

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: Challenges & Opportunities for Asia

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA April 17, 2017



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

19<sup>th</sup> International ATR Conference was organized in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia & Bali Indonesia from April 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017. The main purpose of this year conference was to deliberate on opportunities and challenges regarding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Asia and in Pakistan, secondly to develop possible strategies to become more aware and proactive for achieving SDGs and thirdly to ensure exchange of learning sharing and cross-fertilization ideas.

This year 52 participants from Organizational, Professional and General membership category travel to make the conference a successful one. The main objectives of 19<sup>th</sup> ATR conference was:-

- To provide an opportunity to Network members' professionals from across Pakistan to come together for mutual learning through experience-sharing and cross-fertilization of ideas;
- To promote indigenous models of development internationally and learn from international best practices for replication in Pakistan;
- To facilitate cross-border organizational and people-to-people connections to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Guest of Honour and Key Note Speaker of the conference was Dr. Zulkarnain Kheda, Vice President for Education and Training Business Unit, Serba Dinamik-Malaysia and session panelists were from Pakistan Development sector to deliberate on SDGs.

Apart from the conference all, the participants in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia spent very joyful time, while enjoying the beautiful national and historical sites as well as the tourists places. Bali, Indonesia was opted as optional destination to make the trip more exclusive and full of delight.



## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

The international conference on Sustainable Development Goals: Challenges & Opportunities for Asia commenced on April 17, 2017 in Swiss Garden Hotel Kuala Lumpur as per following agenda:-

<b>Registration</b>		<b>0930 – 1000</b>
Welcome Note	(1000 – 1010)	Board of Director, HRD Network
Conference Opening & Moderation	(1010 – 1020)	HRD Network, Pakistan
<b>Session: 1020 – 1040</b>		
<b>Key Note Speaker: Dr. Zulkarnain Kedah</b> , Vice President for Education and Training Business Unit, Serba Dinamik –Malaysia		
<b>Guest Speakers:</b>		
SDGs: Environmental Sustainability through Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and best practices	(1040-1100)	<b>Mr. Abid Hussain</b> , Chief Executive Officer, Sukaar Foundation, Pakistan
Q&A	1100-1110	
SDGs: Inclusive Education and Role of Private Sector	(1110-1130)	<b>Mr. Naseer Iqbal</b> - National Education Advisor, REPID (Rural Empowerment and Institutional Development), Pakistan
Q&A	1130 – 1140	
Networking over Tea	1140 – 1200	
SDGs: Economic Growth and Role of Private Sector	1200 – 1220	<b>Mr. Saleem Ahmad</b> , Executive Director HUIRA SWAT, Pakistan
Q&A	1220 – 1230	
<b>1230- 1250</b>		
<b>Key Note Speaker: Mr. AAhad M. Osman-Gani</b> , Dean & Managing Director IIUM-CRESCENT & Graduate School of Management-Malaysia		
Q&A	1250 – 1300	
Group Photo & Exchange of Souvenirs	1300 – 1315	
Vote of Thanks	(1315 – 1325)	HRD Network
Networking Lunch	1325	

The conference Moderator Ms. Umm-i-Kalsoom (Head of Office & Manager Programs- HRDN) formally welcome all participants and invited Mr. Shahid Iqbal Khatak- Professional Member HRD Network to formally present welcome note to the conference audience on behalf of Chairman HRD Network and brief the participants from Malaysia about the aims and objectives of the Network.

## WELCOME NOTE- CHAIRPERSON HRD NETWORK

Mr. Shahid Iqbal Khatak welcomed all participants in 19<sup>th</sup> ATRs on behalf of HRD Network Chairman at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He applauded ATRs as a legacy of learning and flagship events of HRD Network's from last 18 years. He said it's been organized regularly to provide an opportunity to members from diverse cultural background and bring them together to learn new things especially the successful development practices.

While highlighting the current year ATR theme, Mr. Shahid said that this year's ATR themed around Sustainable Development Goals: Challenges & Opportunities for Asia. He said let's acknowledge and appreciate the government and leaders of Malaysia for bringing phenomenal revival to their economy and development works and we will learn about their best practices during the session.

He said exposure to different experiences in different cultures helps development practitioners work with people from diverse backgrounds and learn new skills; hence, exchange opportunities like the ATR helps improve people-to-people contacts between people from various sectors and cultures as well as promote tolerance and pluralism in addition to learning and best practices.

## CONFERENCE OPENING- HEAD OF OFFICE HRD NETWORK

Ms. Umm-i-Kalsoom, Head of Office HRD Network, formally opened the 19<sup>th</sup> International ATR Conference and said we looked forward to share positive insights with honorable guests from Malaysia about the best practices of development/social sector of Pakistan to achieve Sustainable Development Goals the 2030 agenda.

She said that to achieve these SDGs where there are numerous opportunities we have challenges as well. While highlighting the most significant challenges, she said it is important to note down here that the overarching challenge for the developing countries and particularly in context with Asia is that the Governments have limited funds and have to make difficult decisions on what to invest in for the betterment of their citizens. They need quality data to understand the impact of their investments and make appropriate decisions – which these countries lack. There are other challenges in context with Asia region and are listed below;

1. SDGs cover a broad range of interconnected issues and thus, require an ambitious plan for financing and full range of means of implementation.
2. Seeking high levels of global GDP growth, the SDGs can undermine ecological objectives.
3. '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', ignore local context and promote a 'one policy for all' notion.
4. For developing countries like Pakistan that could not achieve the MDGs with its 40 indicators, achieving the SDGs with their 169 indicators is even more challenging.
5. Financing SDGs is a major issue for developing countries particularly in Asia region where lack of coordination, disjunction between different departments and lack of capacity at state institutions are serious impediments in advancing the SDGs.
6. The cost to eradicate extreme poverty would require about \$66 billion dollars per year; UN estimates that developing countries including Asia will face a gap of \$2.5 trillion per year if they are to achieve the SDGs.

Thus, Ms. Kalsoom said, we HRDN looked forward to an insightful exchange of ideas and the discovery of newer knowledge that help to achieve SDGs the 2030 agenda.





## SESSION - SDGs: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITES FOR ASIA

In this session, a key note was delivered by Dr. Zulkarnian Kedah, Vice President for Education and Training Business Unit, Serba Dinamik –Malaysia and session speakers were from Pakistan who deliberated on SDGs while presenting best practice by development sector of Pakistan that aimed at achieving the SDGs. The panelists at this session included:-

- Mr. Abid Hussain Channa**, Chief Executive Officer, Sukaar Foundation, Pakistan
- Mr. Naseer Iqbal**, National Education Advisor, REPID, Pakistan
- Mr. Saleem Ahmad**, Chief Executive Officer, Hujra Village Support Organization, Pakistan

### KEY NOTE SPEECH:

The keynote was delivered by Dr. Zulkarnian Kedah, Vice President for Education and Training Business Unit, Serba Dinamik –Malaysia. Dr. Kedah is also a health and safety trainer certified by Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB), the United Kingdom. Previously, in 2013, he was appointed as Chief Executive Officer at the International Islamic College (IIC) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia following his outstanding performance as Assistant Professor and Researcher with the International Islamic University Malaysia since 2009.

Dr. Zulkarnain began his keynote address by pointing out that despite being a developing country, Malaysia is facing a lot of challenges in providing adequate job opportunities to its youths. Unemployment rate, particularly among graduates is rapidly increasing. According to a former Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar, approximately 400,000 youths were unemployed in 2015 in which 40% were graduates while 60% were non-graduates.

He said that there are at least three reasons cited for the lack of employability among these graduates.

1. There has been a mismatch between the training provided at the universities with the skill sets required by the employers. The employers found that the existing university syllabus does not reflect the current skill requirements needed by the industry.
2. Employers cited the graduates' lack of communication skills as another major setback.

The private sector has been reluctant to work with the universities to provide relevant industrial training to increase the employability of graduates. Also, they tend not to have structured internship programme which can prepare the graduates for the real world of working life.

### Successful Models in Human Resource Development in Malaysia

Dr. Zulkarnain very nicely discussed the corrective measures taken by the government to tackle with these challenges and briefed the conference audience about successful models in human resource development in Malaysia. He said; to tackle the unemployment issue among graduates, there are a number of government agencies which have been assigned to address this problem and to come up with practical and impactful solutions such as two models namely:-

1. *Yayasan Peneraju Pendidikan Bumiputera (YPPB) and*
2. *Human Resource Development Fund (HRDF).*

While talking about YPPB he said it is a government agency under the Prime Minister's office which was established in 2012. To date, it has achieved 25% of its target to develop 40,000 talents by 2020. This was achieved through the introduction of 117 programmes at a cost of RM206 million, sponsored by Unit Peneraju Agenda Bumiputera (TERAJU) which is a strategic unit under the Prime Minister's office as well as government linked and private companies.



In other words, the foundation has successfully developed 10,000 talents in which many graduates have found decent jobs with good income.

Another model, HRDF, is a dynamic organisation under the Ministry of Human Resources which was established in 1993. Governed by the Human Resources Development Act 2001, HRDF was given a mandate by the Malaysian Government to catalyse the development of competent local workforce that will contribute to Malaysia's vision of becoming a high-income country. Recently, HRDF launched its human capital strategic initiative, aimed at contributing towards the national human capital agenda of creating 35 percent skilled Malaysian workforce by the year 2020.

The four initiatives namely the 1Malaysia Outplacement Centre (1MOC), the Train and Replace Programme (T&R), the Graduates Enhancement Programme for Employability (GENERATE), and the Rural Accelerated Industrial Skill for Employment (RAISE) will be funded via the 30% HRDF Pool Fund, government allocation and private partnerships, which will run on a continuous basis based on the industry requirements.

Dr. Zulkarnain focused on third important point of his key note and said that I would like to share with you is the importance of learning from others. He said last year, the Human Resources Development Fund in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia organised a 2 day job fair participated by more than 60 local companies from the private sector. They had more than 49,000 applicants from different parts of the country and out of these, 21,115 of them were hired and offered various jobs by the participating companies. Another example, through a knowledge transfer between the Malaysian government and Alibaba group of companies led by Jack Ma, Malaysia has an ambitious project to position itself as the leading Digital Free Trade Zone in the Southeast Asia. Insya Allah, this major initiative is expected to double the growth rate of local SME's goods exports by 2025, as well as create 60,000 jobs by then.

Dr. Zulkarnain concluded his key note and said the issue of unemployment, especially among graduates, has to be addressed quickly and decisively. Therefore, implementing successful models and learning from others are essential for us to overcome these challenges and produce the desired results. He said it is hoped that this sharing will give vital insights to our distinguished leaders, policy makers, trend setters, social activists and educators alike not only to enhance the education and training models in Pakistan but also to increase the employment rate among its graduates and non-graduates as well.

## **SDGs: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION, BEST PRACTICES**

Mr. Abid Hussain, leads Sukaar Foundation as Chief Executive Officer. Under his supervision, SF has been growing day by day that, build trust among International partners who offered extended support to SF in developing organizational systems and community development projects. He is development professional possessing experience of around thirty years, having sound background in the field of social development with professional background in social mobilization, community development, primary education and so on.

Mr. Channa discussed that climate change is becoming a global issue the earth becoming warmer in each upcoming decade is encountered with multifaceted challenges including floods, droughts and other disasters. Climate change intimates these disasters are more frequent in last few decades.



Taking the case of Tharparkar district, the most water scarce desert region of Pakistan, has witnessed heavy rains and consequent droughts in last two decades. He said, Water scarcity already affects every continent of the world. Around 1.2 billion people, or almost one- fifth of the world's population, live in areas of physical scarcity. Pakistan is among the world's 36 most water-stressed countries and the situation gets worse as the population increases.

While talking about Tharparkar, he said the desert district, is regarded as most water insecure region of Pakistan. The agro-pastoral livelihood of Tharparkar is dependent on rain feed water, however, the area is facing intense droughts and acute water scarcity for the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Further he said that that statistics collected by Pakistan's Metrological Department suggest that there happens erratic rainfall and mild droughts. There exists poor rainwater harvesting practices. International examples are available where even 50 mm of annual rainfall is effectively harvested and prudently utilized. Worldwide 95% rainfall is harvested whereas in Pakistan it is less than 20% and still much lesser in Thar Desert. Domestic water needs of Tharparkar is only 0.25% of total rainfall per annum. If recorded water harvesting practices (0.06%) are enhanced just four times higher, they could fulfill water needs of entire Tharparkar as per PCRWR survey.



Mr. Channa highlighted the best practices and said Sukaar Foundation a local NGO working in Sindh Province has always valued & used the folk wisdom with modern techniques. Peoples of Tharparkar do harvest rainwater since centuries to meet drinking water needs. Sukaar has assisted in upgradation of traditional rainwater harvesting practices through technical innovations with financial support of WaterAid Pakistan. Rainwater harvesting approaches are introduced and promoted at all levels including household, hamlet and village levels.

- 1) House Hold Level Rainwater Harvesting
  - a. Nadi Pond
  - b. Roof Top Water Tanks
- 2) Hamlet Level Rainwater Harvesting
  - a. Chonro Pond
- 3) Village Level Rainwater Harvesting
  - a. Chalho Pond
  - b. Upgradation & Rehabilitation of Natural Ponds (Tarai)

He summed up his session with way forward and adaption & Mitigation that based on 14 years working experience in Tharparkar as Water expert Sukaar to realized to develop Water Security Planning for Tharparkar to address;

- Water Governance
- Management of Quantity of Water
- Protection of Quality of Water
- Management of Thar Ecosystems





## SDGs: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. Naseer Iqbal, National Education Advisor REPID and former International Program Specialist, Reach Out to Asia/Qatar Foundation, Qatar. Having worked with the International Rescue Committee, American Refugee Committee and Orphan Refugee Aid, in his professional capacity, Mr. Iqbal has regional/international learning and exposure in managing in various portfolios including working with refugees and IDPs to promote community-based education and accelerated learning.

Mr. Naseer spoke about the forth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) declares that, by 2030, the world ought to **"ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning."** While highlighting the role of Private Sector Mr. Naseer talked in detail and said that providing access to education and schooling is one possible inroad. It's encouraging to see education initiatives move away from a very traditional method of schooling and into much more long-distance learning.

He said we are in need of patience because changing a status is not necessarily super expensive, but what is needed is something that is much rarer than money — and that is patience. On the other hand he said there is huge responsibility of donors as well because they should realize that you can't change this in one or two budget cycles.



Mr. Naseer discussed in detailed the role of private sector and shared that:-

- During the discourse on education, when it comes to private sector players, the reference point is usually corporate players or their corporate foundations. While in reality, there are several non-state players that engage with the education sector in many meaningful ways.
- NGOs, international and corporate foundations, and private trusts and societies that have set up schools are also playing a vital role. By not including other non-state players in the discourse, there is a risk of not making a distinction between private participation and privatization, which takes the debate to a different trajectory.
- It is perhaps for this reason that Public Private Partnership (PPP) in education has not found wide acceptance, because it is perceived that it can make education unaffordable for disadvantaged sections of society.

Looking at private sector involvement in education from the point of view of privatization, there is a difference between the state and the private sector perspective. In many Asian countries, the Constitution mandates that the State provides education to all its citizens as their right, whereas for the private sector, the recipient of education is a consumer. This becomes the basis for viewing each other with caution.

**NGO initiatives:** It is seen that NGOs are engaged in several activities that are aimed at improving access to education of the disadvantaged sections of society. Their strength lies in working with communities and mobilizing them. Being close to communities, their most significant contribution is to engage them with the education system to demand good quality education for their children. Greater success is achieved where there is a balance between encouraging communities to demand education as their right and extending support to the existing system by filling the gaps.

**International NGOs (INGOs)** have played a significant role in adopting a rights-based approach and support civil society groups to demand good quality education. They contribute toward policy development and support initiatives within communities. INGOs, through their work, have helped in linking education with child rights and the development model. **Their support in providing the vital link between grassroots level work with advocacy has been helpful in encouraging people to demand education as a right for their children.**

More recently, public sector undertakings have been directed to allocate a specified percentage of their profits to their CSR activities. This is likely to translate to significant support to social sectors, including in the areas of education and health. Although it is difficult to estimate total allocation of resources by non-government players, it may be assumed by looking at their activities that their contribution is substantial. Furthermore, with the mandate given to public sector undertakings to allocate part of their profits to CSR-related activities, there is the likelihood of enhanced resource expenditure on the education sector. Non-government players have the option of continuing with their existing activities or pool their resources — financial and technical — to support implementation of the inclusive education.

### **SDGs: Economic Growth and Role of Private Sector:**

Mr. Saleem Ahmad, CEO of Hujra Village Support Organization, presented his model, whose 15-minute documentary was screened for the ATR participants. The model involved honeybee-keeping in Swat and was funded by USAID.

Mr. Saleem Ahmed said that the government of Pakistan is committed and more enthusiastic towards the SDGs. It has internalized the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as National Goals and this is a major policy shift. In February 2016 the National Assembly of Pakistan passed a unanimous resolution to adopt the 2030 Agenda and SDGs as the national development agenda. After 18 amendment most of the government functions has been devolved to provinces. At provincial level the planning and development department is mandated to coordinate and comply with achievement of SDGs. He discussed the opportunities and challenges in implementing SDGs:-

#### **Opportunities:**

- Experience of MGDs: Build on progress to date and scale up
- Draw on strengths/advantages of appropriate partners: “leadership” not “ownership”
- Institutional arrangement and government committeemen
- The growing private sector and foreign investment (CPEC)

#### **Challenges:**

- Localizing the global agenda nationally
- Institutional arrangement and awareness regarding mainstreaming SDGs in government functions and private sector
- Demonstrate accountability and transparency: increase trust with government, among agencies/partners and with the public
- Inclusion of those who have not benefited from the previous development efforts
- Governance
- Accurate data for planning and impact evaluation
- Unpredictable security situation

Mr. Saleem briefed the conference audience about major and important projects implemented with public private partnership in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, few are as following:-





1. **Rehabilitation and development of Malam Jabba resort:** In 2014, the Tourism Corporation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa leased Malam Jabba to the Samson Group of Companies for reconstruction of the ski resort and hotel, in a bid to boost tourism in the area again.
2. **Introduction of Health insurance policy (SehatInsaf Card):** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has introduced Sehat Insaf Card which is an innovative public private partnership model. It is a voucher scheme that will increase access of the underprivileged population of the province to quality health services. The programme would benefit 1.8 million families (14 million People) which constitute 50% of the underprivileged population of all districts of the province.
3. **Establishment of Water sanitation companies in KP:** The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (GoKP) has established an independent utility company by the name of Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP). The rationale for setting up this company is to amalgamate, under one corporate entity, all drinking water, sanitation and solid waste management services in Peshawar City currently being provided by various government entities, departments and sections. This integration will greatly improve the overall planning and service delivery in the city by making infrastructure development, and operations and maintenance more efficient and effective.

Mr. Saleem in his concluding remarks said that in every country, there are a huge number of small and medium enterprises investing in areas like education, health, environment and other welfare programs for employees and society as a whole to increase the healthy growth of the society. The number of companies practicing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is on the rise in recent years. He said we are in need to involve civil society and the academia to make a powerful CSR strategy for Pakistan.

## CLOSING REMARKS:

Mr. Mubarak Ali Sarwar Chief Executive Officer AGAHE presented a vote of thanks to all conference participants from Malaysia and Pakistan. He said that the HRDN held its 19th ATR in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia on the topic of SDGs: Challenges and Opportunities for Asia and shared best development practices and discussed the challenges and opportunities in achieving SDGs. The ATR was held from April 15-22, 2017 and involved the sharing of broader ideas from both countries.

The Pakistani guest speakers from development sector focused on Inclusive Education, climate Change best practices and mitigation mechanism and Economic Growth and linkages between the government and local communities. The Malaysian Academia and development practitioners aimed to enhance employment and the impartation of quality education from different backgrounds.





## REFRESHING MOVEMENTS:

One of the objectives of holding International ATR Conference is to provide an opportunity to the participants to have cultural exposure through sightseeing visits and get-togethers to make the event more enjoyable. The second day of the conference a city trip was arranged for all participants to explore Kuala Lumpur. All the participants enjoyed and on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2016 fly back to Pakistan. Around 45-47 participants enjoyed a three day optional trip in Bali Indonesia while enjoying the rich culture and sightseeing while spending quality time together.

