

Media Update

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WFP

PRESS RELEASE

The Business Community Joins Hands with Development Agencies and the Government to Improve Nutrition in Pakistan

Karachi - Pakistan network of professionals focusing on harnessing business to address malnutrition met under the banner of the Scaling Up Nutrition Business Network (SBN) today, 12 August 2015, at the Pearl Continental Hotel in Karachi.

The multi-stakeholder UN-led SUN Movement, founded on the principle that all people have the right to food and appropriate nutrition, has been responding to persistently high levels of malnutrition globally.

Organized by the World Food Programme (WFP), Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and Micronutrient Initiative (MI), in close coordination with the Chief Nutrition and SUN Focal Person from the Planning and Development Commission of Pakistan, the event focused on reviewing the Business Engagement Strategy with regards to nutrition in Pakistan. The strategy was drafted in consultation with the stakeholders specifically in response to malnutrition and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SUN Business Network is part of the SUN Movement and aims to channel business expertise and apply its strengths and comparative advantages to improve nutrition in Pakistan. It supports and encourages private sector businesses to develop and incorporate a combination of nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive plans in their business operations. It promotes coordination with a wide range of private sector businesses covering multiple stakeholders. Companies showing interest in having a social footprint under the SBN umbrella are increasing at an unprecedented



rate and, by the end of the year, the number is expected to reach 50 across Pakistan from the current 24 (fast moving consumer groups, pharmaceutical companies, food commodity producers, manufacturers, consumer, information technology and logistics services as well as others). Worldwide, SBN has a constituency of 160 companies committed to scaling up nutrition both through global and national platforms.

“Enhancing food and nutrition is an important part of WFP’s mandate” Said Lola Castro, WFP Pakistan Representative. “Our efforts capitalize on local capabilities as well as technical expertise and provide locally developed and produced supplementary foods. The private sector is an integral part of promoting nutrition in Pakistan by enhancing local expertise through technology and knowledge transfer. By continuing to work together with the private sector, we can make significant and sustainable progress towards a healthier Pakistan.”

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UNWOMEN

PRESS RELEASE

On International Youth Day 2015, Pakistan’s Young Men and Women speak out for Economic and Political Empowerment

Quetta, Balochistan, 11 August 2015: “We [the youth] need to be empowered through education - quality education - not only in the rural areas but in the urban areas too.”

“Adults have a big role to play in promoting equality between boys and girls, and educating them to succeed in life.”



“With low employment rates, youth need to have their skills developed. How else will they be employed in respectable jobs?”

“The youth are busy; whether doing good or bad they are busy. Our youth have potential, they are active, their brains are working – they are busy on social media. The issue is the system; the political system must work to support the new generation.”

These are some of the issues voiced by young men and women, youth activists and panel members urging leaders at the national, provincial and district levels - to listen, and take action during a youth dialogue held on Tuesday 11 August 2015 (Quetta, Balochistan) in commemorating International Youth Day 2015, under the theme “Youth Civic Engagement”. The event organized by the Women Development Department of Balochistan, in collaboration with UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and the Inter-Provincial Ministerial Group on Women’s Empowerment focused on promoting gender equality in economic and political participation of youth.

Today, Pakistan has the largest cohort of young people in its history. As highlighted in Pakistan’s second National Human Development Report 2015 on Youth (launched last month) almost 64% of Pakistan’s population is below the age of 29 (and 31% between 15-29 years of age). This implies that the youth is one of the most important forces that will forge the future of Pakistan. This exceptional “youth bulge” provides an opportunity to invest in and harness the potential of this young generation and lay a strong foundation for the future of Pakistan.

Mr. Jamshed Kazi, Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan, in his welcome address, shared: “The youth of Pakistan are the next generation of ‘gender champions’ to stand up and take action in raising awareness on socio-economic and political inequalities and discrimination faced by women and girls - and men and boys - not only at home, in Pakistan, but across the world.” He said: “The voice of our youth, if properly harnessed, valued, and recognized, has transformative potential for promoting gender equality towards economic progress, political participation, environmental stewardship and social inclusion.”

Ms. Salma Qureshi, Director, Women Development Department, Balochistan in her opening remarks said: “In recognizing youth and the role of youth within the mechanisms of the provincial Gender Equality Frameworks, we will

inspire change. Balochistan's Women Development Department is ensuring the social, economic and political rights of women, by ensuring pro-women laws, legislations and policies work for, and benefit all women across the province.”

Mr. Afzal Sulehri, Director, Youth Affairs, Balochistan informed: “The Provincial Department is working on a youth policy which is expected to be launched very soon in Balochistan. The Department has conducted career counselling sessions in a number of universities across the province and recently 1,250 young men and women have benefitted from international and/or cross-provincial educational exchange programmes.”

Ms. Rahila Durrani, Chief Guest and Member of Provincial Assembly, Balochistan, speaking for the youth of Pakistan said: “The biggest challenge we face is the lack of a youth policy at the provincial level. Parliamentarians must take the initiative in establishing a Youth Commission which includes representation of all the provinces in which we address specific issues faced by the youth across the country.”

In his vote of thanks, Mr. Hashim Nadeem, Secretary, Women's Development Department, Balochistan urged the discussions on youth empowerment and gender balances not to remain an unreachable vision. The time has come to make this vision a reality, at reachable reality.”

Recommendations from this youth dialogue are being shared with the Inter-Provincial Ministerial Group on Women's Empowerment for consideration and action.

Participants included youth from Balochistan, parliamentarians, representatives from civil society and local groups, and media.

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UNDP

PRESS RELEASE

On International Youth Day, UNDP celebrates the role of young people in building Pakistan's future

ISLAMABAD 12 August 2015 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Young Parliamentarian Forum jointly hosted a conference on Youth Civic Engagement in celebration of International Youth Day 2015. The conference recognised the vital role young Pakistanis play in building social cohesion and human development.

About 64 percent of Pakistan's population is below 29 years of age. These young people are important partners of change for the country. But with under 2 percent of the youth active members of community groups or other local organizations, it is imperative to dramatically change the situation on the ground and actively engage Pakistan's young people.

The Country Director of UNDP Pakistan, Marc-André Franche said: "There is a critical need to engage Pakistan's youth bulge, and strengthen their role in community activities and decision-making. This will only be possible by investing in youth, particularly by increasing their active civic engagement in socio-economic and political affairs. This places immense responsibility in the hands of legislators, policymakers, development practitioners, and other stakeholders. It will be up to them to provide youth with a real chance to become part of Pakistan's socio-political sphere."

UNDP's upcoming National Human Development Report on youth will highlight the key role that Pakistani youth play in the country's future and aims to provide a strategic direction for appropriate policymaking. By ensuring the youth have access to quality education, meaningful employment and genuine opportunities for engagement, they can be mobilized to become agents of positive change towards prosperity, peace and human development.

Together with the Norwegian government, UNDP is taking an active part in strengthening youth participation. In D.I. Khan district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, our Youth and Social Cohesion initiative helps involve young people in decision-making and community activities. We've partnered with USAID to provide training and work opportunities to help young people in Karachi's

troubled Lyari, Korangi and Sultanabad areas get involved in the garment industry. With support from DFID, we raised awareness on voter education especially amongst youth and women.

Mr. Franche said: “We want to change the way youth are thought of in the country: Not as a problem to be solved, but as a potential to be realized.”
