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Dear readers,

The fourth issue of 2016 focuses on the youth who are helping the United Nations in Pakistan deliver on our Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – our interns. Every year, young people from across Pakistan and the world join our Country Team to contribute to our work in Pakistan while enhancing their own higher educations. We hope you enjoy meeting some of the interns who joined us this year and reading about their efforts. As well, International Youth Day and World Youth Skills Day were both celebrated in the past two months, and we share stories about how the United Nations is helping Pakistan’s youth prepare for the future.

World Humanitarian Day was commemorated on August 19, an annual reminder of the need to act to alleviate the suffering and an occasion to honour the humanitarian workers and volunteers toiling on the frontlines of crises. This edition includes special messages and stories about how the United Nations is continuing to provide humanitarian relief to the people of Pakistan to improve their lives. The World Day against Trafficking in Persons was commemorated on July 30, and we have some messages to share about how the United Nations is helping to eliminate human trafficking and migrant smuggling from Pakistan and making sure migrants’ rights are upheld. We also celebrated World Breastfeeding Week with events that highlighted the importance of breastfeeding for children’s health. And, we joined our friends and colleagues in celebrating Pakistan’s Independence Day on August 14.

Throughout this edition, you will find stories about the work the United Nations in Pakistan is doing to help the country and its people. Along with our partners, we are providing expert training and technical assistance, helping give women and marginalized communities voices, assisting governments and industry with programmes and funding, and helping communities improve their health, lives and livelihoods.

The collaboration and support of members of the UN Communications Group and the UN Country Team make it possible to continue telling the story of the United Nation’s work and successes in Pakistan. To our colleagues in the 19 UN agencies operating in the country, thank you for your continuing commitment to documenting our work for the benefit of the Pakistani people.

Vittorio Cammarota
Director, United Nations Information Centre
This year, the United Nations in Pakistan was happy to welcome an excellent group of student interns to our country team. Internships provide university students with exposure to the work of the United Nations and enrich their educational experience through practical work in an international organization.

In turn, these qualified and motivated young people enrich our workplaces and make a positive contribution to our work in Pakistan.

We would like you to meet some of this year’s interns and hear how they are helping us achieve our Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Pakistan.

**Interview**

**Haroon Arshed**

from Taxila is interning with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

**Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?**

I wanted to intern for the UN in Pakistan due to its noble mission. The UN in Pakistan is considerably contributing towards improvements in our country in terms of poverty alleviation, defeating hunger, governance, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, child protection, and education.

**What is the most interesting project you have worked on?**

The most interesting project I have been working here is the networking. With the guidance of my supervisor, I have learned a lot during my three weeks in FAO. I am currently doing the following tasks: a daily checklist, checking bills and preparing statements, configuring and preparing computers for tests and clients, installing and rectifying errors in printers, and installing PABX exchange.

**How would you describe your experience in 3 words?**

Enriching. Professional. Inspiring.
community and donors, and our team faced a lot of challenges during implementation for which we had to find feasible solutions. We succeeded in helping thousands in FATA by improving their livelihoods through rehabilitation of water harvesting structures and enhanced crop and livestock production, and their immediate revival for returnee farm families. It gives me immense happiness that I am contributing to a positive change in our society.

**How would you describe your experience in 3 words?**

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**Hassan Hamid**
Hassan Hamid from Islamabad is interning with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

**Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?**
The UN provides a dynamic platform where you work with diverse communities across the world. Within the organization you get to meet professionals from many countries working together, united for a common cause, bringing different skill sets and problem-solving techniques together which you can learn from. I chose FAO because Pakistan is one of the many countries vulnerable to climate change and our agricultural and livestock sectors are in serious jeopardy. I wanted to know more about how this organization, alongside donors and the Government of Pakistan, is working on initiatives for the betterment of our society by implementing and achieving its strategic goals here.

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**What is the most interesting project you have worked on?**
The most interesting project has been an ongoing Agriculture Early Recovery FATA project. We have been interacting with the local government, the local

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**Sadia Irfan**
Sadia Irfan from Rawalpindi is interning with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

**Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?**
I am a development scholar and for me interning with the organization at the center of development work was actually a dream come true. UN internships are always highly prestigious and competitive and throughout my academic studies I have been studying the UN’s work. Interning with the UN gave me an opportunity to get practically involved with all that I have been learning so far. I consider myself fortunate to work with such an excellent organization and with such a wonderful group of people with development expertise.

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**What is the most interesting project you have worked on?**
Until now the most interesting project I have worked on was the preparation of the terminal report of one of FAO’s projects. The most interesting and fun part was that for the collection of data I had to visit all the departments, including human resources, finance, and the project team. I got to introduce myself to all the staff members and was able to communicate with them too. I also enjoyed the activity because it was the crux of the whole project and I was familiarized with the complete project cycle.

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**How would you describe your experience in 3 words?**
Linza Samson
Linza Samson from Rawalpindi is an intern with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?
My purpose of interning with this prestigious organization is to enhance my understanding of academic material by applying it in the practical work of reducing hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity, and risks of natural disasters. It is also worth learning how the organization works. The UN is among the most gigantic organizations in the development sector so there is opportunity to learn how development is being carried out. Working for the UN in Pakistan is like a dream come true and I hope to learn more and more from the professional personnel of the organization.

How would you describe your experience in 3 words?

Maham Anwar Qureshi
Maham Anwar Qureshi from Islamabad is interning for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?
I am a person who strongly believes that one should be the catalyst of change they want to see in society. Being a student of social sciences, I wanted to work in the development sector with an organization that provides me with the opportunity to bring about change and use my strengths for the benefit of the organization and the welfare of the wider society. FAO is an organization that has been constantly striving to eliminate hunger and poverty from the country, and interning for FAO has provided me with a platform for gaining knowledge and developing skills necessary for pursuing a career in this sector.

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
I am working on the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), focused on food security analysis for the country. Recently, I assisted in arranging the IPC Chronic Data Analysis Training and the IPC Acute Level 1 Training, which included interaction with staff of various government departments from all over Pakistan. It gave me insight into the various challenges being faced by the country in terms of food security, and it also helped me further enhance my interpersonal skills and knowledge. I also helped prepare a Concept Note to be presented at the 19th Sustainable Development Conference.

How would you describe your experience in 3 words?
At the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Islamabad, we are always happy to welcome interns to our team. Because we work on communications and awareness campaigns for all UN agencies in Pakistan, our interns experience a wide variety of projects and priorities and learn a lot about how the United Nations works. As well as enriching their own educations, interns make a valuable contribution to helping us tell the story of the UN’s work in Pakistan to the country’s people and to the world.

**Vittorio Cammarota, Director UNIC**

**Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?**
I have been in Pakistan since 2013, and this summer I had an opportunity to join the UNIC in Islamabad for an internship during the summer holidays. The UN in Pakistan, and all of its Agencies, tries to be supportive and an internship in any of its offices will assist and prepare you to be productive.

**What is the most interesting project you have worked on?**
I have been working on different projects, and the most important is the preparation for the Human Rights Film Festival. We plan to organize a series of movie screenings focused on topics related to human rights, which will be screened in different locations across Pakistan.

**How would you describe your experience in 3 words?**
Educative. Enjoyable. Enthusiastic.

**Yazan Abu Ali**
Yazan Abu Ali is a Palestinian student studying at NUST Business School and interning with the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC).

**Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?**
I wanted to work with the United Nations because it would not only help me earn experience but also give me insight into how the UN works in our country. It was an immense pleasure working in the UN system, because not only did I get to learn a lot but I really had fun doing it. The team here at UNIC comprises the finest individuals who took the time to help me and the other interns as well. Our Director, Mr. Vittorio Cammarota, not only made us feel welcome but also made sure we were comfortable and knew what we had to do.

**What is the most interesting project you have worked on?**
One of the projects I helped the team with was the UN Wall project, and I saw how hard the UN was working to inculcate golden values to the youth of tomorrow.

**How would you describe your experience in 3 words?**
Informative. Professional. Intriguing.

**Shahnawaz Larik**
Shahnawaz Larik is a student of the University of London International Programme who is interning with the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC).

**Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?**
I’ve always wanted to do an internship at the UN and was really excited when the opportunity presented itself when I came to Pakistan. As a human rights lawyer, I was curious to learn about the work the UN is doing in Pakistan and what impact is being made. I am inter-
interested in pursuing a career at the UN in the future and this internship gave me insight on the inner workings of the organization. I thoroughly enjoyed my time at UNIC and would highly recommend the internship to everyone!

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
I really enjoyed editing the United Nations Pakistan newsletter because it gave me an overview of the work every UN agency was doing in the country. In particular, I was very uplifted to read the human interest stories because they gave a snapshot of how communities all over Pakistan are being assisted by the UN. It also allowed me to hone my communication, editorial and time management skills.

How would you describe your experience in 3 words?

Pashmeena Durrani
Pashmeena Durrani from Peshawar lives in Islamabad and is an intern with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?
I planned on interning at the UN since I took international relation courses during my undergradu ate programme. One of the major reasons behind it was the crucial humanitarian role the UN plays, especially in a country like Pakistan where the UN has had a strong presence for many decades. The UN assists the Government of Pakistan with crises in different sectors, and I wanted to have a holistic understanding of the UN in Pakistan.

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
I have worked on building up a research matrix which would contain all the current development projects implemented in Pakistan and funded by international agencies, including UN agencies. This will give UNHCR an adequate understanding of how national agencies are given the task of implementing these projects by international organizations and how they bridge the gap between international organizations and the local populace with their knowledge of the on-the-ground situation.

How would you describe your experience in 3 words?
Enriched knowledge and skills.

Abdul Fateh
Abdul Fateh from Khuzdar, Balochistan, is an intern with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?
I hail from a far-flung area of Balochistan where education remains...
poor and unemployment, corruption, an unstable security situation, drugs and human trafficking are on the rise. I felt a responsibility to enrich myself with the latest trends and the work being done by the UN in Pakistan, particularly in my area. UNODC provided me the opportunity to gain experience in drug demand reduction, corruption, human trafficking and migrant smuggling and terrorism. I observed UN services and a working environment in Pakistan that boosted my confidence to contribute to eradicating such social evils from my native land.

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
I worked on the Unplugged – Substance Abuse Prevention Program, the European Union Drug Abuse Prevention (EU-DAP) programme piloted by the UNODC in four districts of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The programme spreads awareness and educates students on drug use, builds specific skills set to resist social influences, and corrects misconceptions about drug use among youth. I found it interesting because of the positive impact such programmes have on our children and youth who are exposed to, or are at danger of using, tobacco and other drugs. My contribution was data entry, data editing, data interpretation, and quantitative and qualitative analysis. The project also gave me deep understanding of how to conduct research and to do technical report writing.

How would you describe your experience in 3 words?
Exposure. Motivational. Rewarding.

Mohammed Bilal Khan
Mohammed Bilal Khan from Islamabad is an intern with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?
The United Nation’s professionalism and commitment towards the development of human life has always fascinated me. The UN is a massive organization with a commitment to the betterment of human life, political conflict resolving and diplomacy which I believe will help groom me for my practical life. Also, a good friend has worked with the UN and told me the UN has strong values and an organizational culture that promotes learning and development and rewards hard work.

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
I assisted in organizing a training session on Drugs and Precursors Identification at the Anti Narcotics Force Academy. I was tested on all grounds and was given the chance to carry out official tasks and experience professionalism. It was a full learning experience about responsibility, schedule management and team work. The experience was a good confidence boost and helped me enhance my abilities. It helped me learn that an event as small as a three-day training session actually requires months of hard work to execute at a professional level. The success story of the project was really a cherry on top.

Sana Qamar
Sana Qamar from Parachinar, Kurram Agency, is an intern with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?
I wanted to explore a professional working environment and polish my skills as per my degree requirement. Interning for the UN and observing their rules and regulations, meeting with international students and sharing cultures, knowledge and skills, will boost my confidence and help me in my personal grooming. I don’t want to limit myself to the position I have achieved, but I want to go beyond and contribute in the development of Pakistan.

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
One of the most interesting programs I have had the pleasure of working on at UNODC was the Image Building Campaign for Balochistan Police. This gave me deep understanding of how to con-
Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?
The UN in Pakistan is known for its development efforts across the country, especially by introducing new technologies in a diverse range of fields. Being a student of Information Technology, I wanted to be part of the work the UN does and help them in any way I can to further the development of technology in Pakistan.

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
The most interesting project that I’ve worked on is developing a website for the Baluchistan Police by using newer technologies such as ASP.NET and HTML5. The website will contain new functionalities that the previous version of the website did not have, such as Online First Information Report (FIR) and Online Procurement Applications, making it a very useful tool for the people of Baluchistan.

How would you describe your experience in three words?
Friendly. Dedicated. Transparent.

Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?
The United Nations is the most renowned organization in the world and it is an honour for any individual to work for the UN, especially in Pakistan. Working with highly-experienced and professional staff was another incentive.

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
I have been working on the Paris Pact initiative, which is an attempt by the international community to tackle the threat posed by the illicit production of opium in Afghanistan. For me this was the most interesting project to work on and I acquired knowledge about how to tackle drug-related problems.

How would you describe your experience in three words?
**Interview**

**What is the most interesting project you have worked on?**
UNODC recently implemented new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system named Umoja. There were payments that needed to be processed in this new system and it required comprehensive detail on a given template. I prepared the template sheet, reconciled it and made all the required changes. Then this information was submitted in the system and payments were processed smoothly. I was happy to perform this job and found it very interesting.

**How would you describe your experience in 3 words?**

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**Hassan Tariq**
Hassan Tariq from Islamabad is an intern with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

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**Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?**
I decided to do an internship with the United Nations in Pakistan because I am keen on developing my skills in the development sector of Pakistan so I can contribute to important mandates such as drug demand reduction (DDR), criminal justice reforms, economic growth and other areas of assistance.

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**What is the most interesting project you have worked on?**
The most interesting project I worked on with the UNODC was the Policy Framework for Drug Trafficking.

**How would you describe your experience in 3 words?**
Confidence-boosting experience.

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**Sheher Bano Raza**
Sheher Bano Raza from Islamabad is an intern with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

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**Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?**
I was seeking a challenging position in a reputable and progressive organization where I can enhance my administrative, managerial, personal and professional skills to make a value-added contribution to society.

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**Syeda Fatima Nasir**
Syeda Fatima Nasir from Islamabad is an intern with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

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**Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?**
Interning for the UN was an excellent opportunity to gain professional work experience and build skills that enable me to contribute to society in a positive manner.

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**What is the most interesting project you have worked on?**
The most interesting project I worked on with the UNODC was the Policy Framework for Drug Trafficking.

**How would you describe your experience in 3 words?**
Valuable. Priceless. Interesting.
The most interesting project I worked on with the UNODC was the Policy Framework for Drug Trafficking.

How would you describe your experience in 3 words?

I am constantly amazed and inspired by the talent and creativity of young women and men in Pakistan. With greater competition and more access to information, they have a lot to offer and often can teach those of us working in the UN system for years how to do things better and more efficiently. At UN Women, our interns have contributed significantly to our work and we are committed to also making sure that they learn, are challenged, and become even greater champions for gender equality and women’s empowerment. We look forward to continuing and expanding our internship opportunities, not just during the summer months, but throughout the year and with flexible arrangements.

Jamshed M Kazi, Country Representative, UN Women

Why did you want to intern for the United Nations in Pakistan?
I wanted to gain an understanding of, and practical hands-on experience in, development. This will help me tailor my future studies to cultivate the skills I might need to truly contribute and do good work, particularly in women’s economic empowerment. What also interested me was learning how international organizations operate, how inter-agency coordination takes place, and what working in concert with the government looks like, all of which I was introduced to during my internship.

What is the most interesting project you have worked on?
I worked primarily in the Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme, and a project I particularly enjoyed was researching and writing a report on gender-responsive business practices by multinational companies around the world. This will be used as a guide for businesses in Pakistan to cater to the needs of women working. I feel strongly about providing a working environment conducive to women so that more and more women can enter and stay in the workforce and stand firmly on their own feet and raise their families’ standard of living. There is little pre-existing focus on gender-responsive policies in the workplace, and being able to play a part in changing that made my project all the more interesting.

How would you describe your experience in 3 words?

Neha Noor
Neha Noor is a student at the Lahore University of Management Sciences and was an intern with UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.
Livelihood training for women in FATA

Bamabara is a 55-year-old woman who lives in the Kamar Khel village in the Bara tehsil of Khyber Agency, within Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). She and her family spent seven years as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Jalozai refugee camp, and life was not easy after their return. During displacement, the family lost their livestock, poultry and other sources of income. With no regular source of income for her husband, the family often borrowed money and groceries from relatives and neighbours to meet essential needs. Bamabara is also an active member of her village Development Committee (VDC), and when female team members from the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) visited and informed women about project interventions, she was excited. “When I came to know that WFP and SRSP team is visiting our village and intended to start livelihood activities for females, it was an exciting moment for me and other vulnerable females of the area,” she said. Bamabara visited nearby houses and convinced other women to form a committee and participate in handicraft training that would provide them with income-generating opportunities. The women were willing but reluctant to participate due to cultural issues in FATA’s conservative society. Male WFP staff met with male community members and explained the importance of training, and the men agreed that women could participate in the vocational training. The village women took a keen interest in the training and learned skills including sewing clothes (tailoring), making handicrafts and producing quality handmade materials. “We are thankful to this intervention, which gave us the opportunity for learning skills of tailoring and embroidery which will ultimately provide us new income generation opportunities,” said Bamabara. “I also bought additional tailoring material, food, and medicine with the cash grant of 6,000 rupees provided by WFP.”
Mohammad Bilal is 27 years old and lives with his wife and two children in the village of Shahbaz Khel in the Lakki Marwat District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The family’s only income earner, he works as a barber but barely earns enough to meet their needs. As a result, the family lives in a cave.

“We have no means to afford a home and have to live in this cave which does not have even the most basic facilities. Nearby, there is an overflowing drain which hampers our movement, especially when it rains heavily. Flash floods create difficulties for us and we cannot go out to work or contact other community members in case of an emergency such as an illness in the family. I am afraid that my children will one day drown in the water if they go outside.”

To support Bilal and the community, the World Food Programme (WFP) initiated a programme to provide community members with training sessions focused on disaster risk reduction to help them better cope with potential disasters. “Thanks to the training, we found a solution to our problem,” said Mohammad.

Using a hazard mapping technique, community members resolved the issue by installing water discharge pipes in the drain, allowing people to use the main road again without water constantly damaging the path. The community collected the money needed among them and solved the problem collectively.

“We are thankful to WFP for their support in helping us resolve an issue which created difficulties for us for many years,” said Mohammad. “Through such participatory initiatives, we feel a sense of unity in the community and have so far collectively addressed other problems in the village as well.”
Improving hygiene, saving lives

Raising seven children without income support from her husband has been extremely difficult for Malooka, who lives in Babu Muhalla in Jacobabad. Unhealthy family members and excessive medical bills take a toll on her energy and income, leaving her distressed and hopeless with no idea what is causing her family’s misery. The urban WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) team, under an initiative of USAID, UNICEF and UN-Habitat, met with Malooka and determined the family was neglecting personal and environmental hygiene. The house was dirty, utensils were unclean, solid and liquid waste as not disposed of properly and the latrines were filthy. There was also no knowledge of maintaining personal hygiene, especially washing hands with soap. The urban WASH team educated Malooka and her family about the need to ensure personal hygiene, especially handwashing with soap at critical times. They were also taught basic methods to ensure their drinking water is safe and clean. This made Malooka realize that their lack of hygiene measures was contributing to her family’s health issues and astronomical medical bills. Today, Malooka keeps her house clean and also ensures proper sanitation and handwashing with soap before meals and after using toilets. This is resulting in improved household health and quality of life. She also began sensitizing her neighbours and community members about health and hygiene in an attempt to improve the living standards of the entire muhalla. “We got scared when the social mobilizers told us about the consequences of poor hygiene,” said Malooka. “Nobody wants to be sick all the time. We had to do what they said and change our community.”

In Lashari Muhalla in Jacobabad, Rubina and her family suffered a terrible result from a lack of awareness. After a year-long illness, her husband was diagnosed with hepatitis C and prescribed lengthy tests and medications. Rubina began earning to take care of the family and make ends meet, but to her dismay her husband’s health took a rapid downturn and he died soon after. While grieving the death of her husband, Rubina feared losing her daughter to hepatitis as well. She had been complaining of constant stomach aches, and Rubina was not aware that this was a consequence of not maintaining personal hygiene or a healthy living environment.

With the intervention of urban WASH team, under a project by USAID, UNICEF and UN-Habitat, the residents of Lashari Muhalla were sensitized about the significance of maintaining proper health and hygiene standards. Rubina’s family had no concept of handwashing with soap at critical times, they didn’t bathe frequently, their house was dirty, and they didn’t dispose of sewerage properly. Water-borne diseases were common in the household and in other households of the muhalla because the residents didn’t know the repercussions of an unhygienic living environment or how to improve their situation. Rubina said, “How I wish I knew what had caused my husband’s death. Now I know about the importance of hand-washing, personal hygiene, and consuming safe drinking water. I started implementing the teachings in my daily routine and now my daughter is not complaining of stomach aches anymore. I cannot begin to tell how thankful I am to the Urban WASH team.”.
Motivation to change behaviours

Imran Ali lives with his family in Qalati Brohi Muhalla, UC-1 Soomra Muhalla. He comes from a very poor family and education was a luxury they could not afford. Due to this lack of education, Imran was unaware of the diseases caused by improper sanitation and hygiene. He thought proper sanitation was only for the rich, and as a result he and his family members fell ill quite often. When the urban WASH team, under an intervention by USAID, UNICEF and UN-Habitat, undertook a campaign in Soomra Muhalla, Imran discovered sanitation is not a luxury but a necessity for all. The team met with community residents and formed a Muhalla WASH Committee (MWC), and Imran actively participated and was selected as General Secretary of the MWC. Realizing the significance of proper sanitation, Imran vowed to spread health and hygiene messages to his family and community members. Today, the MWC has regular meetings with the community to address WASH-related issues in the area. They teach others about the dangers of unhygienic conditions and how they result in widespread diseases and high health expenditures. Most of his community members have begun following the provided hygiene guidelines to maintain improved sanitation in their households and in the mohalla. Imran said, “Poverty is not because we were born poor but it was our unawareness related to proper sanitation. Now we have a vision that we will bring prosperity in our Muhalla and will keep mobilizing other community members as well. All credit goes to the urban WASH team and we will always remain in touch with them if we need to arrange any meetings or discuss other issues related to sanitation in our mohalla.”

Empowering community leaders with knowledge

Saima is a devoted community member of UC-06 Mochi Basti in Jacobabad. She is always thinking about improving her mohalla, particularly to benefit the children who are often the victims of diseases due to unhygienic conditions. Under the WASH intervention by USAID, UNICEF, and UN-Habitat, the urban WASH team met Saima and asked her to perform duties as the General Secretary of the Muhalla WASH Committee. They also asked her to deliver a session on health and hygiene in her mohalla, and she was trained in health and hygiene messages and equipped with the necessary skills. During routine household visits, Saima visited a poor family totally unaware of proper health and hygiene, including handwashing with soap and water. One child was suffering from diarrhea and vomiting, and the mother said they did not have enough money to purchase the medicines or oral rehydration salts (ORS) needed. Seeing the poor household condition, Saima educated the mother about how unhygienic conditions cause diseases and the importance of fixing the cause and not just the symptoms. The family was taught effective handwashing with soap, especially at critical times, and how to dispose of solid waste properly. The WASH team also taught the mother how to prepare oral rehydration salts (ORS) in case of an emergency. The mother vowed to follow all instructions she was given. When Saima visited the family again a few weeks later, she found the house neat and clean and learned the household’s economic conditions had also improved. She was extremely happy about this positive change she helped bring about. “I can see the behaviours changing in my community regarding proper health and hygiene and I am thankful to the Urban WASH team who gave me the chance to give sessions in my Muhalla.”
Khadim Hussain has never lost his determination. He was born and raised in the Makhan Samoon Union Council of Mirpurkhas, in Sindh province, where the life of a farmer requires an iron will. Every season he works hard to get the best harvest from his land and feed his family, even in the face of the regular natural disasters that strike.

One challenge has been protecting his seeds, which is a struggle when floods occur in the area. Traditionally, farmers in Sindh store their seeds either in mud bins or jute gunny bags kept in sheds. This practice exposes seeds to unfavourable climatic conditions and infestations that result in losses.

Agricultural practices need to evolve with the changing climate, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has helped find a solution. Under FAO’s programme Livelihood Restoration and Protection and Sustainable Empowerment of Vulnerable Peasant Communities in Sindh Province, seed silos have been introduced in Pakistan for the first time.

With design and technical guidance from plant physiologists at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad, seed silos were developed that will provide safe seed storage facilities for farmers at the household level. These portable hermetic seed silos can store up to 200 kilograms of seeds, enough to cultivate four acres of wheat or eight acres of rice, and have built in hygrometers to measure humidity.

FAO distributed 1600 seed silos in the districts of Dadu and Mirpurkhas to beneficiaries selected by Village Disaster Management Committees (VDMC) and Producer Marketing Groups (PMGs). These climate-smart seed silos will help ensure secure livelihoods and futures for farmers and their children.

With the help of this FAO intervention, Khadim no longer fears natural disasters because he knows his seeds will be protected.
“Our children missed many days of school because they had to help us fetch water from the river,” said Mohammad Hanif, a community leader in the village of Bunther. He explained that it used to take at least 25 minutes to bring one bucket of water to the community, and that the water was unclean and caused many diseases.

Bunther is located in the Ayun Union Council of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s Chitral district, and the village’s rudimentary water supply was destroyed during the July 2015 floods. Afterward, it received water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assistance from the Natural Disasters Consortium (NDC), a four-year disaster preparedness, response and recovery programme led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The Consortium includes the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) and the Health and Nutrition Development Society (HANDS).

In February, a much-needed water supply scheme (WSS) measuring 8500 feet was constructed by the community itself with technical assistance from UNICEF’s implementing partner, Islamic Relief Pakistan. The WSS serves 27 households in the village, providing approximately 200 people with access to clean water in their homes. Recurring landslides in one area of the village have interrupted the WS, “But that is not a problem since we are able to fix it,” Hanif explained. “The good thing about building the water supply scheme ourselves was that now we are not dependent on anyone else if we need to fix it or if God forbid there is another disaster.”

“Well people can use the water supply scheme to wash their clothes, dishes, bathe, and cook. And the best thing is that now our children are able to go to school and come home without worrying about fetching water,” Hanif concluded happily."
Kid power helps fight malnutrition in Punjab

UNICEF Kid Power in the United Kingdom has donated 30,000 British pounds for the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to purchase Read-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) for children suffering from malnutrition in South Punjab.

Nearly half of all children in Pakistan are chronically malnourished (stunted), and almost every sixth child is acutely malnourished (wasted). This contributes to high mortality and morbidity rates among children under five years of age and undermines their mental and physical growth. In Punjab, stunting is declining but wasting is increasing at an alarming rate. UNICEF is helping by identifying malnourished children and women and raising their nutrition levels through systematic interventions.

Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) treats severe malnutrition by providing foods that are safe to use at home and ensure rapid weight gain in severely malnourished children. The product can be consumed directly by children and provides sufficient nutrient intake for complete recovery.

RUTF procured through the Kid Power donation is being used in Punjab’s Muzaffargarh district, where nearly 700 children were identified as suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). These children have been registered in the Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP) and are receiving adequate supplies of RUTF to improve their nutritional status.

Younas is one of these children. His mother Haseena brought him to a Basic Health Unit when he was ten months old, where he was diagnosed with SAM. Younas was registered in the OTP and Haseena was given a supply of RUTF Sachets to give him daily. Seven weeks later, Younas’ nutrition status had improved from SAM to Moderately Acute Malnutrition (MAM), and he is a much healthier and happier child now.

UNICEF Kid Power encourages increased activity in children while sensitizing them to problems of malnutrition in other parts of the world. For every activity children carry out, they receive points which can be used to procure RUTF to help children like Younas.
Pakistan faces challenges in achieving food security and improving nutrition, and a strategic review is underway to help accelerate progress. The Strategic Review on Food Security and Nutrition in Pakistan is an independent, analytical and consultative exercise to identify key challenges and prioritize action areas for all humanitarian and development partners.

The first meeting of the Strategic Review Advisory Group was held in July, including representatives from the Government of Pakistan’s Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms, Ministry of National Food Security and Research, and Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, as well as members from academia and civil society. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Eazaz A. Dar, Joint Secretary of the Government of Pakistan’s Economic Affairs Division (EAD), and Mr. Neil Buhne, the UN Resident Coordinator. The Strategic Review Research Team, composed of representatives from the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Aga Khan University (AKU), presented the Terms of Reference and a work plan for endorsement by the advisory group. Representatives from the Strategic Review Secretariat, made up of the UN agencies working on food security and nutrition (FAO, UNICEF, UN WOMEN, WFP, WHO), also attended. Participants provided input and put forth recommendations, including consultations in all provinces and administrative areas to begin soon after.

Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad’s memory alive at FAO

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has paid tribute to the late Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad by naming its main Islamabad conference room in his honour. At a simple, solemn ceremony, Mr. Sikander Hayat Khan Bosan, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, declared it the “Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad Memorial Conference Room.” This gesture honours the services Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad contributed to the agriculture sector in Pakistan. He was serving as Senior Policy Advisor at FAO at the time of his death in June, and his illustrious career included a number of prestigious positions including Chairman of the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC). The conference room is an important venue for major events and meetings involving stakeholders in Pakistan’s agricultural sector. Speaking at the ceremony, Minister Bosan said, “Agricultural research is crucial for a country like Pakistan and there is a need for more professionals following late Dr. Iftikhar Ahmed’s example. I commend FAO for making this effort to commemorate late Dr. Iftikhar Ahmed’s work for the agriculture sector by naming an important part of the FAO premises after him.”

Former Federal Secretary Mr. Seerat Asghar said, “Dr. Iftikhar sacrificed his entire life for the agriculture sector in Pakistan. His departure is a loss for the country.” Mr. Patrick T. Evans, FAO Representative in Pakistan, paid tribute to Dr. Iftikhar by saying, “Dr. Iftikhar had always helped us do a better job. He strengthened the work of many agricultural bodies in Pakistan.” He reminded guests that Dr. Iftikhar was responsible for the construction of the FAO premises, and the Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad Memorial Conference Room will keep his memory alive there.
Water scarcity on the rise in Sindh

In Sindh province, 75 per cent of the population in zones dependent on local rainfall for crop and livestock production lack the resources for basic survival and livelihood protection, and an estimated 1,101,623 people have fallen below emergency-level thresholds. This was revealed in two reports launched by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at an event in Karachi. The Household Economy Analysis (HEA) assessed the impact of the 2013–2015 drought on local livelihoods in some of the worst drought-affected districts of Sindh. The Sindh Drought Needs Assessment (SDNA) sought to understand drought and its impacts on sectors including livelihood, food security, nutrition, health, water and sanitation.

The SDNA reveals the drought has increased water scarcity in Sindh, causing large reductions in yields and abandonment of cultivation in the most affected zones. The reports also highlight the three household categories that have clearly suffered. Pastoralists (livestock breeders) have lost up to two thirds of their animals and income. Sharecroppers, particularly in the West zone, have been forced to seek alternative livelihoods. Agricultural labourers, particularly women, have experienced dwindling opportunities. Households in vulnerable zones should be the priority for drought-mitigation interventions, the reports recommend.

Mr. Nasar Hayat, Assistant FAO Representative, said, “The drought-affected communities need our assistance to cope with the adverse effects of drought that are still present and persistent.”

Mr. Abdul Aleem Lashari, Director (Operation) at Sindh’s Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), pledged to use the reports’ outcomes to increase preparedness.

Mr. Zafar Iqbal, Director (Recovery and Rehabilitation) at the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), confirmed the NDMA’s role in strengthening and supporting PDMA’s in managing their responsibilities.

The two reports were funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), and the results will assist stakeholders in improving drought-related interventions and programs.

Agricultural training to help FATA

In August, twenty-five government officials from the Khyber, Kurram, and North and South Waziristan Agencies of FATA successfully completed a five-day training session at the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) in Islamabad. This training was arranged by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with NARC.

The participants were trained in crop, vegetable and fruit production, and were engaged in lectures and training exercises related to water, soil and range management techniques. They were also introduced to new techniques such as Biozote (biofertilizer) Technology which will be helpful in FATA in particular, as compost and green manure can easily be used as alternatives to chemical fertilizers.

"It is part of our job to help in the efforts aimed at restoring normal life in conflict stricken areas of FATA," said Mr. Nasar Hayat, Assistant Representative FAO, to participants. “This training is an endeavour in that direction and we wish to continue to arrange more of these trainings.”

Dr. Tariq Mahmood, Deputy Director General at NARC, thanked FAO for its collaboration and said adopting good agricultural practices could help make this world a better place. Participants found techniques such as composting very useful and said they would transfer the knowledge by remaining engaged with the farming community.
Integrated food insecurity phase classification (IPC) training

Two training sessions on Integrated Food Insecurity Phase Classification (IPC) were held in Islamabad recently for food security professionals and stakeholders. A five-day session called Evidence Preparation for IPC Chronic Analysis aimed to carry out preparatory work for IPC Chronic Analysis, the second step in the IPC Chronic Implementation Process. Thirty food security professionals from national and provincial government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations participated. Focusing on one province, Sindh, for IPC Chronic rollout, a comprehensive plan for statistical re-analysis and context analysis was created and participants were assigned responsibilities. Attendees also received hands-on training on the IPC Information Support System (ISS), a country-based, internet application for food security and nutrition stakeholders to use in building an IPC Acute or Chronic analysis.

IPC Acute Level 1 Training was held to refresh stakeholders and food security professionals on IPC and enhance decision making related to food security in Pakistan. During the training, participants identified that the availability of data on food security indicators is very patchy and underestimates actual situations. They also discussed efforts to advocate for institutionalizing IPC as a standard tool for integrated food security analysis. The Integrated Food Insecurity Phase Classification (IPC) Acute Analysis is being carried out in Pakistan jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) in collaboration with IPC Global partners and national and provincial governments under the leadership of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. The IPC Chronic Food Insecurity Classification (IPC-Chronic) complements the IPC Acute Food Insecurity Classification and provides invaluable information for decision makers focused on medium and long-term objectives.

Food security experts certified in IPC levels 1 and 2 plan to conduct IPC acute food security analysis of vulnerable districts in Pakistan by January 2017.
Promoting effective policies for the culture and creative sectors

Development cannot be sustainable without strengthening the culture and creative industries, and Pakistan has tremendous opportunities for boosting its rich culture and creative sectors. The contemporary creative arts scene is rapidly emerging, and Pakistan’s total exports of cultural goods increased from 60 million United States dollars (USD) in 2004 to 276 million USD in 2013. Adopting strong policies for the cultural and creative sector is key for successful globalization.

The United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) recently carried out a comprehensive mapping of stakeholders, identified gaps and needs, and examined existing policies related to the cultural sectors. In July, UNESCO followed this with a series of stakeholder consultations to discuss challenges and opportunities and make policy recommendations for Pakistan’s culture and creative sectors. Consultation workshops held in Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore brought together approximately 150 people from the digital arts, film making, video gaming and music industries, as well as academics, provincial and federal government representatives, women, youth and members of marginalized groups. Both the mapping initiative and consultations were supported by the Danish Centre for Culture and Development under the two-year “Empowering people through active participation in art and cultural activities” project funded by the Government of Denmark.

In the first consultation meeting in Lahore, Mr. Jan Fliemer, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of Denmark, said culture remains an important element in building up vibrant, free and democratic societies and is a catalyst in development processes. “By supporting the art and culture sector in Pakistan, our aim is to create opportunities for more intercultural dialogue and collaboration and strengthening of freedom of expression for artists and cultural actors as well as enhance economic growth through creative industries.”

The consultation workshops focused on the benefits for Pakistan of signing UNESCO’s 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The Convention provides a policy framework for the good governance of culture and recognizes the distinctive nature of culture as an important contributor to economic and social development. It ensures that artists, creative professionals, practitioners and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of creative goods, services and activities, including their own. Pakistan has not yet signed the Convention, which has been signed by more than 144 UNESCO Member States since 2005. Ms. Vibeke Jensen, UNESCO Representative to Pakistan, highlighted that “The 2005 Convention ensures the introduction of policies and measures that nurture creativity and it will provide access for creators in Pakistan to participate in domestic and international marketplaces where their artistic works/expressions can be recognized and compensated financially. It also ensures that these expressions are accessible to the public at large.”

Recommendations from the consultation workshops will be shared in meetings later this year with federal and provincial governments and parliamentarians to encourage signing the Convention. Once signed, Pakistan’s public sectors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and creative professionals will become eligible to apply for the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD), which has an annual open call for funding requests up to 100,000 USD.

Addressing stakeholders in Islamabad, Mr. Mohsin S. Haqqani, Secretary of the National History and Literary Heritage Division, Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage, reaffirmed the Government of Pakistan’s commitment to promote the diversity of cultural expression and initiatives for boosting Pakistan’s creative sector. He said the creation of a policy working group and key recommendations from these consultations will help the government in adopting appropriate and transparent polices for culture and creativity, and that the government is undertaking preparations to sign the 2005 Convention. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development highlights the important role of culture in relation to education, sustainable cities, food security, the environment, economic growth, sustainable consumption and production patterns, and peaceful and inclusive societies. As the only UN agency with a culture mandate, UNESCO has developed a series of standard-setting instruments for culture, including the 2005 Convention.
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) continues to assist Pakistan in developing a reliable flood warning system. A number of activities have taken place recently under phase-II of the Strategic Strengthening of Flood Early Warning and Management Capacity of Pakistan project.

UNESCO and the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) collaborated to organize a brief course in Islamabad on Remote Sensing & Geographic Information System (GIS) Applications in Flood Management. As well, a one-day dialogue on climate adaptation and water security in Asia and the Pacific region was held at the COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT) at Wah.

In collaboration with the Soil and Water Conservation Research Institute (SAWCRRI) in Chakwal, UNESCO organized the training workshop Watershed Management Approach to Mitigate Flood and Drought Hazards. The training aimed to build the capacity of farmers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and agriculture professionals in watershed management to reduce the impact of extreme flood events. In collaboration with the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), UNESCO organized an international workshop on Hydro-Meteorological Data Collection for Flood Forecasting at the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore. This Pakistan-Afghanistan training workshop included students, faculty members, trainees from Pakistan and Afghanistan, and journalists.

Dr. Shahbaz Khan, Director of the Regional Science Bureau for Asia and the Pacific in UNESCO’s Jakarta Office, also met with key academics and officials to discuss potential initiatives on water, energy and food security for poverty alleviations as well as disaster risk reduction (DRR).

The Strategic Strengthening of Flood Warning and Management Capacity of Pakistan project is funded by the Government of Japan through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) continues to help the Government of Pakistan and humanitarian organizations increase their institutional capacity in humanitarian supply chain and emergency logistics. In collaboration with the National Humanitarian Network (NHN), specially-designed training sessions on logistics preparedness and planning, surface transport and warehouse management were conducted in Peshawar and Hyderabad, as well as for staff of the Gilgit Baltistan Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA). A total of 59 participants attended this training.

Earlier this year, WFP conducted similar training for 224 staff members of government departments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Balochistan, Sindh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan. This training helps strengthen the in-house logistic capacities of humanitarian actors, which is an integral component of any humanitarian crisis management system.
The number of drug-dependent adults worldwide has risen to 29 million, and approximately five per cent of the world adult population, or nearly 250 million people between the ages of 15 and 64, used at least one drug in 2014. This was revealed in the latest World Drug Report released in August by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

UNODC Pakistan, in collaboration with the Narcotics Control Division (NCD) of the Government of Pakistan’s Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control, held a provincial launch of the World Drug Report 2016 in Karachi. UNODC Representative Cesar Guedes stated that although the number of people who have used at least one drug has not grown over the past four years in proportion to the global population, the number of people classified as suffering from drug user disorders has increased disproportionally for the first time in six years. He said the overall impact of drug use in terms of health consequences continues to be devastating.

Mr. Ajaz Ali Khan, Secretary of the NCD, said Pakistan, like many other countries, is a transit country for drug smuggling, but that serious efforts were being made to control and prevent smuggling and local usage. He said Pakistan’s law enforcement agencies seized more than 342 tons of drugs in 2016, amounting to over 2 billion United States dollars, demonstrating Pakistan’s commitment to the war against drug smuggling and usage.

The 2016 report follows April’s UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS), a landmark moment in global drug policy which resulted in a series of concrete operational recommendations. The report also provides a special focus on the world drug problem within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including a strong link between drug use and poverty.
Enhancing forensic capacity in Punjab

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Pakistan is helping police in Punjab enhance their forensic science capability through mobile crime scene units. In collaboration with the Punjab Forensic Science Agency (PFSA), UNODC Pakistan recently organized a forensic science technician course for personnel of mobile units located in Sialkot, Gujrat and Gujranwala districts with high crime rates that are a priority for Punjab Police.

The UNODC-developed mobile crime scene units were designed according to international standards to meet local needs, and 36 units have been distributed in Punjab to assist specialized homicide investigation units. Mobile crime scene units are playing a vital role in developing law enforcement’s capacity to effectively manage crime scenes, particularly in collecting, preserving and processing evidence.

This support for Punjab Police also indirectly helps the PFSA by ensuring evidence is properly collected, packaged and processed, which is essential for transparent forensic analysis. The Director General of the PFSA, Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Tahir, expressed appreciation for the UNODC’s efforts and stated that the PFSA is fully equipped to process physical evidence as per international standards.

Ms. Saba Sadiq, Chairperson of Punjab’s Child Protection Bureau, also expressed her gratitude for the support and assured the Government of Punjab’s continuous support for the Punjab Police and long-term cooperation with the UNODC.
Drugs and precursors training for law enforcement and industry

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Pakistan is providing training to help build the country’s capacity for identifying and interdicting the illicit trafficking of drugs and precursor chemicals. This is being provided under the new project Strengthening Border Security Against Illicit Drug Trafficking and Related Transnational Organized Crime (2016-2019), recently signed between the Government of Japan and UNODC.

UNODC Pakistan and the Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) held a three-day training course on Drugs and Precursors Identification at the ANF Academy in Islamabad. The objective was to build the capacity of field officers from Pakistan Customs and the ANF for identifying and interdicting drugs and precursors trafficking. The 16 participants were also briefed on the overall drug situation, with special emphasis on the diversion of precursor chemicals.

In Lahore, UNODC and the Narcotics Control Division (NCD) organized a two-day Sensitization Workshop on Precursor Control for industry representatives to raise awareness on the diversion and illicit use of precursor chemicals. Industry plays an important role in helping law enforcement combat drug trafficking and related crimes, and participants were briefed on processes and rules and discussed the problems faced by industry and regulatory and law enforcement agencies.

These achievements were made possible by the generous support of the Government of Japan to the UNODC Country Office in Pakistan. In Islamabad, Mr. Takashi Harada, Counsellor for Economic and Development at the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan, said countering drug trafficking was a global challenge and that the Government of Japan stood committed to combating international criminal syndicates which through their illicit activities hinder the socio-economic development and prosperity of the Pakistani people.

Dr. Anne Bergenstrom, Officer in Charge at UNODC, thanked the governments of Pakistan and Japan for their continued cooperation and assured that UNODC will continue organizing similar workshops.
Pakistan and Jordan join for air cargo security training

In July, Pakistan and Jordan participated in a joint training session on air cargo security held under the Global Container Control Programme. The session aimed to increase knowledge and operational capacity to identify high-risk air shipments and minimize the risk of air freight being used for unlawful acts. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Pakistan, in collaboration with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), conducted the training course on Air Mail and Air Cargo Security at the Queen Noor Civil Aviation Technical College in Amman. This was a joint exercise of the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority, the Anti Narcotics Force, and Pakistan Customs, as well as Jordan’s Anti-Narcotics Department and Jordan Customs, and the training session was enabled by financial contributions from Denmark and the United States of America. This was the first such partnership between UNODC and the ICAO, and the successful collaboration is expected to be repeated in the future.

The Global Container Control Programme is a joint initiative of UNODC and the World Customs Organization to help countries establish law enforcement structures to minimize the exploitation of containers for shipping illicit goods such as narcotics, chemical precursors, arms and ammunition, and endangered species. Following the impressive results in seaports, UNODC expanded the Programme into airports. Pakistan was the first country to join, setting up an Air Cargo Control Unit (ACCU) at Jinnah International Airport in Karachi in November 2015, and Jordan became the second participating country in May 2016.

Computerizing Punjab’s prisons

The number of prisoners in Pakistan is increasing due to the increased crime rate, security challenges and a burgeoning population. Among the challenges prisons face is the lack of an electronic record-keeping system, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Pakistan, in collaboration with the Department of Punjab Prisons, designed a Prison Management Information System (PMIS) for the province’s prisons. PMIS facilitates a prison’s operational administration by digitizing information such as prisoner admission and release, housing, court decisions and sentences, medical treatment, and visitors. It also includes a reporting module to facilitate prison reporting. The system was piloted at District Jail Lahore, and since 2014 the data of 34,352 of its under-trial prisoners has been entered into the administrative module. PIMMS is initially being installed in 19 other prisons across Punjab, with UNODC providing the computers, biometric systems, and networking needed. Basic training is also being conducted for prison officials at the National Academy for Prisons Management (NAPA), including Training of Trainers (ToT) courses.

Building on the successful implementation, the Government of Punjab has approved 19 million Pakistani rupees to enhance PMIS by adding three more modules (human resources, budgetary/financial and inventory), along with the required staff, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Punjab Prisons and the Punjab Information Technology Board. In August, UNODC Pakistan hosted a seminar for international donors, representatives from civil society, and government officials to learn more about PIMS.

Dr. Anne Bergenstrom, the Officer in Charge at UNODC, thanked the Government of Punjab, the Kingdom of Denmark, and the US Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) for supporting this important initiative. She also expressed the need to move forward towards digitizing prison data and assured participants of UNODC’s continued support.
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Pakistan conducted a three-day workshop in Islamabad for the local implementing partners of the Girls’ Right to Education Programme. The workshop aimed to enhance understanding of the project’s implementation and engage partners in interactive discussion about the concepts and methodologies of the Activity Based Learning (ABL) and Multi-Grade Teaching (MGT) components. It also provided an opportunity to refine implementation strategies for training teachers in ABL and MGT techniques. The workshop was interactive with practical demonstrations that can be easily adapted in classrooms to improve learning.
Pakistan’s increasing urban population and insufficient knowledge of city dynamics is resulting in lack of timely service delivery, resource allocation and urban solutions. As urbanization increases, it is important to give more attention to sustainable growth and development.

The Government of Pakistan has committed to developing a State of Pakistan Cities Report. This will be led by the Ministry of Climate Change with technical assistance by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and funding from the Australian Government.

The report will present a well-informed analysis of the state of urbanization across Pakistan, taking a broad view that incorporates economic, social, demographic, political and cultural aspects. It will support planners, administrators and decision makers by providing sufficient information to help them design effective urban solutions, and it will have an extensive policy impact, particularly in relation to urban service delivery, land and housing. “The Government of Pakistan is leading the development of the State of Pakistan Cities Report to ensure that vital information can help planners, decision makers and society to produce better and improved urban solutions,” said Mr. Zahid Hamid, Federal Minister for Climate Change.

Australian High Commissioner Margaret Adamson said, “The development of the State of Pakistan Cities Report comes at a time when Pakistan’s cities, and many cities throughout the world, are under increasing pressure from population growth and environmental concerns, including as a result of climate change. The report will provide vital data for planners, policy makers and legislators in responding to these challenges and equip Pakistan’s cities to play their future role at the centre of the nation’s economic and cultural activity.”

Mr. Neil Buhne, the UN Resident Coordinator said the UN team in Pakistan will complement this by building partnerships, providing technical expertise and assistance, and supporting the implementation of programmes.
During the summer of 2015, two natural disasters struck at opposite ends of Pakistan. In Karachi, a massive heat wave took more than 1,200 lives. In Chitral, several valleys were hit by sudden glacial lake outburst floods that washed away roads, crops and homes. As climate change takes grip across the world, such extreme events are becoming more common and more severe.

Pakistan ranks eighth in the world for climate change vulnerability, and a coordinated response and global funding are needed to mitigate the worst effects on efforts for sustainable development. Climate-resilient development requires an understanding of the effects of climate change as well as planning and budgeting by government departments.

In July, the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Pakistan held a consultative workshop on a Federal Climate Change Financing Framework for Pakistan. It was co-chaired by the Special Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Dr. Shujaat Ali, and the Secretary of the Ministry of Climate Change, Mr. Abu Ahmad Akif, and included representatives from various ministries. The participants drew up 11 key actions to advance the Framework and create a structure to better manage, mobilize and target climate financing using a whole-of-government approach. UNDP committed to providing further technical assistance on governance, public finance and climate policy, and will work with the Ministry of Finance and government stakeholders to develop the technical parameters of the Framework and offer recommendations.

The Framework will outline Pakistan’s financial commitments and demonstrate the country’s ability to use international climate funding transparently. International climate funding is critical for Pakistan to protect peoples’ lives, livelihoods and wellbeing from the effects of climate change.
Pakistan is considered among the most dangerous countries for media professionals in the world, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Pakistan is contributing to journalist safety through its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). In a joint effort with the Pakistan Press Foundation, personal security training is being provided to journalists and media professionals in conflict and post-conflict areas under the Promoting Safety of Journalists through Security Training project.

The three-day sessions include training on personal security during travel and home-to-office movement, dealing with threats and intimidation, conducting risk assessments and determining appropriate safety and security measures, first aid, and post-traumatic stress and stress management. So far, 56 journalists have participated in sessions held in the Sanghar and Shikarpur districts of Sindh province and in the towns of Batkhela and Mingora in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Rahim Bux Jamali, a journalist at the Daily Ibrat Shikarpur, explained the importance of this type of training for journalists, saying, “This is the first time that we have a physical security training in Shikarpur. There is a need to understand the risks that we can avoid taking during our work.” “We usually underestimate risks related to our own security and this training gave me important information to ensure my security during work,” said Rafiullah Khan, a journalist at AAJ News.

UNESCO Pakistan supports journalist safety in a number of ways, including advocating for the protection of journalists and media institutions, sharing international good practices, and allocating funds to conduct training. The IPDC is the only intergovernmental programme in the United Nations system mandated to mobilize international support to contribute to sustainable development, democracy and good governance by strengthening the capacities of developing countries and countries in transition in the field of electronic and print media.
Pakistan has been affected by a number of crises and disasters over the past decade, and often media coverage of these events does not meet international expectations. Due to lack of training, district reporters who are the first to arrive at the scene are often not equipped to report on the situations professionally. Through the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Pakistan recently provided funding and technical assistance for a series of five two-day capacity-building workshops. These were organized by The Media Foundation in collaboration with the Lahore Press Club for 200 journalists and media professionals based in disaster-prone districts of Punjab. The workshops helped participants understand how the humanitarian system works, the frameworks and standards it follows during humanitarian crises, and general preparedness for disasters and hazards. They learned how to apply these insights to field-based reporting to ensure dignity, quality and accountability in reporting on humanitarian response.

They were also introduced to the concepts of reporting through a gender-sensitive lens. The participants, including 52 per cent female journalists, found the training highly beneficial, as it provided them with a rare opportunity to learn from experts on effective crisis reporting. Maimoona Saeed, Senior Correspondent at Geo News in Multan, said, “The training helped recall many aspects of reporting disaster that we have forgotten over the years. There is a need to build on this intervention and develop more technical and advance courses for journalists who report on disaster.” Shafiq Butt, District Correspondent in Sahiwal for Dawn, said, “It was also interesting to learn the standardized approach of ensuring a gender-sensitive approach while reporting on such topics.” This project has helped improve journalists’ confidence in reporting on disaster and humanitarian crises, and participants also formed a network of humanitarian reporters and district coordinators to sustain the learning.
Fiza Farhan shares progress on women’s economic empowerment

Pakistan is making progress in improving economic outcomes for women, as Fiza Farhan shared at the 2nd meeting of the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment in July.

Since the 1st High-Level Panel in March, Fiza joined with the Government of Punjab and UN Women in Pakistan in a Call for Action Campaign on key priorities to accelerate women’s economic empowerment. The Campaign engages key players in Punjab in five commitments:

- Formalize informal home-based workers’ policy
- Improve women’s participation in public-sector jobs by 15%
- Invest in gender-sensitive infrastructure and capacity building
- Engage corporate/private sectors to invest in gender profitability and endorse women’s empowerment principles
- Engage academia to promote women’s leadership, entrepreneurship and career counseling

The Campaign also fast tracks implementation of Punjab’s “Women’s Empowerment Package” which is creating a nexus between economic, social, legal and political empowerment for women. Progress so far includes:

- Allocation of 9.2 billion Pakistani Rupees to implement the Package
- The Government’s renewed commitment to expedite the Home-Based Workers Policy and Law
- Strengthened gender-responsive infrastructure in the public sector, with 54 daycare centers, 16 working women hostels, and separate toilets
- Launch of the first-ever “Punjab Gender Parity Report” by the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women

- UN Women’s support to 17 Punjab-based, private-sector companies to invest in gender profitability and adopt international quality standards of the UN Women-UN Global Compact’s Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEP)

Pakistan’s Fiza Farhan was appointed a Member of the High-Level Panel of the UN Secretary-General on Women’s Economic Empowerment in 2016. This 2nd meeting of the Panel was held in Costa Rica and was jointly supported by UN Women and the National Institute of Women of Costa Rica.
Punjab progressing towards gender equality

The Australian High Commissioner and UN Women co-hosted a panel discussion on progress towards gender equality in Punjab province, with a focus on the Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016 passed earlier this year. The panel discussed Punjab’s progress towards gender equality through women’s economic empowerment, education for girls, and women’s voices in decision making, as well as provincial responsibilities (post-devolution). Panelists lauded the legislation, the first of its kind in Pakistan, which will provide a helpful model for other provinces and countries. "Gender equality is a core foreign policy priority for Australia, and I am reassured to be joined today by colleagues from all sectors of society who are committed to advancing the rights of women and promoting gender equality, not only in Pakistan, but globally, both as a human right, and out of sheer economic good sense," said Ms. Margaret Adamson, Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan.

"Violence against women is one of the biggest threats for any society to fully function," said Mr. Jamshed Kazi, Country Representative for UN Women in Pakistan, going on to commend the Government of Punjab for their Protection of Women Against Violence Act. "Punjab Province has sent a message to the world that we will never accept violence against women as a norm in society," said Mr. Salman Sufi, Senior Member in the Government of Punjab’s Chief Minister’s Special Monitoring Unit (Law and Order Wing).

The event was part of Australia’s tenure as co-chair of the Inter Agency Gender and Development Group (INGAD) in partnership with UN Women. The panel included a number of influential Pakistani citizens, including Fauzia Viqar, Chairperson of the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women, and Hina Jilani, Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Workshop on shelters, settlements and gender-based violence (GBV) risk reduction

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Shelter and Non-Food Item (NFI) Working Group in Pakistan organized a two-day workshop in Islamabad on Shelters, Settlements and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Risk Reduction. Twenty-six participants from across the country were trained to incorporate GBV Risk Reduction practices in shelter strategies.
UN Women recently held focus group discussions with more than 150 women and girls affected by displacement in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The UN Women Pakistan and Afghanistan Country Offices presented the findings in August at the “Pakistan-Afghanistan dialogue on women’s situation in displacement: Challenges and way forward for policy and practice.” The women and girls identified frequent and emerging issues faced during emergencies, displacement and in social reconstruction. Findings from both sides of the border referred to:
- Women’s role in decision-making before, during and after displacement
- Camp and settlement facilities
- Access to health services, educational facilities and income-generating opportunities
- Possession of identity and/or residency cards
- Transportation and financial assistance
- Developing institutional mechanisms for collecting and analyzing data
- Oversight of processes providing identification to every woman that allows them access to food rations, healthcare facilities, non-food items and education for their children
- Increasing access to social

The meeting was hosted Ms. Meraj Humayun Khan, Chairperson of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s Women’s Parliamentary Caucus, and participants included displaced women, Members of Parliament, Members of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s, women’s machineries, and development and humanitarian stakeholders. It resulted in a Joint Resolution to make regional and provincial responses effective and more responsive to the needs of women, girls and vulnerable persons, and to support their safe and dignified return. This includes:
- Ensuring women’s participation in the return processes
- Adopting an inclusive, community-based approach with women’s participation at all levels
- Providing guidance for economic empowerment and earning livelihoods
- Lobbying for allocation of adequate dedicated funds

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- Increasing access to social
spaces to strengthen indigenous coping strategies and mechanisms

The dialogue was held under UN Women in Pakistan’s Women’s Leadership in Social Reconstruction programme, with support from the Kingdom of Denmark. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s Disaster Management Authority facilitated UN Women in conducting the focus group discussions.

Journeys of dislocation and survival

UN Women’s focus groups provided displaced women and girls with a platform to share their experiences. The following are just some of stories of women and girls displaced by emergencies in Pakistan’s Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Province.

“It’s a nightmare what we have gone through - displacement, camp life and survival”

“Disasters affect everyone, but for women the impact is doubled”

“We came to Pakistan due to the war in Afghanistan. We have no homes to go back to - where and how would we live, work and feed ourselves? We are now in our third generation and Pakistan is the only home we know - how temporary is ‘temporary’ for a displaced woman?”

Describing her evacuation, a Pakistani mother of six displaced from North Waziristan Agency in FATA said, “The military operation was nearing our doorsteps. We were told to evacuate - gather what you can and leave. The only thing we mothers could gather was our children. The ones we couldn’t find, we had to leave without - we had no time to locate them.”

Another woman said, “Taking our documents with us never crossed our minds. We faced many issues as we did not carry our ID cards - we were identity-less with no access to food rations, hygiene kits, hospitals or schools for our children.” Many women said there was no transportation available for them, and women and children were made to walk for more than 35 kilometers over three days, unaware of what was awaiting them.

Women displaced from KP’s Malakand Division shared that living in camps has made them more aware of their role and rights. One woman said, “We are more secure here, we have learned a lot from other people. Before we did not know what latrines were – our latrines were our fields.” Another said, “Before displacement our girls were married off between the ages of 12-15 years. Now we delay our girls from getting married too early. They are married once they are 18 years old. We believe our girls should have an education and learn some life skills for if they are widowed, they should be able to support themselves.” However, women also highlighted that the spontaneous camps and settlements they were provided with lacked educational facilities, health care provisions, skills development, and income-generating opportunities.

Most women requested to be sent “home” only when they could be ensured safety and peace. One woman said, “Only when we are mentally prepared can we return home. Our girls are being educated, they need schools. We are learning new skills and earning a small income. We want to continue these and teach others back home.”
“I am voting to exercise my power and identity and want to be included in the political process. I feel empowered that after all, in this male-dominated society, I as a woman have a voice and value of my vote,” said one of the many women voters who participated in the State elections in Pakistan-administered Kashmir on July 21.

This took place ahead of Orange Day on July 25, and women voters came out wearing orange to show their support for ending gender inequality and increasing women’s representation in politics. The United Nations Secretary-General’s Campaign UNITE to End Violence against Women has proclaimed the 25th day of each month Orange Day, a day to raise awareness and take action to end discrimination and violence against women and girls.

The State has 438,884 registered voters (approximately 42 per cent female) and women enthusiastically took part in shaping their future. One women voter was asked what changes she would make for women if she became a politician. She answered, “I will try my best to ensure zero tolerance to violence against women, especially in public spaces. I would introduce women-only buses and vans, women-only hostels for women working away from home, reforms in the security sector with establishment of women-friendly and run police stations, and I would also bring women police officers at par with male officers.”

Another woman voter had a message for young girls who will be eligible to vote in the next State elections: “Make yourself politically aware now and contribute effectively in the political process of your country. Undoubtedly, political participation is more than simply casting a vote. However, it is—if nothing else—a step in the right direction.”
Celebrating World Breastfeeding Week

World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated each August, and events were held to raise awareness and highlight the links between breastfeeding and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In Pakistan, only 37.7 per cent of infants under six months of age are exclusively breastfed, while the bottle feeding rate has increased to 42 per cent. In a country where neonatal and infant mortality rates are high, beginning breastfeeding within the first hour of birth can make a vital difference to a child’s chance of survival.

An event in Islamabad hosted by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination launched the Infant and Young Child Feeding Strategy 2016. Minister of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Mrs. Saira Afzal Tarar, spoke about the new strategy which promotes appropriate feeding practices essential for the health and survival of infants and young children. It includes revitalizing sub-national Infant Feeding Boards, bodies designed to ensure families are not exposed to false advertising and promotion of so-called breast milk substitutes.

“Promotion of breastfeeding is one of the most important public health interventions by UNICEF,” said UNICEF Representative in Pakistan, Ms. Angela Kearney. “We work closely with the government at both federal and provincial levels to protect and promote the practice of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of a child’s life.”

In Sindh, the World Food Programme (WFP) provincial office held an awareness campaign that included special walks, advocacy meetings and talks, seminars, and community sessions, as well as specially-designed posters in Sindhi and Urdu. As part of improving nutrition in Pakistan, WFP puts a special focus on pregnant and lactating women and children under five, prioritizing the first 1,000 days from conception to two years of age. WFP advocates exclusive breastfeeding until six months and continued breastfeeding until two years of age.
Implementing social protection in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Social protection is not new to Pakistan but many challenges remain. To improve the situation, the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have collaborated to draft a Social Protection Policy and a Two Years Social Protection Strategy for 2016–2017.

In August, ILO held a two-day training workshop in Peshawar focused on the One Window Operation (OWO) concept being used globally, and participants learned more about plans for social protection in KP. Mr. Muhammad Fakhr-e-Alam, Director for the Special Development Unit (SDU) of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s Planning & Development Department, said the province has made substantial efforts towards a coordinated social service delivery system. This includes adopting an updated and comprehensive planning document, the Integrated Development Strategy (2014–2018), with the objective to deliver fundamental rights and privileges to its citizens. He highlighted the need for a social protection system to be more inclusive, comprehensive and well coordinated.

Ms. Valerie Schmitt, Chief of Social Policy, Governance and Standards Branch, ILO Geneva, said social protection is a human right and can become a reality for all. She highlighted the need for joint efforts and assured ILO’s continued technical support to implement the Coordinated Social Protection System in the province as part of ILO’s Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors. She emphasized the need for efforts to “leave no one behind” to ensure social protection schemes are available and accessible to all people in the country.

The workshop was successful in developing a concrete road map for implementing OWO in KP. The roadmap will be based on the social protection floor concept, which is part of the sustainable development goals. Pakistan is signatory to ILO’s three conventions on social security.
Kick starting the sustainable energy initiative for industries in Pakistan

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) launched the Sustainable Energy Initiative for Industries in Pakistan at an event held in Islamabad. Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Initiative’s ultimate goal is to avoid greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by developing and promoting a market environment that will stimulate investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies in industry.

The industrial sector in Pakistan is highly dependent on fossil fuels, and the UNIDO-GEF project seeks to promote adopting renewable, efficient energy sources and technologies. This will be achieved by demonstrating technical feasibility and commercial viability, strengthening institutional capacity, and establishing a favourable policy and legal environment. This project will help meet the climate change challenge, lower expensive energy imports and lower costs for industry to enhance economic competitiveness.

Mr. Esam Alqararah, UNIDO Representative in Pakistan, stressed the importance of renewable energy and energy efficiency in Pakistan, and said it is promising that the project will be owned by private-sector industry from the beginning. Mr. Neil Buhne, the UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, spoke about how the Initiative directly addresses the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure.

Mr. Khizar Hayat Gondal, Federal Secretary for Industries & Production, sent a message acknowledging UNIDO for helping the industrial sector explore the options of alternative energy, saying the project could be a breakthrough for Pakistan and boost industrial development.

The event was attended by stakeholders from both governments and industry, including the Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, Mr. Jean-François Cautain, and Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Industries & Production and Chief Executive Officer of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), Mr. Sher Ayub.
Supplier development for inclusive markets in Balochistan & KP

Inclusive markets help build vibrant economies in which poor and marginalized groups, such as women and young people, participate actively in building a prosperous society. Developing micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which are at the heart of inclusive markets, has knock-on benefits all the way along the value chain and in the broader economy. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is bringing its Suppliers Development Programme (SDP) to Pakistan to help develop such markets. The SDP improves the competitiveness of MSMEs, helping them strengthen their financial situation, labour practices and security to facilitate links with the markets. Companies with potential from any sector can participate, while companies along the same value chain are encouraged to invest in the programme. Experience from other countries has shown that companies that participate in the SDP improve their quality and delivery times, reduce wastage, gain access to new markets, increase sales and access previously unavailable financing.

Through the SDP, companies will be assisted by consultants coordinated by two management teams in Quetta and Peshawar, working in alignment with UNDP’s Balochistan Economic Development Project and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Development Programme. Consultants in both provinces have been trained in Suppliers Development Methodology, and certified consultants will work with value chains to improve suppliers’ competitiveness to meet the quality, quantity, standards, and delivery time of products being supplied to the lead company.

The project was launched in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by UNDP Pakistan, the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province and the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA) at an event in Peshawar. Mr. Marc-André Franche, the UNDP Pakistan Country Director, said, “SDP is in line with UNDP’s larger objective of bringing stability through economic development in conflict-affected places. I am confident that the initiative will go a long way in generating employment and securing prosperous futures for skilled labour and entrepreneurs in the province.”

Zafar Ali Shah, Secretary of KP’s Planning & Development Department, said, “In the long run, development of the private sector helps reduce poverty and inequalities in a society and SDP can be a great tool contributing towards this.”
Promoting biomass gasification technologies

Pakistan faces severe energy challenges that include frequent power cuts and unreliable supply of natural gas, but the country also has immense biomass potential. Biomass Gasification Technologies (BGT), which use rice husk, wheat straw and other crop residues as efficient energy material, can help address the energy difficulties Pakistan faces.

In July, the first International Conference & Expo on Biomass Gasification Technologies was held in Islamabad. Co-hosted by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the U.S.-Pakistan Center for Advanced Studies in Energy (USPCAS-E) at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), the two-day event focused on the industrial applications of BGTs as alternative and efficient sustainable fuels for the future. International and national experts spoke about energy issues and adopting BGTs at the industrial, small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) and rural community levels.

Federal Minister for Science & Technology Rana Tanveer Hussain addressed participants, saying: “This forum should form public-private partnerships and interest-specific networks by bringing together the best minds from across the globe, government and the business community to produce tangible solutions for Pakistan’s greatest challenges in energy security.”

Mr. Esam Alqararah, UNIDO Country Head, expressed his pleasure in collaborating with NUST and said the conference would pave the way for more self-reliant and productive energy and industrial sectors in Pakistan. NUST Rector Engineer Muhammad Asghar emphasized the importance of BGTs and spoke about the UNIDO-NUST project for promoting BGT systems for the energy sector.

The forum concluded with the Islamabad Biomass Declaration, calling for all stakeholders to work together to promote and indigenize biomass gasification in Pakistan.
Improving access to justice through paralegal services

Accessing the formal legal system can be a long, expensive and difficult process for many, especially women and marginalized groups. Paralegals, trained in relevant aspects of the law without being full-fledged lawyers, provide access to swift and accountable dispute resolution and judicial services within their communities.

In July, at the National Conference on Community Based Paralegals held in Islamabad, the role of paralegals was recognized for the first time when government officials, paralegals, and international and national representatives came together to issue the Islamabad Declaration on Community Based Paralegals.

The Islamabad Declaration affirms the important role paralegals play in resolving conflicts. Attendees called for full recognition of paralegals in communities, governments and the legal system, and committed to enhancing the quality of services. They also urged that paralegal services be considered a core part of development, as improving access to justice helps fulfill Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions. They also declared that a core goal of the paralegal sector would be to ensure gender equity, supporting SDG5.

Conference attendees shared experiences and resources and learned new tools and methods to enhance their practice. They acknowledged the need to establish paralegal networks across Pakistan and discussed approaches for capacity building and developing formal relationships with government, bar associations, legal aid clinics and law schools.

The conference was co-hosted by the United National Development Program (UNDP) and the Rural Support Programmes Network, and was held under UNDP Pakistan’s Strengthening Rule of Law Project. Operating in 12 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, this project endeavours to improve access to justice and strengthen the rule of law. With funding from the European Union, the project focuses on reforming alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and empowering community based paralegals.
Senior labour inspectors from Balochistan, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have been trained to teach modern labour inspection approaches to improve workplaces in their provinces. Jointly organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOPHRD), in cooperation with the four provinces, the training was held in Lahore by the ILO’s International Training Center.

The week-long Training of Trainers (ToT) session aimed to prepare a group of master trainers to further train the labour inspection forces in their provinces. The training focused on obligations under the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), the functions, characteristics, ethics and tools of labour inspection, and the fundamental principles of rights at work. It provided a platform for labour inspectors to interact and share their experiences, and participants highlighted that forums like this also foster positive competition among provinces.

Mr. M. Saleem Hussain, Director General of Labour Welfare at Labour Punjab, encouraged participants to take full advantage of this opportunity and equip themselves with the technical knowledge required to perform their duties more efficiently. ILO’s Country Director in Pakistan, Ms. Ingrid Christensen, emphasized the important role of labour inspection in ensuring better working conditions at workplaces, and called the training program a significant endeavor towards strengthening the outreach and quality of the labour inspection function in Pakistan. She also acknowledged the Government of the Netherlands for their financial support.

During the closing certificate ceremony, the 24 participants resolved to roll out a modern labour inspection drive that combines enforcement with better awareness and communication to improve working conditions in Pakistani workplaces.
New index reveals Pakistan’s multidimensional poverty rates

Nearly 39 per cent of Pakistanis live in multidimensional poverty, with the highest poverty rates in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Balochistan. This is according to Pakistan’s first ever official report on multidimensional poverty released in June.

The report was developed by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Pakistan and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) at the University of Oxford. It details Pakistan’s official Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which uses a broader concept of poverty than income and wealth alone by also reflecting health, education and standard of living deprivations.

Pakistan’s poverty rate showed a strong decline from 55 to 39 per cent from 2004 to 2015. However, progress across the country is uneven, including 9.3 percent poverty in urban areas compared to 54.6 per cent in rural areas. The report found multidimensional poverty rates of: FATA (73 per cent), Balochistan (71 per cent), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (49 per cent), Gilgit-Baltistan and Sindh (43 per cent), Punjab (31 per cent), and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (25 per cent). Education deprivation contributes the largest share of (43 per cent) to the MPI, followed by living standards (nearly 32 per cent) and health (26 per cent).

Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms, Professor Ahsan Iqbal, said reducing multidimensional poverty is a core objective of Pakistan’s Vision 2025, and that inclusive and balanced growth is a government priority.

The MPI also establishes a baseline for Pakistan’s progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. “Multidimensional poverty provides useful analysis and information for targeting poverty, and reducing regional inequalities,” said Marc-André Franche, UNDP Country Director.

OPHI’s Director, Dr. Sabina Alkire, congratulated Pakistan, saying the country’s leadership will be of interest to other countries using multidimensional poverty measures in the Sustainable Development Goals.
Tripartite commission: empowering Afghan refugees in Pakistan

On July 19, the UN Refugee Agency (UNCR) hosted the 27th Tripartite Commission Meeting with the Islamic Republics of Pakistan and Afghanistan, where representatives underlined their commitment to empower Afghan refugees in Pakistan and work towards their voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan. The parties also called on the international community to support efforts to bring Afghanistan’s protracted refugee chapter to a close and end future displacement.

The representatives reaffirmed their commitment to the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) and extended the Tripartite Agreement that governs voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity until December 31, 2016. Under the Agreement, more than 3.9 million Afghan refugees have returned to Afghanistan since 2001. Both governments expressed appreciation to UNHCR for recently doubling the repatriation and reintegration grant, now up to 400 United States dollars per individual upon arrival in Afghanistan. UNHCR’s Representative in Pakistan, Mr. Indrika Ratwatte, recognized Pakistan’s generosity for hosting millions of Afghan refugees and stressed the need for robust development support to ensure the sustainability of voluntary returns in Afghanistan and to provide tangible support to host communities in Pakistan.

Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), Lt. Gen. (R) Abdul Qadir Baloch, reaffirmed the Government of Pakistan’s commitment to continue working closely with Afghanistan and UNHCR to ensure sustainable voluntary returns. Afghanistan’s Minister of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR), Mr. Sayed Hossein Alimi Balkhi, thanked Pakistan for hosting millions of Afghan refugees and stressed the importance of reinvigorated efforts to create an environment conducive for voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan.

UNHCR’s Representative in Afghanistan, Ms. Maya Ameratunga, said collective efforts backed by strong support of the international community will be critical to meet the needs of returnees in Afghanistan and prevent further displacement.
Cost-sharing agreement between UNDP and Balochistan government

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Balochistan signed a cost-sharing agreement worth 100 million Pakistani rupees to provide assistance and support to impoverished areas that have experienced social, economic and environmental impacts of hosting refugees from Afghanistan since 1979.

This is a continuation of the Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) project, which developed infrastructure and built social cohesion in 12 districts with funding from the European Union. The project has benefitted 1.35 million people in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, and the extension will seek to make up for shortfalls in achieving the original targets in Balochistan.

The agreement was signed by Mr. Marc-André Franche, the outgoing UNDP Country Director, Dr. Hamid Khan Achakzai, the Balochistan Minister for Planning & Development, and Mr. Daud Barrech, Balochistan’s Additional Chief Secretary for Development. Under the agreement, UNDP will mobilize additional resources to scale up the programme.

“The communities involved in the first phase of RAHA lag considerably in terms of human development and infrastructure compared to the rest of Pakistan,” said Marc-André Franche. “Building social cohesion, stronger livelihoods, essential infrastructure and social and environmental protections helped build their resilience despite the strain caused by an influx of refugees needing assistance.”

RAHA expanded from 23 to 102 union councils in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, directly benefitting 54 percent of the population, against a target of 60 percent in these areas between 2011 and 2015. The project has benefitted the provinces’ people with initiatives including forming community organizations, infrastructure schemes, clean drinking water, education projects, and reforestation, as well as free orthopaedic and prosthetic services in Balochistan. This new cost-sharing agreement will expand on the gains made so far and consolidate them in some of the most deprived areas of Balochistan.
Although 31 per cent of Pakistanis are aged 15 to 29, the country has a severe lack of youth-focused planning and development. As a result, young people are unable to contribute to the country’s progress or build better futures for themselves, and are vulnerable to becoming involved in violence. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Pakistan aims to build stability and economic development for youth through its Youth Employment Project, which empowers young people in Karachi’s most sensitive areas.

In August, international development partners saw the project in action when they visited Artistic Milliners, a major denim factory, and the Sindh Technical Education and the Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) Institute in Korangi. Through collaboration with UNDP Pakistan, these organizations train young people based on the needs of potential employers in the textile industry and provide them with routes to employment. The group, including representatives from Japan, Norway, USAID and the Government of Sindh, met young beneficiaries who are acquiring demand-driven skills in garment manufacturing.

“Young people need education, employment and engagement in their communities if they are to contribute to Pakistan’s development, avoid violence and build peace,” said UNDP Pakistan Country Director, Marc-André Franche. “Through our partnership with Artistic Milliners, TEVTA and other organizations, we help build stronger, more peaceful communities where the young people can look forward to great careers in Pakistan’s largest industry, and have a real stake in the country’s future.”

The Youth Employment Project was established by UNDP with a contribution of 3 million United States dollars to increase income and employment opportunities for Karachi youth. The Project aims to train 13,000 young men and women in Lyari, Korangi, Sultabad and other areas of Karachi over three years, with at least 70 per cent of those trained to secure full-time employment.
Showcasing young peoples’ work on International Youth Day

On August 12, young people from some of Karachi’s most troubled neighbourhoods came together to celebrate International Youth Day. This was part of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Youth Employment Project to train youth in employable skills and offer opportunities to achieve financial independence.

On this occasion, UNDP Pakistan collaborated with the Memon Industrial & Technical Institute and Technical Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVTA) Institutes to showcase handmade dresses, bags and other goods. The young people had the opportunity to network and showcase their work to prospective employers from garment companies, boutiques, fashion houses, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as representatives from the Government of Sindh.
The World Day Against Trafficking in Persons is an important moment to show solidarity with the many victims of human trafficking around the world and this year we can keep the issue in the spotlight when World leaders gather on 19 September in New York for the UN Summit on Refugees and Migrants, writes IOM Director General William Lacy Swing. As I travel the globe, I am dismayed by the exploitation suffered by our fellow human beings who are being forced to labour with little or no pay on farms, in fishing boats, in factories, on construction sites, in pit mines, hidden away in private homes, or forced into sexual exploitation against their will by armed groups. They are forced to labour under the threat of violence and through unconscionable systems of debt bondage. Considerable progress has been made in creating legal frameworks that better protect those identified as victims of trafficking. IOM, its partners and other organizations continue to respond to the needs of victims of trafficking and to identify and protect persons vulnerable to trafficking, including during and in the aftermath of crises such as natural disasters or conflicts. In many countries, trafficked persons, quite often migrants, now have access to temporary residence, safe accommodation, medical and psychosocial support, and assisted voluntary return and reintegration opportunities. A few have even been provided with compensation. A noteworthy development is that combating human trafficking is now integrated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, reflecting a continuing political commitment to address the issue. However, we must bear in mind that the numbers of people benefiting from protection remains small – especially when compared with the millions who continue to be exploit-
In truth, the line that separates a trafficked person from many exploited or abused migrants is blurred at best, and difficult to draw when people are fleeing from conflict or disaster. A migrant – especially if he is young, male and working illegally and therefore doesn’t fit the standard stereotype of a victim of trafficking – is unlikely even to be screened for possible exploitation or trafficking. There is a protection disparity between those migrants identified as ‘trafficked’ and those who are not, and we need to bridge the gap between the large number of exploited people and the very few that we seem able to identify. We know that some of the world’s 244 million international migrants are among the most vulnerable to trafficking and associated forms of exploitation and abuse. Many lack the legal status or recognition of their professional credentials that would allow them to be lawfully and gainfully employed. Many others are disconnected from the social networks to which they might normally turn for support in times of difficulty. Perhaps most fundamentally, many migrants (irregular migrants in particular) lack knowledge of their rights, the financial resources required to assert them, and the confidence that government officials will respect them and treat them fairly. Complex and protracted humanitarian and migration crises, such as armed conflicts, further increase vulnerabilities and in some cases, have led to an increase in human trafficking. In some instances, the conflict itself may lead to the emergence of specific forms of crisis-related trafficking in persons. Trafficking in persons not only flourishes during a disaster, it is a direct result of disaster, every bit as much as infrastructural damage, loss of life or food shortages which garner far more attention. The forthcoming UN Summit Refugees and Migrants also puts the spotlight on the specific vulnerabilities to trafficking, exploitation and abuse of migrants travelling within large movements. Those affected are in desperate need of assistance and protection. This remains a major challenge for front-line responders who often lack the time, resources, and established processes necessary for victim identification, referral and assistance. As a result, many victims are not afforded the protections to which they are entitled. There is no quick or easy way to ensure that those who most need our assistance and protection will receive it. However, the starting point is quite clear: we must make it clear that all migrants are entitled to the full realization of their rights. In order to achieve this, we must change the current toxic narrative on migration. We must seize the opportunity to campaign for a fundamental shift in public perceptions of migrants and migration. Xenophobic language and hate speech should have no place in political discourse or media communication. Migration is not a problem to be solved but a reality to be managed. In tackling human trafficking and other forms of exploitation, it is imperative that we affirm that migrants’ rights are human rights and that they are entitled to the same respect and dignity to which all persons are entitled. We must all strive for this and remain united in the fight against human trafficking.

IOM Director General
Ambassador William Lacy Swing
According to the United Nations International Migration Report 2015, the number of migrants globally has continued to increase in the last fifteen years, reaching 244 million in 2015: a 22 million increase from 2010, and the highest post-World War II. Presently, 67 per cent of all international migrants are living in just 20 countries.

Pakistan has a large diaspora living abroad, estimated at around 6 million and mostly residing in European, Gulf, Middle Eastern, and North American countries. In Pakistan, irregular migrants pay money to smuggling networks to facilitate their travel to destination countries by land, air or sea. In 2015 alone approximately 116,000 Pakistanis were deported from various countries, with almost a quarter of these deportees being sent back from the Islamic Republic of Iran while attempting to reach Europe via Turkey and Greece.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the sole guardian of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, and against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air. The UNODC Country Office Pakistan (UNODC COPAK) in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan through its Country Programme, aims to build the capacity of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to effectively prevent, pursue, prosecute and protect victims of trafficking in partnership with other law enforcement and criminal justice agencies in the country and the region.

Under UNODC’s Country Programme, specialist training courses and workshops have been organized in various cities of Pakistan to enhance the knowledge and skills of FIA officials from the Anti Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) in identifying, investigating and prosecuting cases of human trafficking and migrant smuggling, based on the universal human rights approach. With the technical assistance provided by UNODC, the FIA has established a Research and Analysis Centre (RAC) at its headquarters in Islamabad, the first of its kind in the country, to collect data on trends and patterns related to irregular migration. Additionally, the Centre has enabled the FIA to develop a National Report highlighting the push and pull factors along with compiling national and provincial statistics on human trafficking and migrant smuggling cases. In an attempt to increase regional cooperation, a large-scale conference was jointly organized in Karachi in 3015 by the UNODC Country Office and the FIA, in which delegates from over 50 source, transit and destination countries participated, along with the representatives of various international organizations, to discuss and develop a collective response to this global crisis.

UNODC Pakistan remains committed to raising awareness at community level of the dangers associated with irregular migration attempts and endeavors, and to continue working in close partnership with the Government of Pakistan to overcome the common challenges posed by human trafficking and migrant smuggling through facilitating the GoP in meeting the global targets under Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNODC Country Representative
Cesar Guedes

The Federal Investigation Agency is the lead organization dealing with human trafficking and migrant smuggling in Pakistan, and UNODC has been able to develop and implement an extensive support and assistance program for the FIA as per the needs of the Agency, consistent with the directions of the Ministry of Interior. We look forward to continued collaboration with our international partners in our global fight against human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

Additional Director General,
Federal Investigation Agency, Mr. Wajid Zia
Celebrating the One UN project that brought human security to Sindh

Improving the living standard of the common people in Pakistan is core agenda of the United Nations. In July, the One UN project Livelihood Restoration, Protection and Sustainable Empowerment of Vulnerable Peasant Communities in the Sindh Province (LRP) was celebrated in a closing ceremony.

Mr. Neil Buhne, UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, said the project has improved peoples’ lives and was unique in giving people a voice, choice and dignity. The project achieved this in a number of ways, including micro-enterprise development initiatives and improved agriculture production, irrigation systems and soil management. It improved women’s role in household and community-level decision making and improved their access to national identity cards. As well, land tenancy agreements for landless women farmers are a landmark achievement.

Two beneficiaries of the project attended the ceremony and shared their experiences. Champa acknowledged the green skills training provided to her by the ILO, saying, “I was able to construct 2,000 smokeless, fuel-efficient and environment-friendly stoves. I thus earned a profit of 400,000 rupees and also managed to win the Entrepreneurship award from the governor of Sindh.” Nursing declared that he was getting three crops per season from his conservation agriculture plot and that his wife was able to set up a grocery shop, making them feel quite secure and resilient.

The three-year project funded by the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTHF) was jointly implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UN Women in Sindh’s Dadu and Mirpur Khas districts, and was steered by the Government of Sindh’s Planning & Development Department. It has helped bring economic security to rural communities and enhanced the livelihoods, skills and knowledge of peasant farmers and hari (landless) people. During the ceremony, the project was credited with successfully bringing human security to 11,800 families.
The Government of Pakistan and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) have identified six key Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs) around which the United Nations system in Pakistan has developed its framework for action (2013–2017). The SPAs reflect priorities identified through national and provincial consultations and a review of key national frameworks and strategies. Under the ONE UN Programme in Pakistan, each SPA is conveyed by different UN agencies on rotation for a period of two years.

A meeting was held in Islamabad to hand over SPA3: “Increased national resilience to disasters, crises and external shocks” from UN-Habitat Pakistan and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) from August 2016 to December 2017.

Mr. Neil Buhne, the UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, said, “Coordination among the UN agencies ensures improved joint resource mobilization, identification of gaps and needs as well as best practices and achievements.” He further highlighted the need to work more closely at the district levels in addition to the national and provincial levels.

The head of WFP Pakistan’s Policy and Programme Unit, Mr. William Affif, emphasized the need for a joint resilience strategy to achieve better coordination and results as well as the climate change adaptation initiatives under SPA 3. Drafting this strategy was recently initiated and climate change adaptation initiatives will remain a key priority area under SPA3.
My name is Lola Castro and I am the country director of the World Food Programme in Pakistan. In the World Food Programme in Pakistan we have a great task. Our task is to provide food and money to approximately 3.7 million people each month. How do we do it? Sometimes we encounter huge difficulties. Sometimes we have floods, or encounter excessive problems, but thanks to the support of our NGOs, and the support of the Government, we manage to reach all those people every month. This way we ensure food security and nutrition for children, women and men who are in rather difficult circumstances in remote areas of the country. Why I am motivated to work as humanitarian at the World Food Programme? Because every day we make the difference. We make the difference in the lives of millions providing nutrition and food security. And, really, in the 22 years I’ve been working with the World Food Programme I never had a day similar to the previous one and I met so many incredible people and so many people, national and international who want to do good and ensure that there is no more hunger nor undernourishment in the world. This is really a job I could do for the next 22 years.

Lola Castro

Lola Castro’s thoughts on World Humanitarian Day
“To remind the world the importance of humanitarians!”

“A reminder that together we stand and build a more humane world with a stronger commitment to end hunger and life-saving assistance.”

Rejoicing the ownership of humanitarian workers who sacrifice their lives to make this world a better place.

“To remember the sacrifices, hardships and restless efforts of all humanitarian workers to serve the humanity.”

Basic amenities available to all.
WFP’s Lola Castro interviewed on Perspective

World Food Programme (WFP) Pakistan Country Director and Representative Lola Castro appeared on the radio programme UN Perspective on Radio Pakistan. She spoke about WFP’s interventions and operations in Pakistan, with a special focus on Temporarily Displaced Persons (TDPs) and issues and challenges around nutrition and feeding, drought-affected areas, and education. Lola also shared WFP’s active partnership with the Government of Pakistan, UN agencies and other stakeholders in the efforts to achieve food security and nutrition in the country.

Agriculture highlighted on Radio Pakistan

Nasar Hayat, Assistant FAO Representative, was interviewed on Radio Pakistan’s programme UN Perspectives and spoke in detail about the agriculture sector in Pakistan. He said the sector not only directly contributes 22 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) but also employs 42 per cent of the labour force and is the backbone of the rural economy. He highlighted that the agriculture sector needs to resolve issues such as land holding, high cost of production, availability of credit to small farmers and development of market linkages.

Perspective on the state of Pakistan cities

UN-Habitat Country Representative Bella Evidente, along with Australian High Commissioner Margaret Adamson, appeared on the programme UN Perspective on Radio Pakistan to discuss the 2016 State of Pakistan Cities Report. They spoke about the government-led report that, with technical assistance from UN-Habitat and funding from the Australian Government, will present a well-informed and action-oriented analysis of the state of urbanisation across Pakistan that incorporates the economic alongside social, demographic, political and cultural aspects.
Stressing volunteerism to achieve SDGs

United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Country Programme Officer Md. Aktar Uddin was interviewed on UN Perspective on Radio Pakistan. He stressed the importance of volunteerism in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Pakistan, saying volunteerism is the key to engaging people and building community trust. He shared UNV’s activities in empowering youth and women, forming policies on volunteerism, campaigning on SDGs and mobilizing UN Volunteers to support peace and development in Pakistan.

UN Resident Coordinator speaks about IDPs

United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan Neil Buhne appeared on UN Perspective on Radio Pakistan and spoke about Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). He said, “The UN System is helping 1.7 million displaced people from FATA return to their homes and rebuild their communities.”
Cooperative endeavour is about empowerment, inclusion and sustainability. It is designed to uphold the principles of equality and democratic participation. It embodies the principle of the Sustainable Development Goals that no-one should be left behind. This year, we celebrate the International Day of Cooperatives under the theme: “Cooperatives: The power to act for a sustainable future”. We believe cooperatives can make significant contributions to the SDGs on employment, poverty, hunger, and equality.

On this International Day of Cooperatives, I urge Governments to create an enabling environment for cooperatives to thrive and grow. Let us harness the power of cooperatives to achieve the SDGs and create a world of dignity and opportunity for all.

Despite significant gains made in reducing poverty and improving opportunity and well-being for many people around the world, hundreds of millions remain desperate for a chance of a better future. Among those least served by previous development initiatives are girls, particularly those in their formative teenage years.

On this World Population Day, I urge all Governments, businesses and civil society to support and invest in teenage girls. Everyone deserves the benefits of economic growth and social progress. Let us work together to ensure a life of security, dignity and opportunity for all.
Nelson Mandela International Day 18 July

Nelson Mandela International Day is an opportunity to reflect on the life and work of a legend who embodied the highest values of the United Nations. As the United Nations sets out to implement the newly adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, let us seek to continue building on Nelson Mandela’s legacy of selflessness and deep sense of shared purpose. Let us all continue being inspired by Nelson Mandela’s lifelong example and his call to never cease working to build a better world for all.

International Day of Friendship 30 July

Friendship is a joy in itself, conferring happiness and a sense of wellbeing. And the accumulation of bonds of camaraderie around the world can contribute to fundamental shifts that are urgently needed to achieve lasting stability. On this International Day of Friendship, let us resolve to cherish and cultivate as many warm relationships as possible, enriching our own lives and enhancing the future.

World Youth Skills Day, 15 July

Today’s world has the largest generation of youth in history. Their needs and potential are increasingly recognized in the international community. I am proud to have made youth issues a priority, including by appointing the first-ever Youth Envoy to serve as a liaison between the United Nations and the world’s young people.

On this World Youth Skills Day, let us renew our resolve to invest more in empowering young people. When we do, they can better advance the broader mission of the United Nations for lasting peace, sustainable development and human rights for all.

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, 30 July

On this World Day against Trafficking in Persons, I urge everyone to recommit to protect, respect and fulfil the human rights of all migrants and refugees. Creating and supporting well-governed, safe and human rights-based migration and asylum procedures will be an important step towards ending the abhorrent practice of profiting from human despair and misery. I call on every nation -- whether country of origin, transit or destination -- to recognize our shared responsibility. As a first step, we need a strong legal basis for action. I encourage all States to adopt and implement the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocol on human trafficking as well as all core international human rights instruments.

International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples, 9 August

In September 2014, the first World Conference on Indigenous Peoples adopted an action oriented outcome document to achieve the ends of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As a direct result we now have a UN System Wide Action Plan to promote awareness and action to support the implementation of the UN Declaration, particularly at the country level.

On this International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples, I call on Governments everywhere to draw on the guidance of this international framework to improve access to education for indigenous people and to reflect their experiences and culture in places of learning. Let us commit to ensuring indigenous peoples are not left behind as we pursue the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals.
International Youth Day, 12 August

When we invest in youth, they can contribute to new markets, decent jobs, fair trade, sustainable housing, sustainable transport and tourism, and more opportunities that benefit the planet and people. I am proud that the United Nations is actively engaged in supporting young leaders who can carry out the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production patterns. I encourage all young people to become involved in advancing the SDGs and demanding action by their Governments. On International Youth Day, I urge others to join this global push for progress. Let us empower young people with the resources, backing and space they need to create lasting change in our world.

International Day Against Nuclear Tests, 29 August

On this International Day against Nuclear Tests, I call on the world to summon a sense of solidarity commensurate with the urgent need to end the dangerous impasse on this issue.

Since its adoption 20 years ago by the General Assembly, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has yet to enter into force. Given the catastrophic risks posed by nuclear weapons to our collective human and environmental security – even our very existence – we must reject this stalemate.

On this Day, I call on all countries and peoples to work for the CTBT’s entry into force as soon as possible so that we may advance toward a nuclear-weapon-free world.

World Humanitarian Day, 19 August

A record 130 million people are dependent on humanitarian assistance to survive. Grouped together, these people in need would comprise the tenth most populous nation on Earth. World Humanitarian Day is an annual reminder of the need to act to alleviate the suffering. It is also an occasion to honour the humanitarian workers and volunteers toiling on the frontlines of crises. I pay tribute to these dedicated women and men who brave danger to help others at far greater risk. Today, I urge everyone to sign on to the United Nations “World You’d Rather” campaign. Each one of us can make a difference. On this World Humanitarian Day, let us unite in the name of humanity and show that we cannot and will not leave any one behind.
The United Nations has a long-standing partnership with the people of Pakistan in support of national development goals. The United Nations has also been providing humanitarian assistance in case of natural disasters and crises. Led by the Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, United Nations works in all eight administrative areas of Pakistan through 19 resident organizations. Straddling humanitarian assistance and sustainable development, the work of the United Nations in Pakistan includes key areas such as education, health, water & sanitation, nutrition, economic growth, employment and livelihoods, resilience against disaster, governance, gender equality and social justice.

The One UN Programme for Pakistan, United Nations focuses on accelerating progress towards achievement of Millennium Development Goals, reducing poverty, promoting opportunities for youth as well as advancing gender equality and human rights both at national and sub-national levels.

United Nations encourages economic growth in Pakistan through supporting policies and programmes that link small farmers to markets, improving working conditions for women and supporting home-based and domestic workers. It will also assist the Government in strengthening democratic processes and institutions at the federal, provincial and local levels. Tackling the effects of climate change and reducing Pakistan’s vulnerabilities to natural disasters features especially prominently in the work of the United Nations in Pakistan.

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