Ministry of Commerce endorses trade project to uplift SMEs

Islamabad: 26th August: Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress, a project funded by the European Union and implemented by the International Trade Centre held its first National Project Steering Committee meeting in Islamabad on August 25, 2021, chaired by Federal Secretary Ministry of Commerce, Mr. Sualeh Ahmed Farooqi. Representatives from the Ministry of Planning and Development, Ministry of National Food Security and Research, and Ministry of Science and Technology validated the project’s inception phase, and pledged support for ongoing interventions.

Representative of the European Union and head of development cooperation Mr. Ovidiu Mic, representatives from International Trade Centre, chairs from the GRASP Sindh and Balochistan Project Steering Committees, and private sector representatives from horticulture and livestock sector also attended the meeting.

The committee members appreciated GRASP efforts focused on developing the small and medium enterprises into drivers of sustainable economic development, while keeping in mind the priorities of the government of Pakistan. The Secretary stated that “GRASP is a critical intervention as it is addressing key areas of rural poverty by targeting small businesses, nurturing them, and enabling them to grow in a holistic manner”.

Project Coordinator Mr. Azher Ali Choudhry while giving an overview of the scope of work to the committee members emphasized that Pakistan is one of the top ten countries most affected by climate change, and GRASP is working to address trade policies and business environment for SMEs in a global market while promoting climate smart interventions.
GRASP has helped communities affected by the Covid-19 pandemic by providing technical assistance, capacity building, and trainings of policy implementing agencies along with direct inputs such as the vaccination of over 60,000 livestock animals. Implemented in 23 districts of Sindh and Balochistan, the project is ensuring that women are a part of its climate conscious interventions. GRASP is also supporting the provincial and federal government in improving policies and laws regarding SMEs.

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UNICEF ED - SRSG

JOINT STATEMENT

Joint statement by UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore and Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict Virginia Gamba on the 25th anniversary of Graça Machel’s seminal report on the impact of war on children

UN has verified and reported 266,000 cases of grave rights violations against children in conflict zones since 2005

Download fact sheet on the impact of conflict on children here


“The international community heeded the call and took action based on Machel’s recommendations, with the General Assembly establishing the Office of the SRSG on children and armed conflict, and the Security Council establishing a coordinated UN monitoring and reporting mechanism to continue to track the impact of war on children.

“Since then, The United Nations (UN) has verified 266,000 cases of grave violations against children in more than 30 conflict situations across Africa,
Asia, the Middle East and Latin America over the past 16 years. This includes more than 104,100 children killed and maimed, 93,000 children recruited and used in fighting and support roles, 25,700 children abducted, and another 14,200 child victims of sexual violence.

“In 2020, the UN verified a total of 26,425 violations against children in conflict situations. This corresponds to 72 violations occurring every single day or three violations every hour. It also marked the seventh year in a row with at least 20,000 verified violations.

“These are only the cases that can be verified through the UN-led Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, established in 2005 to systematically document the most egregious violations against children in conflict zones. The true figures are undoubtedly much higher.

“But these are not mere statistics. Rather, they represent young lives that have been lost or otherwise devastated by horrifying trauma and suffering. Indeed, many children suffer from more than one grave violation. In 2020, the UN verified that about 10 per cent of the nearly 20,000 affected children were victims of two or more grave violations.

“Despite these continuing impacts on children, significant progress has been made since the report was released, to protect children from conflict. This includes the implementation of global measures and strategies to help keep children safe. Notable examples are the Paris Principles which aim to prevent the recruitment and use of children in armed forces and groups and the Safe School Declaration to strengthen the protection of education from attack and restrict use of schools and universities for military purposes.

“In addition, the UN continues to work directly with families and communities to reduce children’s vulnerabilities and provide them with the support they need to recover from war. Over the years, the UN and its partners have worked relentlessly to secure the release of thousands of children associated with armed forces and armed groups, including 12,643 children in 2020, and provide them with appropriate care and reintegration services.

“Across conflict situations, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG CAAC) supports the engagement of the UN with all parties to conflict to enter into written timebound commitments to end and prevent violations. UNICEF, through its programmatic presence, together with the co-chairs of the country task forces...
on monitoring and reporting and UN child protection monitors and experts, assists in identifying entry points for engagement with commanders from armed forces and groups to negotiate concrete measures to protect children. Since 2005, 35 Action Plans and an increasing number of unilateral commitments have been signed by parties to conflict in 17 conflict situations, and have put in place measures to:

- Protect children from the impact of war
- Prevent grave violations from occurring
- Release children associated with armed forces and armed groups and reintegrate them in their communities,
- Protect children from sexual violence,
- Protect schools and hospitals and
- Hold perpetrators accountable.

“Nevertheless, grave rights violations continue, pointing to a widespread and appalling disregard for the rights and wellbeing of children by parties to conflict. At this time, just 18 of the 61 parties to conflict listed in the annexes of the 2021 Secretary-General’s annual report on children and armed conflict have a joint Action Plan or similar commitments with the UN to prevent grave rights violations against children. This is unacceptable. All parties listed should agree and adhere to an Action Plan to protect children and to put in place measures to prevent violations against children from occurring in the first place.

“As Graça Machel said 25 years ago, ‘The impact of conflict on children is everyone’s responsibility, and it must be everyone’s concern’. Parties to conflict and those with influence over them, as well as the international community, should heed this call to action and redouble efforts to end grave violations of children’s rights. All children have the right to be protected from harm and to live in peace.”

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UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. Follow UNICEF on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/unicef) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/unicef).
UN Habitat PRESS RELEASE

UN Habitat in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change (MOCC), Sindh Environmental Protection Agency, Directorate of Urban Planning and Development, Planning and Development Department Government of Sindh, held a virtual workshop, “Workshop for Slum Up-gradation, and GHG Emission Reduction Project”. This workshop presented the survey findings of Katchi Abadis for brainstorm on introduction of green technologies for low emission development in urban area, especially Kachi Abadi in Karachi. The workshop was attended by prominent stakeholders from local government, experts in the field of human settlement and green technology notably Ms. Yaseem Lari, Mr. Arif Hassan, and Mr. Aminddin Abro with various think tanks.

The workshop commenced with the opening remarks from UN-Habitat, working for mainstreaming climate change into urban planning and development with community-based approach.

The Director Urban Affairs, MOCC Pakistan in his remarks appreciated all the participants and thanked UN Habitat for gathering all under one roof. Thus, this research project could be an excellent opportunity for Kachi Abadi in Karachi to showcase the potential of slum upgrading with green technology. The Chief of Housing Settlement, Planning and Development Government of Sindh in his remarks on behalf of Chairman P&D thanked UN Habitat and participates for organizing this workshop and noted that this is a manifestation of collaboration and singular mindset to work for the betterment of Karachi. He assured full support from the Planning and Development Department Government of Sindh.

Mr. Lee, Seung Hyun, the Executive Vice President of the Safety and Engineering Group, EWP in his keynote remarks appreciated UN Habitat and all stakeholders for their interest, commitment and active participation shown
in this workshop. He said we must increase resilience against rapid urbanization and effects of climate change by building adaptive capacity, but the most imperative part is to introduce the green zero emission technology and raising awareness campaigns for behavioral change.

The workshop solicited opinion from the participants and the experts on the following two major questions: 1) How to uplift the living condition in Katchi Abadis and 2) Which communities do find most suitable for project implementation.

Arch Yasmeen Lari introduced the low carbon technology based on the bamboo structure and climate friendly intervention, and provided meaningful comments on the project.

Mr. Arif Hassan pointed out low carbon technology and climate smart techniques become more important, for example climate smart paints for roof, wind turbine, solar water pump and solar power for housing. At the end of the workshop, 6 more settlements were finally discussed and UN-Habitat Pakistan project team will have further investigation for situation analysis and needs assessment.

Programme Manager UN Habitat Pakistan thanked the participants and the experts for their active participation and pointed out that this workshop is not only provided an excellent opportunity to for working jointly exploration of GHG emission reduction and sustainable urban development opportunities. Secretary Sindh Climate Change and Coastal Development in his closing remarks thank UN Habitat. With this note the workshop was declared closed “we all need to join hands and work together for the betterment of this city that have provided us so much”.