Accelerate Prosperity organises a conference on Economic Opportunities in Northern Pakistan

Islamabad, Pakistan, 28-29 September 2019 - Accelerate Prosperity (AP), an initiative of the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) and Industrial Promotion Services (IPS), organised one of the largest impact investment conferences in Pakistan, APImpactInvest Conference 2019.

The conference highlighted economic opportunities in the mountainous region of northern Pakistan and showcased 78 entrepreneurs from Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. The entrepreneurs shared their stories, products and services, which represented a diversity of sectors, including agro-processing, education, health, technology, hospitality, adventure sports, logistics and warehousing. More than 150 successful entrepreneurs, business executives, impact investors and institutional representatives from Pakistan, along with 50 overseas Pakistanis, participated in the event.

In his speech as the Chief Guest of the opening session, Zubair Gillani, Chairman of the Board of Investments (BOI), Pakistan, praised AP’s initiative and the overall work of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in Pakistan. He emphasised the need for the Government and the private sector to unlock the potential of the country, specifically the untapped regions like Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral.

The session was also attended by Ambassadors and representatives of diplomatic missions of Canada, United States, Norway, Italy, France, Mauritius, Switzerland, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, representatives of the Federal and Gilgit-Baltistan Government and its subsidiaries such as Ignite, senior executives from the development sector including ADB, IFC, UNDP, UNICEF, PPAF, Market Development Facility of the Palladium Group, AKDN agencies in Pakistan, and representatives of the private sector including Arif Habib Group, The Indus Entrepreneurs, Izhar Constructions, financial institutions and others.

A number of panel discussions on entrepreneurship and impact investing took place over the two days. The concluding session focused on discussions related to the new initiative of the Aga Khan Foundation @Work on the future of work and included topics such as “@Work: Promoting Freelancing Business Intermediaries for Youth.”

In her closing remarks, Guest of Honour, Marguax McDonald, highlighted the importance of promoting business activities in Pakistan and the contribution of the Government of Canada towards this goal. She also praised the role of AKDN and its partnership with the High Commission of Canada in improving the quality of life specifically in northern Pakistan and enabling the youth to benefit from economic opportunities.
Imran Shams, Country Manager, Accelerate Prosperity Pakistan, provided a summation of the conference and highlighted the national vision of AP for Pakistan, along with its plans to work closely with the Government, the private sector and the Pakistani diaspora overseas.

APImpactInvest Conference 2019 reinforced AKDN’s commitment to the development of Pakistan and the realisation of the country’s economic potential.

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