

## ***PRESS RELEASE***

### **Delegation to Planning Commission**

**Islamabad, 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2019:** A delegation comprising of young thinkers and policy activists of Pakistan visited Planning Commission to discuss the significance of sustainable development goals and where Pakistan stands in achieving them. 15 young leaders from different universities and backgrounds participated in this delegation to present a more holistic youth perspective on SDGs. Mr Malik Shaheryar led the delegation on behalf of Youth Economic Forum. The delegation was taken to SDG unit of Planning Commission.

Mr Malik Shaheryar initiated by presenting the view of young minds on SDGs and their status in Pakistan. Mr Nadeem, Economic Advisor, told the delegation that 25<sup>th</sup> December 2015 was the first time that SDGs were initiated in Pakistan. And on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016, SDGs were recognized by government on national and provincial level of Pakistan. A month after, a national movement took place on the respective topic. The idea of SDGs originated from MDGs. He further said that it is, now, a 5 year project National initiative with respective designated SDG departments on provincial and federal level.

Mr Nadeem further added that the total number is 17 and out of which, 7 are related to the basic necessities of a human being. The later goals are related to economics, infrastructure and politics. He told the delegation that there are 169 targets mapped out of which 50+ are related to Youth of Pakistan. He further added that there is National SDG framework designed for the respective purpose and the provincial frameworks are currently under progress. He demonstrated the delegation how and why they have set the previous year as the baseline. For example, if the literacy today is 62% then 62% will be the baseline for future research.

Dr Ali Kemal, Economic Advisor, further added that baseline refers to the current situation, where a person stands today. By keeping this in view, we can move towards betterment. He further added that SDG section is striving to achieve its vision 2025 but due to no coverage by mainstream media, the section is often underestimated. Zaheer Abbas, Analyst, added that Gilgit Baltistan grew successfully against shopping bags with a campaign to spread awareness.

Mr Shahid Naem, Chief SDG section, that youth can play its part by advocating the agenda of SDGs in their respective gatherings and society. They can spread awareness about the significance. He further said that they believe in a society based on equality i.e. no one is left behind. He further added to progress they have interlinked the departments of government with respect to budget and planning. The understanding of SDG is not physical or tangible but practical that will result for generations to come towards betterment.

Mr Malik Shaheryar concluded the delegation by advising the youth that it is time to be practical rather than being a good citizen on social media only. He thanked the respective staff of SDG section for their valuable time and views. Later, a question answer session was proceeded in which the young delegates took part with enthusiasm.

Youth economic forum is the Pakistan's first youth-run policy think tank which strives to bridge the gap between the youth and the policy makers. Its mission is to make policies that are more youth inclusive. This delegation was in alignment with its vision and presented the youth of the country to connect with the policy makers on a much deeper level.