

Media Update

26 January 2017

ILO

Press Release

Provincial Labour Legislation reviewed and actions discussed

Islamabad, Wednesday, 18 January 2017: Pakistan's tripartite stakeholders including Government, Employers and Workers jointly reviewed progress on Provincial labour legislation after the 18th Constitutional Amendment. Moreover, constituents discussed actions at Federal and provincial level to complete and adopt first cycle of labour legislation and subsidiary legislation as well as to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of Labour Laws. For this purpose, it was reported that the Provinces of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and Sindh have almost completed the present labour legislation process while Baluchistan, Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Pakistani Administered Kashmir (AJK) and Islamabad Capital Authority (ICT) are at different levels of completing their legislations. Decision about Labour Laws in Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) will depend upon its merger with KP or any other course as decided by the Government.

The two-day National Consultation was organized on 17th -18th January 2017 by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO). Provincial and Regional tripartite stakeholders from the four Provinces and FATA, GB, AJK and ICT along with the Pakistan Workers Federation (PWF), Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP), - both members of the Federal Tripartite Consultative Committee - participated. This consultation was held under the Project 'Promoting International Labour and Environmental Standards in Pakistani SMEs (ILES)' funded by European Union (EU).

After passage of the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010, it was a unique gathering of tripartite stakeholders from all regions of the countries. . A comprehensive review of the existing situation of the Provincial labour



legislation, challenges in the legislative process as well as challenges in the effective implementation and enforcement of labour legislation was undertaken.

Mr. Sohail Amir, Federal Secretary, Ministry of OP&HRD highlighted the role and responsibilities of national and provincial stakeholders in the formulation of labour laws, the enforcement of those and the reporting. Compliance with international safety standards and improving the OSH conditions, coordination for harmonization of labour laws as well as reporting are important areas to work on. He assured that the Ministry of OP&HRD will support all provincial and regional labour departments in drafting new labour laws, in effective enforcement and smooth reporting on their application.

Addressing the event, Dr Amaury Hoste, Head of Section, EU Delegation in Islamabad, assured EU's commitment for compliance of international labour, environmental and human rights Conventions and the achievement of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He further noted that provision of opportunities for women is also imperative. Increase in number of unionized workers, improving the OSH, strengthening labour inspection system and capacity building of institutions involved in the oversight mechanisms are other important areas for improvement. He also highlighted the importance of sustainable initiatives by different partners.

While welcoming the participants, Ms. Ingrid Christensen ILO Country Director, Pakistan, highlighted the importance of International Labour Standards (ILS) as guiding principles while formulating labour laws so as to promote Decent Work. She also emphasized the need for effective implementation of labour laws at workplace level and the role of employers and workers in this process. She assured ILO's technical assistance to the stakeholders in the development of labour laws and regulations to allow for implementation of the principles enshrined in the Conventions through national legislation, standards and guidelines, providing for the ratification of the Conventions, In post-devolution scenario, it is a unique opportunity to look back in terms of current status, opportunities, challenges, and way forward on this important process.

Mr. Zahoor Awan, General Secretary, Pakistan Workers' Federation (PWF) emphasized the need for enforcement of labour laws in accordance with the spirit of the law and international labour standards. He opined that the uniformity among provincial laws and speedy legislation process are very important aspects of the labour legislation. Unionization and collective

bargaining are imperative for ensuring the decent work environment for the workers.

Mr. Fasih-ul-Karim Siddiqui, General Secretary, Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP) also urged for harmonization among provinces and regions for experience sharing and transfer of technical expertise and uniformity among labour laws devised by the provinces. He found it the need of the time that Governments, Employers and Workers show positive attitude for the labour welfare as that will consequently contribute to the economic development of the country.

The technical experts recommended further capacity development of the labour departments, strengthening of the Federal and Provincial Tripartite Consultative Committees, development of a time-bound action plan, strengthening of the social dialogue at provincial and regional levels, elaboration of a strategy for extending effectively the labour laws to the agriculture and informal sectors as well as to the Economic Processing Zones (EPZ), engagement of political leadership through Provincial Tripartite Committees, the need to revisit the inspection paradigm and last, but not least sensitization of all stakeholders on compliance of labour laws.

At the end it was agreed to continue the dialogue to ensure that the provincial laws are aligned with international labour standards and with economic and social policies of Pakistan.

The ILES Project is a joint undertaking of the Government of Pakistan with the support of ILO and European Union (EU) to support Enterprises and industries for better compliance with labour & environmental laws and standards. The World Wildlife Fund will be a key partner as to the environmental aspects. Over the next five years, the project will gradually expand its work to all Provinces. Small and medium-sized enterprises in the textile and leather sectors are specifically targeted for providing technical support and capacity development.

UNICEF

Press Release

UNICEF and Department of Planning and Development, Punjab organise joint workshop for media on the situation of Stunting in Punjab

Islamabad, 26th January 2017 – A media workshop on stunting was organized jointly by UNICEF and the Planning and Development Department of the Government of Punjab in Lahore today. The aim of the event was to sensitize journalists and media to one of the most pressing issues of Pakistan that affects more than one out of three children in Punjab alone, and represents a serious obstacle for the development of the country as a whole.

Stunting is the physical manifestation of underlying, persistent and severe nutritional deficiencies, and severely hinders the growth and development of a child. It is associated with suboptimal brain development, which may have long-lasting harmful consequences for cognitive ability, school performance and future productivity.

The technical expert on the issue, Dr. Shehla Zaidi, Associate Professor and Program Director at the Department of Community Health Sciences, Agha Khan University Karachi explained that stunting may begin whilst a child is still in the womb; thus, the nutritional status of the mother is critical for the future health of the child.

The Punjab MICS 2014 survey shows that every third child in Punjab suffers from chronic malnutrition (stunting). While stunting has shown a downward province-wide trend since 2007, this masks serious problems in some districts. In Dera Ghazi Khan, the worst affected district, however, the rate of stunting is as high as 50.9 per cent.

“The good news is that we know exactly what causes stunting and how to treat it”, said Angela Kearney, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan, “Stunting can be prevented through very simple actions that are done during pregnancy and the first two years of life such as exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months, as well as the provision of wheat, oil or salt fortified with vitamins and minerals and use of vitamin supplements for pregnant women and



children. Another important measure that can easily be taken is handwashing with soap to prevent diarrhoea and other water borne diseases.”

The workshop was attended by journalists from news and entertainment television, radio stations, newspapers and bloggers. Famous media personalities such as, Waseem Badami, Noor ul Hasan, Maria Memon, Rehman Azhar, Irfan Ahmed Urfi and Danish Saeed gave their suggestion on covering the issue and bringing it to the public’s attention.

“The media, needs to be provided with good stories related to stunting and malnutrition, and a good level of coordination needs to be maintained for this,” said Waseem Badami, Analyst and TV Show Host.

Maria Memon, another TV show host said, “This is something I would personally take forward and I look forward that you all point us ahead, that’s when we can really make people understand the issue.”

Noor-ul-Hassan, prominent TV show host, stressed on the importance of ensuring mother’s health. “These things need to be included not only in our syllabus, but also in films as dramas to educate the masses.”

The journalists pledged to do everything in their power to bring the issue up on their respective media outlets and after a fruitful discussion with the development partners agreed on ways how they could work together to this end.

Some of these innovative ideas was the suggestion to use mobile phone communication platforms such as Ureport- PakAvaz or social media for regular exchange on data and facts, as well as the collaboration on producing compelling media content to tell how badly stunting affects the development of children.

Dr. Shabana Haider, Member of Health, Planning and Development Department, Government of Punjab thanked all participants and announced that a full-fledged “stop stunting” campaign will be rolled out shortly to improve the nutrition indicators in the province. She also reiterated that the media will be a critical partner in the campaign.

About UNICEF

UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work in 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into



practical action, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children, everywhere.

For more information about Stunting in Punjab contact Multi-sectoral Nutrition Cell, Planning & Development Department Punjab at msnc.pnd@gmail.com

For more information about UNICEF visit: www.unicef.org/pakistan

For further information, please contact:

Daniel Timme, Chief – Advocacy and Communications -UNICEF Pakistan,
dtimme@unicef.org; +92 51 2097700

UNODC

Press Release

Denmark supports UNODC's capacity building program for Pakistan's border management agencies, police and prosecution services

Islamabad, 26 January 2017 – The Government of Denmark has today signed a DKK 4 million partnership agreement with UNODC Pakistan. The agreement was signed by the Ambassador of Denmark, H.E. Mr. Ole Thonke and Mr. Cesar Guedes, Country Representative UNODC. The agreement is about a program that aims to improve the capacity of Pakistan's border management agencies, police and prosecution services.

On the occasion, Mr. Ole Thonke said that Denmark fully supports Pakistan in their strive to enhance security and the rule of law in Pakistan, as both were important pre-requisites for developing a secure and fair society for the people of Pakistan.

“We are very happy to be extending our support to this important program which is led by UNODC in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan. We fully believe that through this support, the institutions would be strengthened to protect the population, thereby increasing trust in government and



contributing to overall stability within Pakistan and its surrounding borders”, said Ambassador Thonke.

He also emphasized that Denmark strongly supports the on-going regional processes aimed at developing a regional consensus for peace, security, stability and development, underlining Denmark's commitment to strengthen this cooperation.

One of the program components focuses on improving the capacity of Pakistan’s border management agencies and their cooperation with Afghanistan using an integrated border management system based on cross-border collaboration. By providing knowledge, training, equipment and support to collaborate with Afghanistan, the program is expected to make Pakistan’s border agencies more effective in reducing threats in border regions and strengthen their cooperation with Afghan counterparts.

The Danish funds will also support in building capable and accountable institutions within the security and justice sector so it will lead to more effective investigation and prosecution of criminal cases.

On the occasion, Mr. Guedes, thanked the Government of Denmark for their support and highlighted the importance of building capacity of law enforcement agencies managing border regions of Pakistan and cross border cooperation with counterpart authorities. He also said, that this engagement will help police and prosecutors to be more effective at protecting the public against crime and related illicit threats.

For further information kindly contact Rizwana Asad, Communications Officer UNODC via 0301-8564255, rizwana.asad@unodc.org

WHO

Press Release

WHO Statement recognizing UAE PAP contribution to Polio Eradication efforts in Pakistan

Humanity is on the verge of one the greatest public health achievements in history – eradicating polio. In 2016, fewer children were paralysed by polio than in any other year globally, and in Pakistan. Despite many challenges faced by the polio programme, Pakistan has made strides towards stopping transmission and in 2017 is the closest it's ever been to reaching that goal. After many years the highly transmittable yet vaccine preventable virus is finding that there are very few places left to hide.

In 2016, thanks to the support of the UAE Pakistan Assistance Programme's Emirates Polio Campaign Phase-III, more than 10.6 million children across Pakistan's highest-risk districts were reached with the most vital health intervention for protection against polio: two drops of Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV).

The generous contributions of the UAE towards polio eradication in 2016 cannot be underestimated and has contributed significantly to the turnaround seen in Pakistan since 2014. Two years ago, Pakistan reported 306 wild poliovirus (WPV) cases. Transmission was widespread across the country with all of FATA, most of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, many parts of Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab reporting cases. In less than 18 months, a reinvigorated programme has been able to first stem the tide of uncontrolled transmission and tackle the more chronic underlying challenges that have proven obstacles to virus interruption and eradication. A fundamental paradigm shift towards reaching and vaccinating missed children amongst the 37 million target under 5 population has seen missed children reduced to historic lows.

With the support of funds from the UAE, highly committed and dedicated staff in the field have accessed and facilitated access to the most high risk districts, vaccinating some of the most vulnerable children, some of which would otherwise not have been reached by any health service. Through a series of well-planned, high-quality immunization campaigns financially



supported by the UAE's Emirates Polio Campaign Phase-III for 66 high-risk districts across Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Federal Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Sindh, the programme has made efforts to reach previously missed children.

The financial contribution made through the World Health Organization (WHO) Pakistan has ensured that more than 71.5 million polio drops were received by vulnerable children in Pakistan. It also helped to cover incentives to polio frontline workers, in addition to the associated operational costs of the campaigns in identified districts, enabling WHO to continue strengthening capacity and outreach in the most difficult part of Pakistan.

“We are extremely grateful to the UAE and the Director of the UAE PAP, Mr Abdullah Khalifa Al Ghafli, for the multi-year long commitment shown in ending polio in Pakistan. The generous and unwavering support UAE continues to show to Pakistan and this cause is making all the difference. Without it, the programme would be lacking what it needs to push to the end,” said Dr Michel Thieren, WHO Representative to Pakistan.

The UAE has long played a pivotal role in supporting global eradication efforts. In 2013 His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces announced a commitment of AED440 million (US\$120 million) in support of global efforts to put the world over the finish line for polio eradication, with a focus on Pakistan, one of the last endemic countries.

In 2016, as part of the Emirates Polio Campaign Phase-III, UAEPAP contributed a total of \$US18.4 million to the polio programme in Pakistan through WHO for 66 high-risk districts in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Federal Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Sindh that were identified for support. Through this initiative, more than 10.6 million children have been administered polio drops in each of the three phases of the campaign supported by UAE PAP between March – December 2016.

Overview of UAE Support to Polio Eradication Initiative

- In 2016 UAE has provided financial contribution to the Polio Eradication Initiative in Pakistan through WHO of \$18.4 million in US dollars to cover incentives to polio frontline workers, in addition to the associated operational costs during the supplementary immunization activities in 66 high risk districts of FATA, KPK, Baluchistan and Sindh.

- Through this initiative, more than 10.6 million children have been administered polio drops in each of the three phases of the campaign supported by UAE PAP between March – December 2016. During March to December 2016 over 71.5 Million polio drops were given to children during campaign in 66 districts.
- This contribution helped to reach children in the most insecure areas through the support to the security forces.
- The financial support has allowed the programme to increase the incentive rate to the Front Line Workers, which adds to motivation.

The UAE has played a pivotal role in supporting global eradication efforts: in 2013 His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces announced a commitment of AED440 million (US\$120 million) to back the polio campaigns in Afghanistan and Pakistan.