UNDP and UNV Pakistan Celebrate International Volunteer Day 2019

Islamabad, 5 December 2019 – International Volunteer Day (IVD) is celebrated every year on 5th of December to recognize and celebrate the contributions of volunteers worldwide to peace and development.

This year United Nations Volunteers Pakistan (UNV) and the United Nations Development Programme Pakistan (UNDP) in partnership with the School of Leadership Foundation (SoLF) celebrated the International Volunteer Day in Pakistan by holding a one day capacity building workshop for 100 young volunteers who are working on the grassroots level. Following the theme for the IVD this year; “Inclusion Through Volunteerism” the workshop included skill building sessions on ensuring inclusion in social action projects. Three young volunteers Sadam Hussain, Mehnaz Begum and Zia Khan also presented the projects that they are undertaking on ensuring inclusive society.

Speaking on the occasion Knut Otsby, Resident Coordinator UN Pakistan said, “Inclusion is recognizing our Universal “oneness” and interdependence. It is also celebrating the richness and value of diversity in our societies. Achieving the transformational promise of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depends on ensuring the empowerment, inclusion and equality for all people.”

Aliona Niculita, Deputy Resident Representative UNDP commented “Volunteers promote an inclusive future as they facilitate participation of all segments of society in the quest for peace and development. Volunteer action widens spaces for engagement.”

The workshop was very well received by the young volunteers and they were certain that the insights they gained would help in ensuring that they undertake projects that are geared towards ensuring inclusion in their local communities.

UNV: The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that promotes volunteerism to support peace and development worldwide. UNV contributes to peace and development by mobilizing volunteers, advocating for volunteerism globally and encouraging partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming. UNV’s vision is a world where volunteerism is recognized, within societies, as a way for all people and countries to achieve peace and development through the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion.

UNDP: UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in nearly 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.
UNESCO
Media Advisory

Launch of Plastic Waste Baseline Report of Islamabad Capital Territory and Ayubia National Park

When: Tuesday, 10 December 2019, 1030am – 1230pm

Where: UN Conference Room, 7th Floor, Serena Business Complex, Islamabad

What: The Office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, cordially invite you to the Launch of Plastic Waste Baseline Report of Islamabad Capital Territory and Ayubia National Park. The study has covered all types of plastic waste in the two areas and has identified opportunities for future actions. We are planning to present the findings of the study and get feedback and inputs from the stakeholders.

Who: Media, Civil Society Organizations, NGOs, Government and UN officials will grace the occasion.

Programme Agenda:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
<th>Focal Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1030 - 1040hrs</td>
<td>Welcome</td>
<td>Ms. Vibeke Jensen, Director UNESCO Islamabad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1040 - 1050hrs</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
<td>Mr. Ignacio Artaza, Director UNDP Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1050 - 1120hrs</td>
<td>Presentation on results of baseline study</td>
<td>Representative of WWF Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1120 – 1140hrs</td>
<td>Q&amp;A/Discussion</td>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1140 – 1155hrs</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
<td>Mr. Raza Ali Habib, Director General Galiyat Development Authority (GDA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1155 – 1210hrs</td>
<td>Closing Remarks</td>
<td>Mr. Sheikh Ansar Aziz, Mayor of Islamabad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1210hrs</td>
<td>Refreshments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note to the Media Participants:

You are kindly requested to assign a reporter/cameraperson to cover the event. For RSVP please contact Mr. Adnan Ahmad on 0300 8511309 or a.adnan@unesco.org by 9 December 2019.

We look forward to your participation and coverage.

***

UN Women
PRESS RELEASE

Empowered Pakistani Woman
An exchange of experience event with Women Parliamentary Caucuses and Parliamentarians

‘Greater and effective representation of women in decision-making process crucial to end violence’

ISLAMABAD: “We cannot achieve gender equality without ending violence against women and girls. I would strongly recommend Women Parliamentary Caucuses (WPC) of National and Provincial Assemblies to review all existing laws and introduce amendments in bills for further improving legislation to safeguard women rights and end violence,” said Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser as the chief guest of an exchange of experience event with provincial Women Parliamentary Caucuses and parliamentarians titled ‘Empowered Pakistani Woman’ jointly organized by UN Women Pakistan and WPC here on Wednesday.

The event was arranged in connection with 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, a global campaign that takes place each year from 25th of November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10th of December, International Human Rights Day. The 16 Days campaign is used as an organizing strategy by individuals and organizations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.
The participating parliamentarians signed a joint resolution that reflected their collective determination to empower Pakistani women through supporting the enactment of pro-women legislation.

MNA and Secretary WPC Munaza Hassan gave the welcoming remarks. Senator Farhatullah Babar; Firdous Shamim Naqvi, Opposition Leader Sindh Assembly; Mehmood Jan, Deputy Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Assembly, and Patron-in-Chief WPC KP; Uzma Kardar, Chairperson Standing Committee on Gender Mainstreaming Punjab, Aisha Mukhtar, Deputy Country Representative UN Women Pakistan; members of national and provincial assemblies, and representatives from civil society and media participated in the event.

Speaker National Assembly said that the government was committed to empower women and enhance their representation in the parliament. We have 17 women parliamentary secretaries in the National Assembly that substantiates the government’s commitment to women’s empowerment. “We will be left behind if men are not part of efforts to empower women and end violence. I’m glad to witness that male legislator champions are recognized for their work around gender equality,” Asad Qaiser said. He appreciated the collaboration of UN Women with the WPCs that helped participating parliamentarians from provincial assemblies to learn from the experiences of each other and replicate good practices in their respective legislative processes. “I hope that the technical assistance from UN Women Pakistan will continue to make sure we leave no behind as we advance our journey towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other international commitments on gender equality,” Asad Qaiser remarked.

“As the world is halfway through the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence campaign, women legislators of Pakistan are ready to address all forms of violence through gender sensitive legislation in line with Pakistan’s constitutional guarantees and international commitments,” said Munaza Hassan, Secretary Women’s Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) of the National Assembly of Pakistan.

“Despite political differences, WPC is consistently proving itself as a platform that can enable all women parliamentarians to work collectively for the empowerment of women. Therefore, strengthening of national and provincial caucuses is key to improve coordination for pro-women laws,” said the Secretary WPC.
Enhancing women’s participation and ending violence against women and girls are key mandated functions of WPC. “When I see my male colleagues joining the cause of gender equality, I feel stronger and more optimistic,” Munaza Hassan stated. “Women’s representation is important for disadvantaged communities, especially girls who cannot go to schools and who are driven into early, forced or child marriages.” In order to protect and defend the interests of half of our population, we need greater representation of women in political decision making.

Aisha Mukhtar said, “Women and girls in Pakistan continue to face an unprecedented set of challenges when it comes to achieving their goals. By working to ensure political accountability on gender equality, parliamentarians can accelerate impactful change for women and girls at the national and provincial level.”

We are standing at a very opportune moment in time, she said while adding, “2020 will celebrate five years of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 10 years of UN Women and 25 years of Beijing Platform for Action. We must galvanize the momentum developed through these significant milestones to advance gender responsive policy frameworks, pro women legislations and inclusive and effective governance. I hope that together we will be able to achieve our common vision for a gender equal and inclusive Pakistan.”

The event was divided into two parts. In the first part legislators deliberated on strengthening WPCs as agents of change and brainstormed on key challenges and opportunities for collaboration between federal and provincial caucuses. They discussed how to use CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women), Beijing Platform for Action and the SDGs indicators for building cross-party consensus on gender issues, especially pro-women legislation for ending violence against women and girls.

While the second part comprised of two panel discussions with female and male parliamentarians respectively, on the need and relevance of policy advocacy for pro-women legislation.

First panel discussion with male legislator champions focused on how male champions could support legislative reforms to align domestic laws with national and international commitments. Firdous Shamim Naqvi, Mehmood Jan and Senator Farhatullah Babar were the panelists of this session that was moderated by Nabila Malick, EVAW (Ending Violence Against Women) Advisor UN Women Punjab.
The second panel discussion with women parliamentarians including Nusrat Sehar Abbasi, MPA Sindh, Shakeela Naveed Noor Qazi, Chairperson WPC Balochistan, and Uzma Kardar, explored how to identify and engage allies and build momentum for legislative reforms. Younas Khalid, GBV Advisor UN Women Pakistan, moderated the discussion.

The event offered a great opportunity to parliamentarians to formalize partnerships and build solidarity between national and provincial caucuses in order to collaborate on gender equality and women’s empowerment, developing gender-sensitive legislative frameworks, and reviewing and supervising gender-inclusive programmes and policies.

***