UN Women
PRESS RELEASE

‘Mind the Gap’ workshop concludes with commitment on advancing gender equality in private sector companies

KARACHI: Mind the Gap, a three-day workshop concluded here with commitments from Human Resources (HR) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practitioners from sixteen leading private sector national and international companies to adapt to global best practices on women economic empowerment and advance gender equality within private sector companies in line with Women Empowerment Principles (WEP).

UN Women Pakistan led this 3-day impactful workshop that focused on workplace equality, inclusion and diversity. This event was led and supported by Fareeha Ummar, Portfolio Manager, Women’s Economic Empowerment and Sustainable Livelihoods (WEE & SL), UN Women Pakistan; and Jamaluddin Khan, Programme Officer WEE & SL.

During three days of the workshop, participants were enlightened on gender equality dynamics, diagnostics and the way forward. Ms. Asma Yousaf, Head HR Services, Unilever Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, shared highlights of the White Paper that Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) has presented for approval to the Government of Pakistan.

The workshop facilitator, Shahnaz Kapadia Rahat, CEO Mera Maan, also shared the Women Empowerment Principles (WEP) which is an initiative of the UN Global Compact and UN Women, and is the first global code of conduct for businesses on gender equality. The 7-principles provide a framework for implementation on gender equality. In Pakistan, 66 private sector companies have signed as supporters and promoters of WEP. Through an activity, participants also mapped their CSR and HR practices regarding contributions to creating women friendly workplaces, responsive
and diverse C-suite management, inclusion of female entrepreneurs in procurement and supply chain, and gender responsive HR policies and structure.

The participants were introduced to some of the best practices that are happening in Pakistan about priority areas for advancing women inclusion and economic empowerment.

On the last day, the participants conceptualized a way forward and developed a Gender Responsive Action Plan – 2020. Twenty participating organizations presented their action plans, including JS Bank, Nestle, Schneider Electrics, Soorty Enterprises, Pak Suzuki Motors, Engro Corp, EY Ford Rhodes, Bulleh Shah Packaging, PepsiCo, EFU General Insurance Ltd, Sindh Microfinance Bank, TPL Corp, ICAP, Novo Nordisk Pharma, Midas Safety, Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company, Arthur Lawrence, Gharo Solar Ltd, National Foods Ltd.

Some of the actions included development of policies and implementing actions to recruit more persons with disabilities and transgenders; investing in developing women for leadership and CEO level management; gearing CSR practices so that it is more business driven, sustainable, and able to support women; improving recruitment, retention and growth through women friendly policies, in particular establishing and improving day care centers.

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