

# Media Update

5 June 2024

## UNDP

PRESS RELEASE

### UNDP and the Government of China Strengthen Manufacturing Capacities to Empower Youth and SMEs in Pakistan

**Islamabad, 04 June, 2024** – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pakistan, with support from the Government of China, successfully completed the ‘*Strengthening PPE-related Manufacturing Capacities in Pakistan*’ project. To celebrate the occasion, a closing ceremony was held in Islamabad, which was attended by high-level officials including the Counsellor for Economic Commercial Affairs from the Government of China, Mr. Yang Guangyuan, and the Chairman of the Prime Minister Youth Programme, Mr. Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan. Representatives from the Planning and Development Departments in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Sindh Education Foundation, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority, and Technology Upgradation and Skill Development Company, as well as selected project beneficiaries from Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, were also present at the event.

The closing ceremony highlighted the collaborative efforts between the Government of China, UNDP Pakistan, and Federal and Provincial Governments to support youth and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in pursuing employment, income generation, and business development opportunities in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Punjab. In this regard, the project equipped 17 Common Facility Centers in the three provinces with 858 new and state-of-the-art industrial training and production equipment, which will be used by the youth workforce, as well as MSMEs to

increase the supply of their products, and match the quality demands of the markets.

The initiative will benefit 10,000 young people over a period of three years with at least 50% of the beneficiaries being young women. At the newly equipped centres, trainees will gain hands-on technical skills in industrial manufacturing and production processes of Personal Protective Equipment, apparel/textiles, plastic goods, light furniture, and other commercial goods production. Additionally, MSMEs are also being offered access to the available facilities at the centres to assist in their commercial production work. Moreover, through the project's commercial production and income generation model, the centres would be able to sustain themselves in the long run.

In her speech, Ms. Van Nguyen, the Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Pakistan highlighted that the project's interventions would enhance business development opportunities for enterprises and the vulnerable youth of Pakistan, enabling them to become more resilient and economically empowered. She said that *“With the right technologies and technical support provided by this project, Pakistan can leverage its labour-intensive MSMEs to produce export-quality products that are in high demand, both locally and internationally. This approach not only ensures increased productivity, but also creates employment opportunities and improves prospects of income generation for Pakistan’s youth.”*

Also speaking at the occasion, Mr. Yang Guangyuan, Chief Guest and the Minister Counsellor for Economic Commercial Affairs from the Government of China said that *“This project is truly small and smart. By teaching a person to fish, instead of giving him a fish, we could possibly help to feed him for a lifetime. I am delighted to know, that in the next 3 years, more than 10,000 young Pakistanis will get involved, with 50% of them being women, which will lay a solid foundation for relevant manufacturing industries in Pakistan. The future of Pakistan relies on young people. The future of Pakistan's economy relies on export-oriented industry. The project combines these ‘two futures’. We are sincerely honoured, together with our close partner UNDP, to play a role in it.”*

Mr. Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, Chairman of Prime Ministers Youth Programme highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts in achieving

sustainable development. *"We believe that the holistic development of youth should be achieved through collaborative and cross-sectional approaches. Projects like this demonstrate that together, we can achieve great things. We also appreciate the support of our friends from China and UNDP in helping us build a brighter future for our youth, and look forward to continued collaboration and support in our efforts to empower the youth of Pakistan."*

This project was initiated under UNDP's Stabilization and Inclusive Development Programme (SIDP), which aims to contribute to the economic development of vulnerable groups, particularly youth, women, and people with disabilities, through skills development, access to meaningful employment and by catalyzing the MSME sector. The programme focuses on strengthening business-enabling environments by providing technical support to public institutions and the private sector for job-rich economic development. Additionally, SIDP equips vulnerable groups with the necessary skills to remove barriers to education and promote socially cohesive and resilient societies.

#####

### **About UNDP:**

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

Learn more at [undp.org](http://undp.org)

### **For more information, please contact:**

Ramsha Nadeem | Communications Officer | [ramsha.nadeem@undp.org](mailto:ramsha.nadeem@undp.org)