

Media Update

23 November 2016

UNIDO

Press Release

Nurturing emerging & commercially viable clean technologies to deal with imperative energy, environmental and economic challenges through Innovative solutions

Given the significance and contribution of small businesses to the promotion of job creation and overall economic development of Pakistan, UNIDO is implementing a "Global Cleantech Innovation Programme for SMEs and Start-ups" focusing on the promotion of innovations in clean technologies, funded by the Global Environment Facility and supported by its strategic partners, Pakistan Council for Science and Technology (PCST), National Productivity Organization (NPO), Pakistan Institute of Management (PIM) and international knowledge partner - The Cleantech Open USA, In 2015 this programme has accomplished its second cycle of call for awards with great success. It attracted 332 innovations, out of which 55 best SMEs and start-ups were supported through extensive mentoring, training, access to investors and showcasing opportunities. The five national winners of the call were awarded with prizes ranging from US\$ 20,000 to US\$ 15,000 and an additional prize of US\$ 15,000 for the most promising woman-led business, in the categories of energy efficiency, renewable energy, water efficiency and waste to energy. The winners further participated in the global competition held in Silicon valley, USA where Pakistan won 'Global Award' in the *category* of Waste to Energy.

Continuing with the same spirit, the next cycle for the call for awards was launched in the year 2016. There were record number of 592 applicants this year also. The series of activities started with the solicitation of applications after a successful outreach activity across Pakistan. After that the applications were scrutinized and semi-finalists were declared. The first activity of training was National academy after that the series of webinars



direct from Silicon valley, USA, started which lasted for 2.5 months. After that Business Clinic was held to further guide the teams on improving their business plan. The next milestone was the Mock Judging which completed today. These sessions were held in three cities of Pakistan for the semifinalist teams. Main purpose of these sessions was to guide the semifinalist teams on how to improve their presentations technically, financially, and from marketability point of view. Judges gave valuable remarks on the presentation and all the semifinalist teams vowed to improve their presentation as well as pitching techniques.

These mock judging sessions were helpful for Innovators of 2016 to develop brief and competitive executive summary and the investor presentation for their business models to attract attention of the potential investors and to get additional financing for further development of their business ideas and technologies' prototypes. This training was the conclusion of the 7 weeks of intensive business clinic sessions that were aimed to provide relevant business knowledge, business development skills and competences to startups and support them to build their final viable business models.

UNESCO

Press Release

International conference launched for increasing water, food and energy security for poverty alleviation in dryland regions of Pakistan and Asia and the Pacific Region

Islamabad / Rawalpindi, 23 November: UNESCO and Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR), jointly launched today a three day International Conference on **Asia Pacific Policy Dialogue on Water, Energy and Food Security for Poverty Alleviation in Dryland Regions** at PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi.



This International Conference is held at a time when the United Nations together with its partners is promoting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thus representing a significant step forward in the recognition of the contribution of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) to sustainable development. As such, UNESCO is highlighting key issues, available solutions and policy directions for poverty alleviation and improved livelihood by inviting policy makers, scientists, academicians and other stakeholders to explore new ways for increasing water and food security and alleviate poverty in the resource deficient dryland regions worldwide, in Asia and the Pacific region, and particularly in Pakistan. The Conference will constitute to integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national development plans and will be proposing policy guidelines and strategies for effective use of resources to ensure water, energy and food security.

In his welcome address, Prof. Dr. Rai Niaz Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of PMAS-AAUR said that by joining hands together and through collective efforts, we will be able to overcome the negative impact of climate change.

Ms. Vibeke Jensen, UNESCO Representative to Pakistan in her inaugural remarks stressed that the rates of soil depletion are especially worrying in the drylands which need significant attention for global sustainability, especially food security. Drylands make up 44 percent of all the world's cultivated systems and account for 50 percent of its livestock. She emphasized on reviewing existing policies and interventions and make the needed revisions to achieve the 2030 goals. "The growing demand for food, energy and water will claim more land thus leading to more deforestation and environmental degradation unless we commit to restoring degraded land", Ms. Vibeke said. She also stressed on the need for partnerships between governments and private sector to provide an enabling environment for smallholder farmers to increase productivity in a sustainable manner.

In his key note remarks, **H.E. Mr. Takashi KURAI, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan** mentioned that the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development is a wider plan of action and guiding principles for all which requires joint efforts and the Government of Japan efforts is committed to address poverty and working to improve health, education, disaster management, hunger and climate change. Furthermore, the Government of Japan is assisting Pakistan in many areas including the provision of safe and clean drinking water, livestock, disaster and technology use in many rural areas.

While H.E Dato' Dr. Hasrul Sani Mujtabar, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan in his remarks congratulated UNESCO and PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi and expressed that all the main themes - Water, Energy and Food Security are important for human security. He expressed that the Government of Malaysia under the South-South Cooperation will continue to share information and learn good experiences from the member countries.

Chief Guest, Mr. Sheikh Aftab Ahmad, Federal Minister for Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, thanked UNESCO and PMAS-AAUR for organizing the conference and termed the International Conference as an excellent example of promoting cooperation among member states and hoped that the conference participants would come with key recommendations to policy makers that will be helpful for Pakistan to devise strategies for addressing food, water and energy security issues. He said that Pakistan has been confronting the energy and water crises and that the government of Pakistan is realizing these and other resources for greater economic development. Diamer-Bhasha dam project is one of many examples that the government is working on.

Dr. Shahbaz Khan, Director, UNESCO Regional Science Bureau for Asia and the Pacific highlighted the importance of the Conference and also informed about the various programmes that UNESCO is undertaking through different funds in trust programmes including from Japan and Malaysia under which Engineering Qualification Standardization, International Hydrological Programme, Man and the Biosphere Programme and use of ICT for High Learning in Asia Pacific are being carried out.

The three day International Conference is being organized around four major themes in Water Security for Sustainable Development, Renewable Energy Systems, Food Security and Poverty Alleviation.

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UNDP

Press Release

Businesses to play greater role in new development era in Asia-Pacific, says UNDP at Responsible Business Forum

UNDP, Global Initiatives, 600 business leaders and government officials start work on a new coalition for sustainable development

23 November 2016, Singapore – At the fifth Responsible Business Forum, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) today called on business leaders to take a greater role in the new development era in order to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This Forum, opened in Singapore by UNDP and Global Initiatives, aims to address a sea change in the nature of development funding by creating a new partnership for sustainable development.

Domestic public and private finance accounts for 89 percent of all financial flows in Asia-Pacific, according to a UNDP report launched last month. While foreign funding (Official Development Assistance) is still essential for the development system, it now accounts for 0.7 percent of total financial flows in Asia-Pacific (down from 13.5 % in 1990).

This trend in development funding is partly driven by the increase in the number of middle-income countries from 16 to 28 over the past decade. This requires a fresh approach to financing for development that mobilizes contributions from a wider range of sources, including the private sector. At the same time, there has never been a greater need for innovative ideas, new partnerships and funding as we gear up to achieve the SDGs.

“This new development era presents unprecedented challenges and calls for unprecedented solutions to ensure stability and sustainability,” said Haoliang Xu, UN Assistant Secretary-General and UNDP Director for Asia-Pacific. “Climate change, aging populations and explosions of popular discontent with the status quo are combining to present an existential threat to both people and planet. Everyone must join together to face this challenge.”



“Enlightened companies are facing headwinds with sustainable growth due to the nationalistic shift in global politics and the still subdued level of commodity prices,” said Mark Cliffe, Chief Economist of ING Group, who joined the UNDP press briefing. “Technology and new consumer propositions, such as sharing economy models, offer exciting new ways to deliver on the SDGs.”

September was the warmest month in modern temperature monitoring and 2016 is likely to be the hottest year on record. This global warming and the other effects of climate change are leading to an increase in natural disasters, for which Asia is already the most vulnerable region in the world with 1,600 disasters in the last decade and the loss of half a million lives.

Four-fifths of the population in Asia live in countries where inequality has increased over the last two decades, and the unequal distribution of resources – including access to water, farmland and economic opportunity – is a major driver of conflict in areas as diverse as Afghanistan, Myanmar, Thailand and the Philippines.

At the same time, accelerated ageing in many countries presents governments with an ever heavier burden on the public purse to provide pensions, healthcare and other basic services.

“All sectors of society – private and public, international and domestic – must collaborate to address challenges that affect the wellbeing of us all,” added Haoliang Xu. “Our role is to combine decades of experience with ideas and resources from new partners, including in developing countries where businesses account for 60 percent of GDP and 90 percent of jobs.”

For example, Bangladesh aims for private financing to fund 78 percent of its current Five-Year Plan.

“Domestic sources of finance have emerged as a driving force for sustainable development in Asia-Pacific,” said Haoliang Xu. “The new partnerships and funding allow us to provide tailored services in the areas such as development planning and budgeting, building the capacity of national institutions, piloting and scaling up innovative projects, and sharing knowledge among countries.”

As emphasized in UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s statement to the Responsible Business Forum, “Looking across the 17 interlinked SDGs, it is



evident that business must play a central role in the transition to a sustainable future. Business is the change agent that will spur innovation, unleash low-carbon investments and power sustainable growth across the planet.”

More information is available on the Responsible Business Forum [web page](#) and on Twitter under #RBFSingapore.

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WFP

Press Release

WFP SIGNS LANDMARK AGREEMENT TO RESEARCH NUTRITION IN SOCIAL PROTECTION

ISLAMABAD, 23 November – The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Pakistan today signed a landmark, three-year agreement to research and identify the most cost-effective strategies to improve the nutrition status of children between 6 and 23 months of age who are covered through social protection systems. The agreement was signed by WFP, the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and the Primary and Secondary Health Department in Punjab.



“This is the first time such research is being done in the context of an existing social protection scheme, rather than a specially-created research project. The findings will give Pakistan a great opportunity to build an evidence base for its social protection programmes,” said WFP Country Director ad interim Stephen Gluning. “WFP Pakistan is proud to be a part of this initiative.”

The Government of Pakistan has declared nutrition a national emergency and has included nutrition in its “Vision 2025” national plan. The main actors working in nutrition have agreed on the importance of basing future operations on scientific conclusions. This research will be based on real operations and will compare the efficiency and cost-effectiveness, from a nutritional perspective, of different types of nutritional interventions. The results are expected to be the basis for future efforts to prevent malnutrition in Pakistan within the social protection sector. This venture is also strengthening partnerships among different government departments that collaborate to improve nutrition in the country.

“There is no clear evidence on the cost-effectiveness of interventions currently being used vis-a-vis their impact within the social protection sector. Pakistan cannot afford to continue as they have; prioritization for impact on nutritional indicators is a must,” stated Cecilia Garzón, the Head of Nutrition of WFP Pakistan. “This research will give us solid evidence for evidence-based programming that can change the nutritional situation of the most vulnerable people of Pakistan and thus the country’s future.”

BISP is the largest safety net programme in Pakistan, and plans to use the findings to help inform the scale-up of its programmes in the future. By partnering with BISP and the provincial government of Punjab, WFP hopes to ensure that assistance will have the greatest impact on the poorest of the poor.

Research will be carried out in the Rahim Yar Khan district in Punjab province. Five different groups will be considered (including a control group) to compare the outcomes of the different types of interventions, includes combinations of different interventions including cash-based transfers through the BISP-run social protection scheme, enhanced behavioral change communication and the provision of specialized nutritious foods, which will be supplied by WFP. All interventions will be implemented in close collaboration with the Lady Health Worker programme of the Primary & Secondary Health Care Department Punjab.

The 2011 National Nutrition Survey shows that 44 percent of children under five years of age are stunted. This condition impedes mental and physical development, and hinders capacities to learn, thereby constraining futures and impacting future incomes. Different initiatives are being taken to reduce these alarming percentages, and the research by BISP, WFP and the Primary & Secondary Health Care Department is expected to be of great value for future decisions and programming.

Since 2008, WFP has been addressing acute malnutrition and stunting by implementing nutrition programmes in Pakistan, including wheat and salt fortification. WFP programmes are aligned with the Government of Pakistan's priorities for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger and the goals set within Vision 2025.

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WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. Each year, WFP assists some 80 million people in 80 countries.

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