



Mr. Muhammad Usman Dar

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ICMA Pakistan: The Prime Minister's 'Kamyab Jawan' program aims to empower the 'youth' to play a role in the socio-economic development of Pakistan. Please briefly apprise about the key initiatives taken and being planned under this program?

Usman Dar: Over 68 percent of Pakistan's estimated population is below the age of thirty and our top priority is to empower this youth dividend. Kamyab Jawan is the government's flagship program that aims at creating opportunities for knowledge, skills, and leadership development of the youth. The program is empowering Pakistani youth through various youth-focused initiatives that are focused on three main priority areas viz. Employment, Education, and Engagement.

Kamyab Jawan Loan Scheme of Rs. 100 billion is designed to enable startups by providing loans to potential entrepreneurs on easy terms and conditions to promote entrepreneurship culture in Pakistan which is the fastest route to job creation and economic empowerment of youth. So far business loans of approximately Rs. 18 billion have been disbursed to more than 14,000 young entrepreneurs which means the establishment of an equal amount of businesses and financial stability of 14,000 families.

On the other hand, the Skills Scholarships Scheme (Hunarmand Pakistan) of Rs. 10 billion was launched to train and equip the youth with market-driven industry high-tech and high-end traditional skills to gain employment in domestic and international markets.

Through Skills Scholarships, advanced skills training to 1700,000 young Pakistanis have been imparted, out of which 50,000 trainees have been trained in high technology courses.

Under this program, we established youth engagement platforms such as the National Youth Council and PM's Tigers Force, which seek to tap into the unbounded enthusiasm of the youth for social cause, political participation, policymaking, and civil engagement.

We have recently collaborated with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) for five new youth engagement initiatives of approximately Rs. 4 billion intending to involve young students in sports and constructive co-curricular activities.

ICMA Pakistan: ICMA Pakistan learned that being an entrepreneur you have a success story. Please identify some areas and skills required for successful achievements in a professional career?

Usman Dar: The key to a successful professional career is uprightness and dedication with your work, a sense of responsibility, and having a clear and focused vision with the right direction. If you want to achieve exemplary career success, put your heart and soul into your work.

ICMA Pakistan: What steps your Ministry is taking for the skill development of youth, especially IT Skills so that they can launch their startups?

Usman Dar: For skill development of youth Kamyab Jawan program has a distant component of Education under which Skills for All/Skills Scholarship program of Rs. 10 billion is designed to uplift the quality of Technical and Vocational Education and equip youth with market-driven conventional and high-tech skills/training for career mobility and growth.

Through Skills Scholarships, intense skills training to 1700,000 young trainees have been imparted out of which 50,000 trainees have been trained in high-end technology. We have success stories of many young people who are earning thousands of dollars through freelancing after getting trained from this program.

ICMA Pakistan: Will you be engaging the Universities and Professional institutions in Youth entrepreneurship programs? How ICMA Pakistan can participate in such programs?

Usman Dar: Abundant universities, colleges, and technical institutions across Pakistan are being engaged for Kamyab Jawan's Skills Scholarship program to impart high-tech and conventional courses. ICMA Pakistan can play a crucial role in raising awareness about the Kamyab Jawan program in their institution and encourage students to take benefit from this program by getting enrolled in the courses free of cost. This will surely enhance the outreach of the program at the grassroots level.

ICMA Pakistan: Freelancing is an innovative opportunity for new startups and a source of foreign remittances. What

is the vision of the Government about facilitating the Pakistani youth to explore international freelancing opportunities?

Usman Dar: To encourage the culture of freelancing among young Pakistanis, relevant high-end courses have been imparted to the trainees of our Skills Scholarship program. I am sharing this with immense pleasure that the majority of those trained youngsters are now earning thousands of dollars through freelancing. Moreover, recently we have also organized an e-commerce youth conference in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and USAID to explore and discuss its future prospects and present recommendations to empower youth in the e-commerce sector and upscale the industry in Pakistan as per international standards.

ICMA Pakistan: Please share if there are any plans for seeking internships and scholarships for the Pakistani youth in foreign countries?

Usman Dar: We are continuously exploring opportunities for giving international exposure to young talented people of Pakistan which are regularly floated through Kamyab Jawan's official portal. Under the collaboration of the Kamyab Jawan program and PepsiCo, 1000 internships have been given to undergraduate students to work with PepsiCo, a global organization. Furthermore, Boot camp for entrepreneurship training with Jazz was organized to build and enhance entrepreneurial skills in potential entrepreneurs. We also have a state-of-the-art national job portal with national as well as overseas job and internship opportunities to broaden the exposure of Pakistani youth.

ICMA Pakistan: ICMA Pakistan is collaborating with various Government departments to add value to economic development and improving governance. Can you identify few areas where ICMA Pakistan can collaborate in Youth development programs of the Government?

Usman Dar: We highly appreciate and look forward to collaboration with ICMA Pakistan for the greater benefit and empowerment of the youth. ICMA Pakistan can play an effective role in spreading awareness among the masses about the initiatives of the Kamyab Jawan Program which will ultimately enhance its outreach for the benefit of a maximum number of people in the country.

ICMA Pakistan: The Members and Students of ICMA Pakistan would love to learn from your professional achievements. What is your message to the members and students of ICMA Pakistan?

Usman Dar: As I have mentioned before, the key to a successful professional career is uprightness and dedication with your work, a sense of responsibility, and having a clear and targeted vision with the right direction. You must put your heart and soul into your work to achieve exemplary career success in your life.

The Editorial Board thanks Mr. Muhammad Usman Dar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs for giving his exclusive interview for Management Accountant Journal.