

Press Release

Islamabad, 26 June, 2019: Inclusivity of urban women in the economic development of

Pakistan was an interactive session organized by Youth Economic Forum. The session helped youth in becoming aware of problem of gender gap in the society and helped them to understand why should they address these problems. The target audience of the event was youth. Entrepreneurs, university students and young professionals participated in the event. The discussion was followed by interactive question answer session. Guest speakers for the event were Dr Zunaira Saqib, (HR Professional), Ms Bakhtawar Mehmood (GM Digital Broadcast TV), Komal Shakeel (Asian and world development bank)

Opening the discussion, Dr Zunaira discussed about the Global Gender gap in Pakistan. She pointed out that Pakistan ranks 148th out of 150 in Gender Equality index which is the 2nd worst performance for the year.

She cited the example of Rwanda which is one of the smallest countries in the world but ranks 4th in gender equality index because they stepped out of economy despite facing mass genocide.

She also gave example of IKEA and pointed that the reason that it has risen to be one of the greatest companies in the world is because women are hired in equal proportion.

She pointed out that women in Pakistan are not encouraged to work because of socio economic factors. Emphasizing the need to include women in economy she asked for greater employment of women in different fields and demanded that society play a greater role and support females.

Addressing the occasion Komal Shakeel emphasized on inclusivity of urban women in economic development of the country by giving them the basic human rights and freedom of choice regardless of sex, ethnicity, gender,

age, ethnic background. She cited the example of house wives and mothers and was of the view that they do a lot of work at home and still they do not get paid anything. She also had a vocal view that women need to be given a social security at both individual level and organizational level .Need for making a policy by government and institutions was also stressed. According to her the world is rapidly progressing and by 2030 there would be an equal ratio of working men and women in the world therefore to keep at par Pakistani women need to start contributing to economy .For this to happen we need to change the mindset of the society and start motivating her .

Bakhtawar Mehmood (GM DBTV) was also part of the panel discussion. She put special emphasis on Gender equality and termed it as important as it is part of United Nations Sustainable development goals .She was of the view that in any organization hiring of an employee should be done based on aptitude rather than gender preference. She praised the current government for taking the right steps for women empowerment. Currently SECP has one female member in its BODs. The importance of creating the right environment for female employees at workplace was also highlighted in the conversation.

The discussion provided the participants the opportunity to have a real-life exposure to the problems being experienced by the women of the country .The panelists also emphasized the different ways by which the participation of women in the economic matters can be made possible and what are the different measures being taken by public and private sectors to ensure gender equality among staff