Secretary General of the Home-based Women Workers Federation (HBWWF), Ms. Zehra Khan, stressed that it is important to ensure that women are not left behind within technology, and she therefore found this initiative very promising.

Closing remarks were given by the chief guest Ms. Amna Imam, Secretary for Women and Development Department (WDD), Government of Punjab. She applauded the women for taking the opportunity to learn about economic empowerment and encouraged the participants to use these skills for income generation.

UN Women is thankful to the Danish Embassy in Pakistan, Pakistan Innovation Foundation, WeCreate, Lahore College for Women University, School of Leadership in Karachi, Million Kitchen and all the implementing partners who participated in the workshop.

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