

# DEVELOPMENT CHRONICLES

Monthly Newsletter - July 2024



## International delegates during 5-Day International Conference

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**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft  
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Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

**Balochistan Government  
Approves Climate  
Change Policy in  
Partnership with  
UNDP Pakistan**



**Digital Census 2023 by  
Pakistan Bureau of  
Statistics revealed that  
Pakistan's population stands  
at 241.49 million with  
2.55% growth rate**



### Interview

**Atif Sheikh  
Executive Director  
Special Talent  
Exchange  
Program**



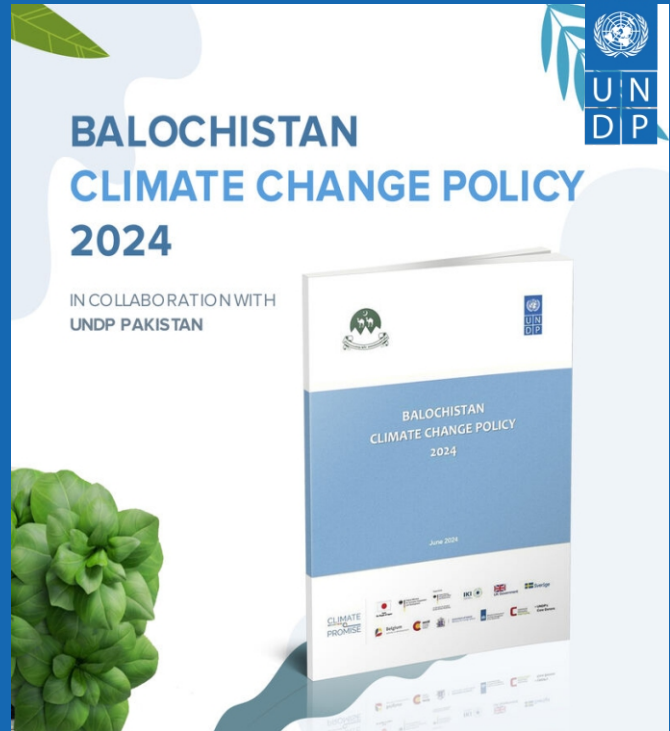
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## Balochistan Government Approves Climate Change Policy in Partnership with UNDP Pakistan

In a significant stride towards environmental stewardship, the Government of Balochistan has green lit the Balochistan Climate Change Policy (BCCP), marking a collaborative triumph with UNDP in Pakistan. This visionary policy charts a definitive path in confronting the pressing challenges posed by climate change across the province. Crafted through meticulous deliberation, the BCCP is more than just a framework—it's a blueprint for actionable change. By prioritizing adaptation, mitigation strategies, and judicious resource allocation, this policy promises to fortify Balochistan's resilience against climate adversities.

The official endorsement and imminent implementation of the BCCP underscore a resolute commitment from both provincial authorities and UNDP. Together, they pledge unwavering support to catalyze climate action within Balochistan, fostering a sustainable future where environmental harmony thrives.



## The Silent Crisis: Climate Change's Impact on Global Nutrition

This analysis by Romina Khurshid Alam, the PM's coordinator on climate change and environmental coordination, highlights how the global climate crisis is significantly impacting nutrition in developing countries like Pakistan. Disrupted weather patterns are affecting crop yields and nutritional quality, leading to food shortages and malnutrition. Regions in East Africa and Southeast Asia are experiencing reductions in staple crops, resulting in micronutrient deficiencies and health issues. Coastal communities in South Asia are further challenged by rising sea levels and cyclones, exacerbating food insecurity. To combat this silent crisis, coordinated global efforts are essential to implement climate-resilient agricultural practices and ensure equitable access to nutritious food.



**Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam**

PM Coordinator on Climate Change and  
Environmental Coordination



Munazza Gillani, Director Pakistan and Middle East, Sightsavers congratulated all members of CBIDN on this remarkable accomplishment. She highlighted that their contributions are making a real difference in the lives of individuals across Pakistan and Sightsavers is proud to be the founding member of CBIDN. She further expressed her gratitude, "We are grateful to the management of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics for being patient and supportive for adopting our suggested tools and questions in the census questionnaire and training of their master trainers through our support

**Munazza Gillani,**  
Director Pakistan and Middle East, Sightsavers



## Sightsavers Applaud PBS for First National Disability Data Set in Historic Digital Census



Sightsavers and Community Based Inclusive Development Network (CBIDN) Pakistan lauds Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) making First National Data Set on Disability, possible in Pakistan through 7th Population and Housing Census 2023. This was the first ever digital census of the country that used a tool to measure disability prevalence in the country. This achievement is the result of persistent and collective advocacy efforts by the CBIDN-Pakistan, led by people with disabilities and Sightsavers. Sightsavers, in close collaboration with CBIDN provided technical assistance to the technical committee of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) in adapting the Washington Group Short set of Questions in the census questionnaire for disability statistics, developed in consultation with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) under the umbrella of CBID Network. Previously, Sightsavers has provided comprehensive training to PBS's master trainers on the use of the disability questionnaire ensuring accuracy and inclusivity in Pakistan Social and Living Standard Survey (PSLM).

## Pakistan Federal Cabinet inducts Shamsher Ali in Board of Overseas Pakistanis Foundation



The Pakistan Federal Government has appointed Shamsher Ali, a Dubai-based business tycoon, as a Member of the Board of Governors (BoG) at the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF), under the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development. The Cabinet Decision, presided over by Syed Qamar Raza, Chairman of OPF, and attended by other key officials, made the announcement.

Shamsher Ali, Group CEO of Titan Investments Dubai, will contribute to policy-making for Non-Resident Pakistanis (NRPs) with his insights on Pakistanis in the UAE and GCC countries. He stated, "I am honoured to be appointed to this prestigious position. It is a duty to my nation, and I will perform to the best of my abilities.

# IRC Engaged Journalists to Combat Malnutrition in Sindh

International Rescue Committee (IRC) organized pivotal workshops in Sukkur, Kashmore and Khairpur, under their project titled "Combating Malnutrition in Sindh." This event was structured into two dynamic sessions, each designed to educate and engage participants on critical nutrition issues in the region. Digital Time Communications, a communications firm, is managing these sessions for IRC. Digital Time Communications invited prominent journalists and social media influencers from Sukkur, Kashmore & Khairpur recognizing their vital role in disseminating information and driving public engagement. The workshop covered both the technical aspects of nutrition and highlighted the significant role media professionals play in combating malnutrition. These interactive workshops featured a range of activities, including presentations of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in local languages by enthusiastic participants from the crowd. This approach not only made the sessions more relatable but also empowered local voices. Moreover, these events concluded with the distribution of certificates to acknowledge the participants' commitment and involvement. Under this activity, IRC and Digital Time Communications will also conduct sessions in Hyderabad, Naushahro Feroze, and Karachi, expanding their reach and impact in combating malnutrition across Sindh.





# INTERVIEW INTERVIEW

**Atif Sheikh**

Executive Director,  
Special Talent Exchange  
Program (STEP)

## Question 1

**Tell us about your journey, how did you start, what were some challenges you faced and how did you overcome them?**

I was born with a disability, making my childhood in **Pakistan very challenging due to the lack of facilities and societal acceptance for people with disabilities**. When I reached school age in 1976, the situation became even more difficult. At that time, there were no special education schools, and the regular public schools were not equipped to accommodate students with disabilities. Both students and teachers struggled to accept and support people like me.

In 1981, **the first government policy for people with disabilities was introduced**, leading to the establishment of the first special education school system. I was among the first children admitted to one of these schools. Unfortunately, the school only provided education up to the primary level. After completing primary school, I had to move to a public school, where **I realized that I was different from the other students. This difference was both a strength and a weakness**.

During this time, I began to think about my peers from the special education school. **When I reached out to them, I was shocked to learn that most of them had passed away due to the lack of facilities and support**. This realization motivated me to create a platform to raise awareness for people with disabilities.

In 1997, **I founded STEP (Special Talent Exchange Program) along with a group of students**. Over time, we expanded our efforts, recognizing the need to elevate our mission to a higher level. Through STEP, we aim to create a more inclusive environment and advocate for the rights and needs of people with disabilities in Pakistan.

## Question 2

### **What is the major accessibility issue for people with disability?**

Disability, I believe, is not inherent in a person but in the environment. As a society, we must work towards creating a more inclusive environment. In Pakistan, 9.6% of the population consists of people with disabilities, and 96% of them are not attending school due to a lack of accessible educational facilities. If mainstream schools were made accessible to people with disabilities, there would be no need for separate schools for children with disabilities. This would also contribute to a more inclusive society overall.

## Question 3

### **Do you think social media platforms play a role in dissemination and spreading awareness about these issues?**

Social media platforms play a crucial role in spreading awareness. These platforms have made it easier to access information and are inclusive; for example, subtitles are available for people who are deaf, and audiobooks are available for people who are blind. Therefore, social media is a vital tool for raising awareness about these issues.

## Question 4

### **How can government play an important role towards ensuring inclusion and rights of people with disabilities?**

The government is responsible for the education, employment, and inclusivity of people with disabilities. Although policies have been created and have provided some assistance, it is crucial for every government sector to be inclusive of people with disabilities. For example, the railway sector needs to recognize that people with disabilities use their services and should work towards making railways more accessible.

The first policy introduced by the government was in 1981, which ensured a 1% quota and the establishment of special education centers. However, there were no new policies for 21 years until 2002, when the National Policy for People with Disabilities was introduced. This policy aimed to ensure that all departments create an inclusive environment for people with disabilities. Unfortunately, it was not implemented until 2011. Since then, Pakistan has been aligning its policies with the UN's rights of people with disabilities.

## Question 5

### **Tell us about your most impactful work that you think played a big role in paving path towards inclusion of people with disabilities.**

Since 2009, STEP has been actively organizing and empowering people with disabilities to connect and support one another. That year, we held the first leadership conference to honor the efforts of individuals with disabilities who are making a difference in their communities. This annual conference has since grown significantly.



# Digital Time Communications Facilitating GIZ in Photography, Videography, Video Editing, Reels/Highlights and Graphic Designing

## German Ambassador Visits PGFRC in Lahore

German Ambassador, Mr Alfred Grannas, accompanied by the Head of Development Cooperation, Dr. Sebastian Paust, and First Secretary, Ms. Janine Rohwer, visited the Pakistan-German Facilitation and Reintegration Centre (PGFRC) in Lahore. The centre serves as a vital resource hub for individuals seeking employment or career opportunities abroad, as well as for returnees needing local support for social and economic reintegration. During their visit, the delegation toured the centre, learning about their dedicated services to support both potential migrants and returnees. Ambassador Grannas also met with two project beneficiaries, Fizza Irum and Faisal Farooq, who participated in our front desk training. This interaction provided him with firsthand insights into the positive impact of German cooperation.



## GIZ and NAVTTC hosted International Conference

The 5-Day International Regional Program "Empowering Workforce and Gender Inclusivity: Navigating the TVET Landscape through Digitalization and Green Practices" was held in Islamabad, Pakistan. Organized by NAVTTC, the event honored delegates from the Philippines, Nepal, Malaysia, Bhutan, Fiji, Thailand, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, and Pakistan



## Stakeholder Engagement Workshop on LT – LEDS held in Islamabad

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pakistan, the German development cooperation and UNICEF in close collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment Coordination and Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives hosted a workshop on Pakistan's long-term vision for Low Emission Development Strategies (LT-LEDS). Attended by around 250 representatives from the public, private, academic, and development sectors, the workshop progressed towards the declaration of a joint LT-LEDS work plan by the Government of Pakistan, UNDP, GIZ and UNICEF, signifying a unified approach to creating a roadmap for achieving a decarbonized economy in Pakistan.





## Suggested Read



The World Bank Group's Annual Conference on Development Economics (ABCDE), a premier development policy forum, will be co-sponsored by rotating partners starting in 2024, with the Center for Global Development as the first partner.

Click the link below to read the insightful article.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2024/07/09/annual-bank-conference-on-development-economics-2024-the-great-incoherence>



The Sport for Sustainable Development Summit, co-organized by the IOC and French President's Office, will launch a global initiative to enhance sport's contribution to the SDGs. The event will host 500 participants, including heads of state, athletes, and development financiers

Click the link below to read the insightful article.

<https://olympics.com/ioc/news/international-summit-on-sport-and-sustainable-development-on-25-july-2024-in-paris-for-the-pre-opening-of-the-olympic-and-paralympic-games>



Three promising trends are shaping the field for the better as we enter 2024. These inclusive, impactful trends are here to stay and are poised to make a meaningful difference in people's lives.

Click the link below to read the insightful article.

<https://www.rti.org/insights/three-international-development-trends-for-2024>



The 2024 Global Gender Gap Report shows caregiving burdens limit women's labor force participation, especially in South Asia. In Pakistan, only six percent of senior managers are women.

Click the link below to read the insightful article.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1847881?ref=whatsapp>