

## **KEY MESSAGES OF PAKISTAN'S VNR- HLPF 2019**

### ***Political commitment, institutional readiness – partnerships to scale-up***

As a demonstration of political commitment and ownership, Pakistan integrated the SDGs into its national development agenda in February 2016. Pakistan was first such country to do so.

This reorientation in approach was guided inter alia by lessons learnt from the implementation strategy of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

A National SDGs Framework was launched in 2018 envisaging a national vision, plan and strategy to optimize, prioritize and localize the full potential of SDGs in Pakistan.

In terms of institutional arrangement, task forces in the National and Provincial Parliaments have been established to review progress and facilitate legislative support for implementation.

Seven SDGs Support Units instituted at Federal and Provincial Government levels facilitate vertical and horizontal coordination among the stakeholders.

Notwithstanding economic and financial challenges, Pakistan will continue to work towards achieving the SDGs through innovative, targeted and focused implementation strategies in the social, economic and environmental fields.

A key aspect of implementation strategy is strengthening of the existing and forging new alliances, leveraging technology and mobilizing finance. Partnership and close collaboration with a broad array of governmental, private, civil society and media actors, supplemented by regional and international support, will continue to be a major feature.

### ***Ambitious plans to alleviate poverty***

Commitment to poverty alleviation remains a key focus. Through key interventions and programmes, progress has been made even if challenges persist. Over the last ten years, poverty headcount has fallen by 26 percent and multi-dimensional poverty decreased by 16 percent points.

A national poverty alleviation program – *Ehsaas (Compassion)* has been launched this year to expand social protection, safety nets and support human capital development throughout the country. This programme complements and expands the on-going robust social protection program for poor women.

The national resolve to eliminate poverty is firm. The size of assistance for the lowest strata has been enhanced. The National Socioeconomic Registry (NSR) is being updated to target the poorest more effectively and ensure that no one is left behind.

### ***Committed to eliminating hunger and improving health***

Reductions in stunting and malnutrition have taken place - over the period 2013-2018 by 6 and 9 percentage points, respectively. Recognizing the persistent challenge, greater focus and allocation of resources is being made.

The prevalence of skilled birth attendance has improved by 17 percentage points while neonatal mortality rate has fallen by 10 percentage points during the same period. The Lady Health Workers Programme, with its grassroots presence, has been instrumental in achieving this improvement.

A new universal health coverage initiative – the *Sehat Sahulat* Program - has been launched this year to provide health insurance coverage for those in need. Health Sector reforms are underway, entailing a centralized integrated disease surveillance system and strong inter-provincial information sharing mechanism.

### ***From commitment to action- environmental protection and climate change***

Even as our carbon footprint is miniscule, the adverse impacts of climate change on Pakistan are enormous and imminent. Climate adaptation has become a forced reality for Pakistan.

These factors notwithstanding, Pakistan has commenced actions to both protect the environment and contribute towards efforts to minimize the adversaries of climate change. Both adaptation and mitigation are reflected in our policy and implementation approach.

Pakistan's Billion Tree plantation over 350,000 hectares was the first Bonn Challenge pledge to hit and surpass its commitment, through national

resources. This project has now been up-scaled to 10 Billion Tree Tsunami – a five-year country-wide tree plantation drive to restore depleted forests and mitigate climate change.

Moreover, programmes such as Clean and Green Pakistan as well as Recharge Pakistan have been launched. These Nature Based Solutions for Ecosystem Restoration are leading examples of climate action among developing countries, with co-benefits to improve bio-diversity and livelihood generation.

### ***Monitoring and evaluation***

Periodic monitoring and evaluation of various strands of the SDGs framework remains an important priority. Baselines and targets for all SDG indicators have been determined since 2018. National data collection tools have been modified to improve data availability with a focus on equity and sustainability aspects of SDGs. Transparency would be a major hallmark of the monitoring and evaluation architecture- through the establishment of SDGs Dashboard.

*A national approach anchored in partnerships, aided by technology and facilitated by finance, would catalyze and scale up implementation of the 2030 agenda.*