

03 December 2020



***I appreciate the fact that we walk the talk and treat persons with disabilities as part of the organization. and trust them to represent and empower individuals and societies to claim and embrace inclusion.***

*Tayyaba Arshi, UN Volunteer Social Inclusion Officer with UNDP, Pakistan*

## **UNDP championing disability inclusion in Pakistan**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Pakistan is deploying five young professionals with disabilities under the UNDP-UNV Talent Programme for Young professionals with Disabilities. By enhancing the employability and career prospects of young professionals with disabilities through work experience opportunities, UNDP is taking a step further towards a more inclusive environment and society.

“ We are proud of our UN Volunteers, who bring such positive energy, knowledge and talent to the team. UNDP has long placed youth at the heart of our development framework and is eager to advance the inclusion of youth with disabilities. I strongly believe the contributions of our volunteers will be a catalyst in addressing many challenges people with disability face in the country. --Aliona Niculita, Resident Representative a.i. , UNDP Pakistan

Around the world, young people with disabilities remain economically isolated and vulnerable and often face stigma, discrimination and inequality. In order to combat these social problems, UNDP, in close collaboration with UNV, is advancing the inclusion of youth living with disabilities by placing them at centre of the development framework.

By the same token, UNDP Pakistan seeks to promote the social, economic and political inclusion of marginalized youth living with disabilities. Under the UNDP-UNV Talent Programme for Young professionals with Disabilities, UNDP recently deployed three of five UN Volunteers – one as a UN Volunteer Experimentation Associate and the others as Social Inclusion Officers.

The UN Volunteer Experimentation Associate is expected to drive innovation through social inclusion. This young professional will support the work of the UNDP Accelerator Lab in conducting research and identifying current development challenges and trends that local communities in the country are facing, and mapping possible solutions.

Similarly, as Social Inclusion Officers, volunteers will support project activities with a particular focus on the inclusion of persons with disabilities and those from marginalized groups, including women, particularly victims of gender-based violence and juveniles in conflict with law.

“ I grew up in a former tribal area in Khyber

“ district, where disability is considered a burden on the society. I joined UNDP because I believe it is the best platform for me to contribute to changing the perceptions of my people towards disability. -- Saddam Hussain, UN Volunteer Social Inclusion Officer with UNDP

Following the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 2, UNV and UNDP are providing reasonable accommodations to the volunteers. This includes accessible spaces to live and work, with the adjustments that are necessary in view of their disabilities.

In order to promote more participation and raise awareness, UNDP Pakistan is offering webinars and pursuing social media engagement. The office recently held a webinar on promoting the inclusion of youth with disabilities, exploring with participants in the discussion the opportunities available for young people with disabilities.

UNDP also covered a disability awareness session to sensitize UNDP staff members on inclusion and the UNDP-UNV Talent Programme for Young Professionals with Disabilities, and share resources.

Through these partnership efforts, UNDP and UNV are contributing to a major cultural shift in the workplace and within communities.

---

Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 10: Reduced inequalities](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)