

Telenor Pakistan and UNDP sign MoU to jointly pursue convergent development goals in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD – May 24, 2016: Building on its efforts to empower Pakistani youth, Telenor Pakistan and the Royal Norwegian Embassy/Government of Norway have jointly inaugurated the second community center in Dera Ismail Khan. Part of the comprehensive UNDP Youth and Social Cohesion project, the joint inauguration was followed by the signing of a MoU between UNDP and Telenor Pakistan which sets the framework for both partners to cooperatively pursue convergent development goals in Pakistan.

The development is a first-stage constituent of a 3-stage initiative starting in 2015, wherein Telenor Pakistan provided material and technical assistance to UNDP in the construction of three community centers in UC Musazai of District DI Khan. Telenor Pakistan will be extending similar support for the second and third stages of the project that comprise interventions and expansion of services and resources respectively.

With Pakistan currently experiencing a dramatic growth in its youth population, the youth bulge can both be seen as force for good - with great potential for generating economic growth; and potential disaster - should large segments become unemployed, criminalized and violent. The 3-year initiative aims at leveraging Pakistan's immensely rich youth potential towards triggering positive, long-term development.

"We are pleased to be progressing in a partnership that brings us closer to achieving our goal of empowering the Pakistani society. Although we still have a long way to go, we are already making headway and the second community center is ready to engage the youth of KPK in constructive pursuits," said Michael Foley, CEO Telenor Pakistan while inaugurating the center. "We aim to provide the unemployed and disillusioned youth in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa with opportunities to interact and engage in social/communal spaces, free from pernicious narratives and discourses, so they are less likely to be drawn towards anti-state elements, and more towards alternative pathways of positive development," he added.

The UNDP Youth and Social Cohesion project addresses the need to improve data and analysis on conflict and radicalization, while enabling conflict-prone communities to engage at-risk youths. The project will provide the government and civil society actors with technical expertise and evidenced-based data from its mapping and research interventions. The project will also work with communities in selected conflict-prone districts of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa to strengthen youth participation and engagement in decision-making and providing facilities for community activities and services targeting youths. The project will equally target young women, as well as young men under its interventions.

Under the agreed framework, Telenor Pakistan is responsible to provide stage-based material and technical support to the project's activities. The first stage of 'Infrastructure Development' entails Telenor Pakistan's material and technical assistance in setting up of three community centers, two of which are already operational. The second stage comprises 'interventions' requiring Telenor Pakistan's assistance in setting up a lab for mobile repairing skills, literacy software and virtual teaching platforms, sporting services and support to launch village level youth teams and sports leagues. The third and last stage of the project will be 'Expansion of Services & Resources' whereby Telenor Pakistan will facilitate in providing agricultural training and expertise, business development expertise and resources, and sporting opportunities in the project areas.

Press Release



Speaking further on the benefits of UNDP's partnership with Telenor Pakistan, Mr. Marc-André Franche, Country Director- UNDP Pakistan stated, "Investing in Pakistan's young people is an investment in the future. With education, employment and a stake in their communities, youth can play a central role in development, prosperity, and the creation of a peaceful, cohesive society. Through its support for some of the country's most vulnerable youth, Telenor Pakistan has made an invaluable contribution towards realizing that future."

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About Telenor Pakistan: Telenor Pakistan is a provider of high quality telecommunication services in Pakistan since 2005. It has over 36 million subscribers, over 3,000 employees and a nationwide network. For more information, please visit: www.telenor.com.pk

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