

CHAPTER 10

YOUTH AND SPORTS

According to projected statistics, there are 53 million youth of 15 to 29 years of age in Pakistan. The population in this age bracket benefit directly and indirectly from projects and programmes of sectors like education, sports, vocational training, information technology, etc. Energy of the youth has immense economic potential provided it is channelised and mainstreamed. Absence of policies and proper implementation of the existing ones has resulted in a colossal loss of quality manpower. This has also led to serious social problems leading to drug abuse, crime, beggary, poverty, illiteracy, mental and physical disorders, and has been an important contributor to terrorism and radicalism. Special attention is paid to human resources, especially the youth, since this vast potential has the capacity of energising and supporting every sector, which is responsible for the overall development and progress of the country.

Now the youth sector is predominately a provincial subject and all youth-related development subjects have been devolved to the provinces after the 18th Constitutional Amendment. As the federal government's responsibility is concerned, this sector is being handled by various ministries and organisations. However, a broad-based Prime Minister's youth programme is in operation since the financial year 2013-14, which cater for various requirements of this sector at the federal level.

Performance review 2014-15

On March 4 this year, the CDWP approved a project 'Holding of National Games', which will cost Rs573.500 million. The project is for holding annual national games for five years of all major sports, like athletics, hockey, football, boxing, swimming, badminton, squash, table tennis, etc. The primary objective of the activity is to promote sports and revive interest of people in sports, channelise the youth energies for healthier sports activities, explore new talent for national teams and develop linkages with business for sponsoring such activities in the country. The project has been included in the PSDP 2014-15 under the new initiatives proposed by the Ministry of Planning Development and Reform. The Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) is the executing agency of the project, and there is an allocation of Rs100 million is available against the project in PSDP 2014-15. The entire allocated amount has been released and national games are expected to be held from June 9 to 12 this year at the Sports Complex, Islamabad.

Besides this, various projects have been launched under the PM's youth programme, which are continuing in the next fiscal year as well.

Outlook 2015-16

Prime Minister's youth programme

The incumbent Prime Minister has announced a package for the youth with broad canvas of programmes, which is aimed enabling the youth and poor segments of population to get good opportunities of employment, economic empowerment, acquiring skills needed for gainful employment, spreading use of computers and imparting on-the-job training for young graduates to improve the probability of getting a productive job. An amount of Rs20,000 million has been allocated in the PSDP for various schemes under this programme.

PM's Youth Business Loan Scheme

This Scheme is for young entrepreneurs within the age group of 21 to 45 years for starting their own businesses. Under this programme, loans worth Rs100,000 to Rs2,000,000 are given to young applicants through computer balloting. The loans are given for a period of eight years at a low mark-up. The designated financial institutions for this programme are the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), First Women Bank (FWB), Habib Bank and Sindh Bank.

Two ballots of the Scheme have been held on February 28 and June 4, 2014. A total of 10,442 applicants were selected for the disbursement of loans to eligible young people belonging to four provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and the Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Majority of the participants have expressed their interest in livestock, agriculture, education and cottage industry.

PM's Interest Free Loans Scheme

The *Qarz-e-Hasana* or the microfinance loan facility is aimed at providing interest-free financing to 2.5 million people to five million people in the next five years. Vulnerable rural and urban poor, with a poverty score of up to 40, are eligible to apply for this loan. The national outreach of the programme is not limited to geographic terms. However, preference is being given to underserved areas. A total of 2,50,000 loans of an average amount of Rs25,000 with zero mark up rate are being disbursed as part of the programme. The tenure of return of loans is three years. An amount of Rs3,500 million has been allocated to the programme by the federal government. The Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) is the main executing agency of the programme. Registered partner and community organisations with necessary expertise and experience are also being engaged in the process.

A total amount of Rs620 million has been disbursed among about 30,000 eligible applicants through 89 loan centres established in 30 districts till April 30, 2015. The average disbursed loan size is Rs20,756 with 100 per cent rate of recovery.

PM's Youth Training Programme

Under this Programme, young individuals with 16-year education, from the Higher Education Commission (HEC) recognised institutions, of age not more than 25 years (26 for less-developed areas) are eligible to apply. They will be provided internships in the private and public sectors. This professional training will equip them with abilities to get job opportunities, both inside and outside the country. A total number of 50,000 interns will be hired at a monthly stipend of Rs12,000 for one year.

A top class management consulting firm or university from the private sector, in collaboration with the government, will be responsible for the design, placement of internees and their periodic evaluation. Under this programme, all leading private sector firms, bodies and

development sector organisations, federal, provincial and local government offices, including educational institutions, will be offered services of the internees. Moreover, partnership with the private sector will increase financial transparency, ensure selection on merit and better results. The Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (MoIPC) is the focal point of the Programme.

PM's Youth Skills Development Programme

This Programme is aimed at providing vocational training to unemployed young individuals for acquiring productive skills for gainful employment. Young men and women, who have passed the 8th Grade, and are not more than 25 years, are eligible beneficiaries of the Programme. The government is supporting a fee equivalent to or less than Rs3,000 per month for a duration of six months. A monthly stipend of Rs2000 for the same number of months is also being paid to each beneficiary.

An estimated 25,000 individuals will benefit from the Programme. The break-up is: 200 from Islamabad, 500 Azad Jammu and Kashmir, 300 Gilgit-Baltistan, 400 FATA, 3,000 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2,000 Balochistan, 5,850 Sindh and 12,750 from Punjab. Out of the total, 8,524 females are being given technical and vocational training. Rs800 million have been allocated for the Programme in the financial year 2013-2014. The NAVTTC and Ministry of Education and Trainings are the main executing agencies. The provincial Technical Education and Vocational Training Authorities (TEVTAs) and skills training institutes of the federal government are working in collaboration with the main executing agencies, which are responsible for designing and the final evaluation of the Programme.

The project, to cost Rs800 million, was approved by the CDWP on October 28, 2013. About 350 well-reputed technical education and vocational training institutes from the public and private sectors all over the country have been selected through the provincial TEVTAs and NAVTTC's regional offices in Islamabad, Lahore, Multan, Karachi, Larkana, Quetta, Gwadar, Peshawar and Gilgit-Baltistan. The advertisement to invite applications from potential trainees from all over Pakistan has also been published in leading national newspapers.

In the first phase of the Programme, about 20,000 young people have successfully completed the training. The NAVTTC plans to launch a short training programme for 3,000 young people. Rs85 million were saved from the total approved cost during the first phase of the Programme.

PM's Youth Laptop Programme

This Programme is an attempt to spread the use of computers amongst the university and college students to bring about a technology revolution and bridge the digital gap, while the HEC is its executing agency. The CDWP had approved the project on December 31, 2013, which will have a total cost of Rs4000 million. The Programme is for students registered with the HEC-approved institutes. All doctoral and masters students, and 50 per cent under-graduate students will get the laptops. A total of 100,000 students every year across Pakistan are being awarded laptops, while dongles and internet connections are included in the package.

About 32,000 laptops have been distributed among PhD, MPhil and MS students. The HEC has also established a local laptop assembly plant, in collaboration with Haier, which will become functional shortly.

PM's Fee Reimbursement Scheme

This Scheme has been started with the aim to encourage pursuit of higher education among students from less-developed areas through financing of their tuition fees paid directly to universities. Both, male and female students, domiciled in interior Sindh, Southern Punjab (Multan, Bahawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan divisions), entire Balochistan, less development areas of KPK (Malakand, Kohistan and Dera Ismail Khan), Gilgit-Baltistan and FATA are eligible to apply.

The HEC, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Trainings is responsible for its implementation. Fee reimbursements to 50,000 students of 78 universities and 33 colleges have been made in the first phase.

National games

An amount Rs137 million has earmarked for the project 'Holding of National Games' in the PSDP 2015-16. The purpose of the games is to encourage the young sporting talent and generate inter-provincial harmony among the youth. The allocated amount has been reflected in the development budget of Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC).