

# Youth Universities Network on Sustainable Development Goals

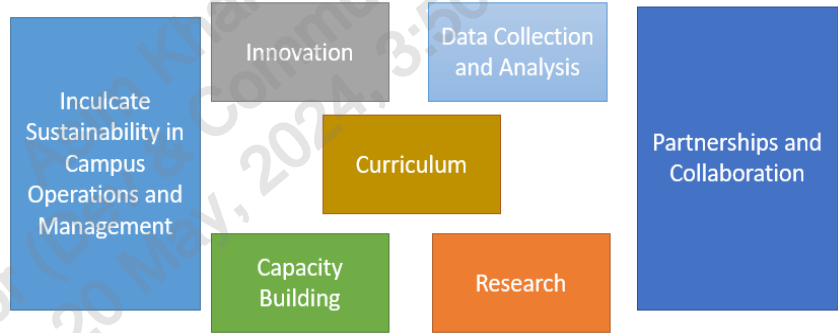
## Consultative Sessions in All Provinces and Regions

### Brief Overview of YoUNGs Initiative

The Youth Universities Network on Sustainable Development Goals (YoUNGs) was launched in January 2023 to involve academia in the SDGs engagement. Prior to this, a University Engagement program was launched in 2018. SDGs is an ambitious agenda and the achievement of its targets requires collective efforts of all stakeholders. The role of academia is core to achieve SDGs in the evidence based policy as well as teaching the sustainability curriculum to the students and comply with the spirit of SDGs, i.e. inclusivity, equity and sustainability.



Universities play a crucial role in contributing to the implementation



The idea behind YoUNGs was to accelerate the implementation of SDGs and enhance the role of academia through awareness raising, advocacy and innovation. All universities were requested to nominate 17 SDG ambassadors to form a formal group of YoUNGs and identify one focal person from faculty to liaise with the Ministry. YoUNGs is instrumental in sensitizing the masses about sustainable development and its relevance to the life practices.

### Consultative Sessions in Provinces

The SDGs team conducted six consultative sessions in all provinces and two regions. The universities were requested to organize an SDG workshop and bring together all their ambassadors and faculty members, as well as extend the invitation to other universities in their cities. The six sessions were held at the following institutes:



Applied Economic Research Centre, University of Karachi, Karachi	26 <sup>th</sup> February, 2024
University of Punjab, Lahore	28 <sup>th</sup> February, 2024
Azad Jammu and Kashmir University, Muzaffarabad	1 <sup>st</sup> March, 2024
Gandhara University, Peshawar	4 <sup>th</sup> March, 2024
Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS), Quetta	6 <sup>th</sup> March, 2024
Karakorum International University, Gilgit	29 <sup>th</sup> March, 2024

### Objectives of the Consultative Sessions

The objectives of these consultative sessions at universities can be summed up as follows:

- i. Sensitize universities about SDGs and what role can they play in the implementation of SDGs;
- ii. Inform the universities about the progress on SDGs and the role of Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives in the achievement of SDGs;
- iii. Learn about the work being done by the universities for implementation of SDGs and the role that YoUNGS ambassadors are playing in these achievements;
- iv. Brainstorm on future course of action for implementation of the YoUNGS initiative.



### Key Takeaways from the Consultative Sessions

- i. To improve the coordination between universities, there is a need to nominate one university on each SDG for each province. The nominated university would liaise with all universities of that province to report on SDG initiatives as well as take lead for reporting on SDGs.
- ii. The SDGs section at the provincial Planning and Development departments need to be engaged for SDGs to assist the universities for better implementation SDGs and arrange financing for initiatives.
- iii. Some universities have aligned their curriculum with SDGs and ensure that their research complies with one SDG at least. However, some of the regions are still struggling with awareness of SDGs.
- iv. A YoUNGS portal to be developed where all research, initiatives and projects of universities can be displayed.
- v. The level of engagement and coordination in Peshawar and Quetta was impressive. In order to accelerate it further, international stakeholders and private sector may be requested to regularly collaborate for SDG related initiatives/projects.



- vi. The ideas of students in developing association with SDGs in Sindh were more influenced by the prevalent cultural traits of the city. For example, students thought about sustainability and inculcate it in entrepreneurial ventures and sustainable community service.

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