

**Written Statement by The American Pakistan Foundation
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The Poorest of the world are being left behind. We need to reach out and lift them into our lifeboat. – UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, 2011

In accordance to the provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-sixth session of the Commission (E/CN.5/2017/L.1) on strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all, Family Education Services Foundation (FESF) and American Pakistan Foundation (APF) are hopeful as global leaders meet to review action pertaining to situation of social groups: (i) World programme of action concerning disabled persons; (ii) Standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities; and (iii) World programme of action for youth.

Discussions on eradicating poverty must include the dialogue on the role of social protection floors. Social protection is the key to addressing all forms of poverty. As mandated by the International Labor Organization (ILO), universal social protection coverage and social security standards including the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, No. 202, adopted by 185 states in 2012, outline the importance of preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion.

We urge Pakistan and other UN member states to develop national social protection floors policies (through the national planning commissions) to secure the following social security guarantees (subject to existing international obligations):

1. Access to essential health care, including maternity care;
2. Basic income security for children, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services;
3. Basic income security for persons in active age who are unable to earn sufficient income, in particular in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability;
4. Basic income security for older persons.

With the adoption of the SDGs, there is a new momentum for strong positive impacts of social protection with cross-cutting policy approach to make a real difference for people as it spreads across the 17 SDGs. Research indicates evidence that social protection can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in terms of human capital development, social risk management, social cohesion, macroeconomic resilience and the promotion of inclusive economic growth by combatting poverty and reducing inequalities.

Although the eradication agenda, Agenda 2030, vows to *leave no one behind* by focusing on poverty, hunger, health, learning, gender, water, energy, sanitation, jobs and decent work, cities, industrialization, societies, etc., and has identified those left behind (individuals on the bottom of the income distribution, working poor, smallholder farmers, rural populations, roma, indigenous and other minority ethnic groups, elder people, children, women and disabled), the national political realities are much different and policy measures and implementations are far from reach. These overlapping deprivations and interlocking constraints lead to cumulative effects¹.

We recommend varied, multi-dimensional and region-specific approaches to development policy with relevant stakeholder partnership.

We recommend leveraging the move to sustainability with conducive development practices and accessibility.

We recommend deepening the normative basis with fostering collective behavior, civil society voice and accountability and special emphasis on minority participation.

In the context of ending poverty in all its forms and to ensure dignity and equality, **we remind** Pakistan and other UN member states the centrality of disability inclusion in Agenda 2030 ²in the following goals:

- (i) Global Goal 4: Guaranteeing equal and accessible education by building inclusive learning environments and providing the needed assistance for persons with disabilities;
- (ii) Global Goal 8: Promoting inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment allowing persons with disabilities to fully access the job market;
- (iii) Global Goal 10: Emphasizing the social, economic and political inclusion of persons with disabilities;

¹ Expert Group Meeting, June 2016, NYC, input from Human Development Report Office, UNDP.

² UN Enable, www.un.org/disabilities

- (iv) Global Goal 11: Creating accessible cities and water resources, affordable accessible and sustainable transport systems, providing universal access to safe, inclusive, accessible and green public spaces;
- (v) Global Goal 17: Underlining the importance of data collection and monitoring of the SDGs, emphasis on disability disaggregated data

With one billion persons with disabilities worldwide, translating into 1 in 5 of the world's poorest people have disabilities, it is recognized that disability is both a cause and consequence of poverty. Therefore, it is imperative for policy makers and stakeholders to prioritize the issue.

We urge Pakistan and other developing states to interpret text of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs through the lens of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The emerging issue, "Promoting integrated policies for poverty eradication: Youth development in the 2030 Agenda", FESF & APF feel education is at the heart of the discussion and solution. As we head into the SDGs, the world is in a unique and unprecedented position to make investments and policy decisions informed by rigorous evidence about what works and effective strategies for human capital formation and poverty reduction. Evidence-based programs are not sufficient in and of themselves to eradicate poverty, nor are they appropriate policy interventions in all contexts³. We encourage policymakers to combine theory, descriptive evidence and evidence from rigorous evaluations to help make decisions regarding effective interventions. In Pakistan (as in most developing regions of the world) enrollment in primary schools does not guarantee that students are learning and retaining content as an estimated 250 million primary school children lack basic reading, writing, and numeracy skills⁴.

We recommend inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. Policymakers must focus on basic skills and direct instruction towards learning levels.

Family Education Services Foundation (FESF) with America Pakistan Foundation (APF), our UN collaborative partner, **urge Pakistan** and other UN member states accelerate their commitments to the eradication of poverty, in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty.

³ J-PAL and IPA Policy Bulletin. 2015. "Building Stable Livelihoods for the Ultra-Poor." Cambridge, MA: Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab and Innovations for Poverty Action.

⁴ EGM, June 1, 2016, cited Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) India. 2014. <http://www.asercentre.org/>