Chairman PMYP Applauds PPAF's Projects for Empowering Balochistan Youth



On a special invitation extended by Chief Executive Officer, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), Mr. Nadir Gul Barech, Chairman, Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PYMP), Mr. Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, visited Quetta to witness PPAF's impactful work and engage with the youth benefiting from various initiatives. During his visit, he interacted with PPAF-supported startups at the National Incubation Centre at BUITEMS, which aims to empower Balochistan's youth by fostering innovative, viable, and sustainable social enterprises. He also met madrassa students and young participants of the Chamalang Education Project from Kohlu and Loralai. In another event he distributed interest free loan cheques to enterprising borrowers of Balochistan.

This visit also highlighted PPAF's commitment to peaceful coexistence and social cohesion, with religious scholars from various faiths participating in an event to stress the importance of unity and collaboration in building a prosperous future. Ms. Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Minister of Colleges, Higher & Technical Education Department and School Education, Government of Balochistan, along with other dignitaries, also attended these events. Chairman PYMP praised PPAF's efforts and recognised the positive outcomes, emphasising the potential for further collaboration to strengthen these initiatives.

PPAF Launches "Restoring Social Services and Climate Resilience" Project



PPAF has launched, "Restoring Social Services and Climate Resilience (RSS&CR) Project" across 61 flood-affected union councils in 19 districts of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, AJK, and Gilgit Baltistan. The project will be carried out through 34 selected local partner organisations, aiming for sustainable, community-driven development for the most vulnerable populations in flood-prone areas. PPAF organised orientation workshops for project implementing partners outlining the project's aims, objectives, and targets. This initiative focuses on empowering grassroots communities to enhance their preparedness and response to future emergencies, enabling them to navigate challenges with greater resilience and ensuring a safer and more secure future. Mr. Ramesh Singh Arora, Minister of Human Rights and Minorities while addressing the session participants in Lahore appreciated PPAF's initiative and highlighted PPAF's critical role in restoring essential services by supporting the rehabilitation of health, education, water, sanitation and communal facilities

Groundbreaking Agreement to Support the Deaf Community in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



In a landmark agreement, PPAF, the Social Welfare, Special Education & Women Empowerment Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (SWDKP), and the Family Educational Services Foundation (FESF) have joined forces to establish a Centre of Excellence for Deaf Children and Youth in Nowshera. This innovative collaboration leverages the strengths of all three organisations, with SWDKP providing the building, PPAF committing PKR 66 million to fully equip and operate the center for its first year, and FESF taking on the critical role of establishing and managing the facility. The Center will offer comprehensive education and vocational training, opening new doors of opportunity for deaf children and youth in the region.

The agreement was signed in Peshawar by Mr. Nazar Shah, Secretary SWD; Mr. Richard Geary, Director Programmes, FESF; and Mr. Arshad Rashid, Chief Programmes, PPAF in the presence of Ms. Mashal Yousafzai, Adviser to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Social Welfare, Special Education, and Women Empowerment.

GRASP Awards PKR 165 Million to Empower Balochistan's SMEs



The Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Development Project (GRASP) recently held its third Matching Grants Cheque Distribution Ceremony in Quetta, awarding over PKR 165 million to 30 SMEs to boost rural enterprise development in Balochistan. The event was attended by Mr. Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan, Chairman, Prime Minister's Youth Programme, along with other notable figures who highlighted the initiative's positive impact on sustainable growth and the empowerment of local communities. Seven SMEs from previous cycles displayed their products on stalls and more took the stage to share their transformative journey all translating into a reflection of tangible outcome and success of the programme.

Saifullah Channa from Lasbela, who received matching grant of PKR 0.5 million to support his goat farming business said, "This grant is a game-changer for my business. It will allow me to increase my herd and, more importantly, provide employment opportunities for others in my community." Hawa Sakhi from Turbat, recipient of PKR 2.5 million matching grant, highlighted the importance of such initiatives in leveling the playing field for women in her province. "I am thankful to GRASP for not only helping our region but also providing equal opportunities for women," Hawa stated. "I will strive to utilise this grant to its fullest and create more opportunities for women."

Women Lead Climate-Resilient Infrastructure in DI Khan



The KfW-funded Livelihood Support and Promotion of Small Community Infrastructure Project (LACIP II) is making strides in improving rural infrastructure with a focus on sustainability and climate resilience. Construction has commenced on ten Climate Resilient Integrated Areas Upgradation Projects across District Dera Ismail Khan (D.I Khan) and Tank.

One notable aspect of these projects is the active involvement of women community members in their execution. So far, 3,000 feet of PCC roads have been completed in Union Council Mahra of D.I Khan, out of a total planned length of 4,824 feet. This development is set to benefit approximately 650 households in the village. Women, with the support of field engineers, are playing a crucial role in monitoring the construction site. They oversee the quality and quantity of materials, check the road's thickness at various points, and ensure the project's progress meets the set standards.

Mitigating Agricultural Risks to Secure Sindh's SMEs



The European Union funded GRASP's Access to Finance (A2F) component is driving support for MSMEs through a dual approach of Matching Grants and financial sector linkages. Collaborating with 24 Financial Institutions, the initiative is extending credit, offering viable financial products, and providing crop and livestock insurance. GRASP achieved a transformative achievement as 25 insurance policies, covering 328 acres and valued at PKR 27 million, were distributed to SMEs in Sindh. These policies, facilitated by PPAF GRASP partner Salaam Takaful (an Islamic Insurance Company) aim to improve the financial health and socio-economic conditions of the farming community by mitigating agricultural risks.

PPAF CEO, Mr. Nadir Gul Barech, underscored the vital importance of insurance in stabilising small farmers' businesses in Pakistan's high-risk environment. He highlighted that this initiative is essential for improving the financial security and socio-economic well-being of farming communities. He also reaffirmed PPAF's commitment to empowering farmers in Sindh and Balochistan and promoting sustainable agricultural development.

New Collaboration with Akhuwat to Strengthen Interest Free Loan Programme



PPAF and Akhuwat Islamic Microfinance have signed a grant agreement to enhance the capacity of the PPAF's partner organisations implementing the Prime Minister's Interest Free Loan (IFL) Programme by introducing Sharia-compliant lending products across the country.This collaboration aims to build a robust Sharia-compliant microfinance industry, providing sustainable lending options to underserved communities while enhancing the technical and operational capabilities of implementing partner organisations. The initiative is designed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the IFL Programme, aligning with PPAF's core mission of fostering financial inclusion. Since 2014, PPAF has been leading this Government of Pakistan-funded initiative that supports microenterprise activities for poor, vulnerable, and marginalised households across 67 districts, working through 26 partner organisations.

Panel Discussion on Women's Empowerment in Agriculture & Fisheries



PPAF played a leading role in advancing the dialogue on women's economic empowerment at a national conference, "NCSW' Roll out of the National Women's Agenda 2024" organised by the National Commission on the Status of Women, Islamabad, in collaboration with UN Women Pakistan. PPAF led a dynamic working group discussion focused on Women Empowerment in Agriculture & Fisheries, with Dr. Khola Iram, PPAF's Specialist in Gender & Inclusion, moderating the session, and Mr. Kabeer Naqvi, Chairman of the Pakistan Microfinance Network, chairing it. The session featured insights from Senator Bushra Anjum Butt, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training, and brought together experts from UN agencies, government ministries, civil society, women chamber of commerce, and female beneficiaries from rural communities. Key recommendations included empowering women through education, microfinance, entrepreneurship, market access, digital literacy, and creating safe workplaces with childcare support and secure commutes.