

Media Update

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PRESS RELEASE

Repairing Collateral Damage; Decent Work for Temporarily Displaced Persons from North Waziristan Agency

Islamabad: An old adage says “Give a person a fish and they will feed for a day; teach to a person to fish and you will feed them for a lifetime.” Confucius may have predicted the touchstone of modern development and ILO’s intervention in assisting Temporary Displaced Persons meet the semblance of decency as they cope with their plight coincides with exact same logic in the war torn areas of Khyber Pukhtun Khwa. Displaced persons from North Waziristan shared courageous experiences of their journey to build back better what once was lost, at an event held on Thursday 28th May 2015 at the ILO office in Islamabad.

The event was held under ILO’s project Employable Skills Development for Improved Livelihoods of Temporarily Displaced Persons (TDPs) in North Waziristan Agency (NWA). Initiated in October 2014 the project has imparted training to a total of 200 persons, 80 men and 120 women in marketable trades including competency based training in plumbing, electrical, tailoring and hand embroidery. The project is part of “Community Resilience Program” of the UNDP implemented through Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (KP-TEVTA).

The ILO Country Director Mr. Francesco d’Ovidio in his welcome note said “The Government and Development partners need to do more for ‘employment creation’ for the people in the terrorism-affected areas. This is the only sustainable way to keep people in productive activities and avoid anti-social engagements’ .

As the custodian of global knowledge on skills and employment creation, ILO was entrusted with the technical quality of the skills training component of the project. Vocational skills trainings were carried out in collaboration with the Technical Educational & Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) of KP Government. The trades for the project were identified by United Nation Development Program (UNDP) with the assistance of its Implementing Partners (IPs), keeping in view the demand from the community, marketability of the trades, cultural constraints and interventions of other stakeholders in terms of skill development in that geographical area.

The event on 28th May showcased a heart-touching skit on the importance of decent work and the role of women as contributors in the household in order to improve their livelihoods. Two rights holders (traditionally called beneficiaries) shared their experiences on how ILO's intervention improved their situation. Naseemullah, now proudly making ends meet through newly acquired skills in plumbing, while sharing his experience said "we are mountain people and would not settle for anything less than honourable living. I can confidently state that it is ILO and ILO alone whose colleagues remained with us throughout the touch period of our lives and helped me start earning money in a dignified manner and provide for my family".

Chief Guest Mr. Adil Mansoor-Assistant Country Director UNDP highlighted the quality and quick response nature of skills training imparted to the beneficiaries which was the key to employment creation.

As part of the overall strategy, skills development and short-term livelihood opportunities for the temporarily displaced families of NWA enabled them to earn reasonable income, improve their living standards in hosting areas and also encouraged them to continue educating their children during the time of displacement to avoid their entry into anti-social or unproductive activities, including in child-labour. This greatly reduced the pressure on both the displaced families and hosting areas and also enabled Government authorities to properly manage the rehabilitation work for the displaced families. The complementary results of this intervention included a reduction in domestic violence and improved nutritional status of families and children.

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