SDC DISPATCH

Your Daily Conference Update

29th Sustainable Development Conference

Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption

2 – 5 November 2026 Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan



DAY

1

Monday, 2 November 2026

COMPILED BY: Ramsha Mehboob Khan



ECONOMY | ENVIRONMENT | EQUITY

Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption

The 29th SDC on "Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption" is being convened at a moment of profound global uncertainty. The convergence of geopolitical conflict, climate shocks, economic fragmentation, technological transformation, and erosion of multilateral cooperation is driving a fundamental reconfiguration of the development landscape that extends beyond implementation challenges to fundamental questions of purpose, governance, collective action and policy autonomy.

In this context, development can no longer be understood as a linear progression towards predefined targets. Instead, it must be reimagined as a process of securing resilience, managing risk, and sustaining human well-being in an increasingly volatile world.

This rethinking of development requires renewed attention to the **three Es of Development: Economy, Environment and Equity.**

The Conference will, therefore, move beyond a **retrospective assessment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and instead focus on what comes next. It will explore how development frameworks must evolve to strengthen economic security, environmental sustainability, and social well-being in an increasingly uncertain and rapidly changing world.

Alongside the 29th SDC, SDPI's 4th Sustainability Investment Expo (SIE) will also be organised showcasing stalls, Capacity Building Hubs, Fireside Chats, and Sustainability Awards.

$1 trillion economy by 2035 and a $3 trillion economy by 2047 PROF. AHSAN IQBAL	**$10 million** Green Field programme to provide young people with equity-based investment MUSADIK MALIK	**$550 billion** in climate-related investment through 2035 UMAR AHSAN, OICCI
24.3 percent households experiencing moderate or severe food insecurity in 2024-25 DR SHAISTA KHAN JADOON	**2.8 degrees** global temperature will increase by the end of this century DR ABID SULERI	**below 0.5 percent** soil organic matter, against an ideal level of more than 2 percent ZAWAR KAZMI, PEPSICO

DAY 1 IN NUMBERS

Figures from the Opening Day

As reported by the press, 2–3 November 2026

3.7 billion
people lived in countries where debt servicing consumed more resources than combined spending on education and healthcare
DR MUSADIK MALIK · APP

48%
of revenue goes to debt servicing
DR MUSADIK MALIK · THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE

2.2% vs 5.2%
wealthy countries paid around 2.2 per cent interest on borrowed funds, compared with 5.2 per cent for developing countries
DR MUSADIK MALIK · APP

$59 billion
cumulative climate-related losses over the past three decades (State Bank of Pakistan)
SENATOR SHERRY REHMAN · DAWN

50 GW
Pakistan had imported more than 50 gigawatts of solar panels worth nearly US$18 billion
SENATOR SHERRY REHMAN · THE NEWS

Economy, Environment and Equity

This rethinking of development requires renewed attention to the three Es of Development: Economy, Environment and Equity.



ECONOMY

OPENING PLENARY
Ahsan calls for new global financial architecture to address debt, climate disruptions

OPENING PLENARY
Bangladeshi minister proposes industrial transformation, regional networks

PLENARY 1.2
Private sector a key partner in addressing climate change & sustainable development challenges: Dr Suleri

ENVIRONMENT

PLENARY 1.3
Climate action requires decentralization, empowerment of local authorities, say experts

PLENARY 1.3
Pakistan's Judiciary lead the world in defining climate law: Justice Jawad

PLENARY 1.4
Rumina calls for shift to regenerative agriculture as water scarcity, food insecurity threaten Pakistan

EQUITY

OPENING PLENARY
Musadik says Pakistan needs a pro-poor model of development

PLENARY 1.4
Climate change, shrinking cultivable land making farming a riskier livelihood, warns Dr Suleri

PLENARY 1.5
Experts call for integrated climate resilience, social protection framework to protect vulnerable communities

DAY 1 AT A GLANCE · MONDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2026

Eight Messages from Day 1

What ministers, parliamentarians and experts told the 29th Sustainable Development Conference, in the words reported by the press

1

A new global financial architecture

"A conflict thousands of kilometres away can raise the cost of a Pakistani farmer's fertiliser, a factory's production, and a family's daily meal."

PROF. AHSAN IQBAL · BUSINESS RECORDER

2

Continuity in sustainable development policies

"Countries with diversified economies, strong institutions, technological capacity and skilled human resources were better positioned to withstand global disruptions and convert challenges into opportunities."

PROF. AHSAN IQBAL · THE NEWS

4

Closed for debt but open for business in equity

"We collect Rs16 trillion, of which roughly Rs8 trillion is paid in debt servicing. That is about 48% of our revenue."

DR MUSADIK MALIK · THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE

3

Rights-based and climate-resilient development

"For the poor, development is measured in generations, not dollars."

DR MUSADIK MALIK · APP

5

Climate change a multi-layered crisis

"We are paying for a crisis we contributed very little to creating."

SENATOR SHERRY REHMAN · DAWN

6

Climate crisis, AI, energy security must be tackled together

"AI requires electricity, water, land and raw materials."

SENATOR SHERRY REHMAN · THE NEWS

8

Private sector a key partner

Governments alone, he said, could not mobilise all the financing, innovation and technical expertise required.

DR ABID QAIYUM SULERI · NAZRANA TIMES

7

A century of water scarcity

"We are in an Axial Age. The advent of El Niño means that we are in a century of water scarcity."

SENATOR SHERRY REHMAN · URDUPOINT

Quotes and phrases are reproduced as published by APP, Business Recorder, Dawn, The Express Tribune, The News, UrduPoint, and Nazrana Times (2–3 November 2026). Full links appear in the Day 1 Press Coverage section.

How Day 1 Advances the Sustainable Development Goals



9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Inaugural Plenary | Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption

Zaki Auditorium



Advances SDGs 1, 4, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 17 through calls for a new global financial architecture, pro-poor development, labour protection against extreme heat and AI-enabled youth employment.

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Sustainability Investment Expo: Awards Plenary & Ribbon Cutting | Connecting Ideas, Investment and Impact for Resilient Development

Zaki Auditorium



Advances SDGs 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 17 by connecting private investment, green energy cooperation, circular-economy practice and women's livelihoods with climate action.

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

SI Expo Fireside Chat 1: Public Private Partnerships for Water Stewardship

Hall 203 • PepsiCo Pakistan



Advances SDGs 6 and 17 through public–private partnership for water stewardship.

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Strengthening Climate Action: Priorities and Proposals for Effective Implementation

Zaki Auditorium • UNEP, Southern Voice



Advances SDGs 6, 11, 13, 16 and 17 by focusing on the implementation of climate action, local decision-making, water scarcity, climate law and regional cooperation.

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Plenary: Rethinking Agriculture through Regenerative Practices: Restoring Soil, Water and Nature's Balance

Zaki Auditorium • PepsiCo Pakistan



Advances SDGs 1, 2, 6, 13, 15 and 17 through regenerative agriculture that restores soil and water, strengthens food security and builds partnerships with farmers.

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Plenary: Building Climate-Resilient Communities: Linking Nature-Based Solutions and Social Protection

Theatre Room • GIZ



Advances SDGs 1, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13 and 15 by linking social protection, nature-based solutions and climate-risk data to protect vulnerable communities.

OPENING PLENARY 9:30 AM • Zaki Auditorium

Ahsan calls for new global financial architecture to address debt, climate disruptions

Bangladeshi minister proposes industrial transformation, regional networks

Musadik says Pakistan needs a pro-poor model of development





ISLAMABAD (02 November 2026): Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal has called for restructuring the post-Second World War international financial architecture to address mounting debt, climate disasters and technological disruptions.

He was delivering a keynote address at the opening ceremony of four-day 29th Sustainable Development Conference being organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute at Allama Iqbal Open University here on Monday. The overarching theme of this year's conference is 'Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption'.

Ahsan Iqbal said existing multilateral financial institutions lacked the capacity to respond to the development challenges of the 21st century, particularly climate change and the growing financial vulnerabilities of developing countries.

"These institutions have no space for climate challenge mitigation," he said, stressing the need for a new international financial architecture capable of supporting countries vulnerable to climate disasters and other emerging global challenges.

He called for a new global dialogue to restructure multilateral institutions, arguing that geopolitical conflicts, trade restrictions, sanctions and competition among major powers were increasingly influencing energy supplies, food prices, shipping routes, investment decisions and public finances. He further said Pakistan needs to adopt a proactive approach towards technological transformation through investment in foundational education, scientific research, technological absorption, entrepreneurship and institutional capacity.

> *Countries that rely exclusively on low-cost labour as their competitive advantage will face growing challenges from automation and increasingly sophisticated robotics.*
>
> PROF. AHSAN IQBAL

"Countries that rely exclusively on low-cost labour as their competitive advantage will face growing challenges from automation and increasingly sophisticated robotics," he cautioned. Referring to the growing debt burden, Iqbal cited a UNCTAD report, saying 3.7 billion people lived in countries where public debt interest payments exceeded spending on health or education.

He said Pakistan had set an ambitious target of becoming a $1 trillion economy by 2035 and a $3 trillion economy by 2047, when the country would celebrate its centenary.

Advisor to Bangladesh Prime Minister Rashid Almehmood Titumir called for a new South Asian development paradigm based on industrial transformation, regional production networks, decent employment and stronger social protection. He said Bangladesh-Pakistan cooperation could set an example for the region.

He said the international economic and political order was undergoing structural transformation, requiring developing countries to rethink conventional development strategies and strengthen economic resilience.

"These disruptions are not merely external shocks to be absorbed. They are reshaping the conditions under which countries can industrialise, create employment, mobilize domestic resources, finance development and secure economic sovereignty," he observed.

Titumir proposed integrated production networks connecting South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Middle East and North Africa, bringing together primary, intermediate and finished-goods production. He said investment should build domestic capabilities, generate employment, transfer technology and strengthen linkages with the wider economy rather than merely attract capital. He also called for reinvigorating the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to address emerging economic challenges.

He said Bangladesh is now aspiring to become a manufacturing hub and export gateway, leveraging its strategic geographical location.

Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Musadik Malik declared that Pakistan would no longer pursue development through additional borrowing, saying the country was open to equity investment and debt swaps but not further debt.



That shop is closed. Whatever development we undertake must be fair, durable and genuinely ours.

MUSADIK MALIK

"That shop is closed. Whatever development we undertake must be fair, durable and genuinely ours," he said.

Malik said Pakistan collected around Rs16 trillion in revenue, of which approximately Rs8 trillion was consumed by debt servicing, accounting for 48-49 percent of total revenue.

"We are not opposed to debt swaps. We are willing to undertake development through debt swaps. We are open for business when it comes to equity, but we are not open to more debt," he said. He said Pakistan needed a development model that protected poor communities from repeated destruction caused by floods, glacier outbursts and extreme weather. Malik also called for recognizing extreme heat as a labour-rights issue, saying workers exposed to unbearable temperatures should receive paid leave without losing their income. "This is not merely weather. This is not simply climate. This is a tax imposed on poor people, a tax they pay through their own bodies," he said.

He also proposed using artificial intelligence to create employment opportunities for young people rather than displacing them, enabling graduates to train AI systems in regional languages, including Balochi, Brahui, Sindhi and Urdu. Malik announced a $10 million Green Field programme to provide young people with equity-based investment for scientific experimentation and innovative solutions, with the first competition planned within three months.

SDPI Executive Director Abid Qayum Suleri, Chairman SDPI Board of Governors Shafqat Kakakhel and Allama Iqbal Open University Vice-Chancellor Nasir Mahmood also addressed the inaugural session, highlighting the importance of sustainable development, regional cooperation and adapting development strategies to emerging global challenges.

Press Coverage Details →click

PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS | INAUGURAL SESSION

29th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC): Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption















Private sector a key partner in addressing climate change & sustainable development challenges: Dr Suleri

Expo 2026 Highlights Environment, Economy and Equity as Pillars of Resilient Growth





ISLAMABAD (02 November 2026): Pakistan must integrate environmental sustainability, economic competitiveness and social equity into its development agenda to address escalating climate risks, unlock green investment and ensure inclusive growth.

This was stated by the speakers at the Sustainable Development Expo 2026 organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) at Allama Iqbal Open University here on Monday.

Held under the theme "Connecting Ideas, Investment and Impact for Resilient Development," the expo brought together policymakers, diplomats, business leaders, researchers and development practitioners to explore practical solutions for climate resilience, sustainable industrialization and equitable economic opportunities.

Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja and Prime Minister's Coordinator on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the inauguration of the exhibition

The occasion also marked the launch of SDPI's anthology, "Sustainable Development in the Emerging World Disorder," incorporating key policy recommendations from its 28th Sustainable Development Conference, alongside Volume 10 of the Journal of Development Policy Research and Practice.



Speaking on the occasion, SDPI Executive Director Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri stressed that the private sector must be recognized as a key partner in addressing climate change and advancing sustainable development. He said governments alone could not mobilize the financial resources, innovation and technical expertise required to confront mounting environmental and economic challenges.

Dr Suleri noted that the perception of environmental sustainability as a constraint on profitability was changing, with greener businesses increasingly demonstrating greater competitiveness and economic efficiency. He warned that Pakistani industries must prepare for evolving international trade requirements, including the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), as global markets increasingly demand cleaner production processes and transparent carbon-emission reporting.

Highlighting the importance of international partnerships, he appreciated Denmark's continued technical and institutional support for Pakistan's transition towards a greener economy.

Danish Ambassador to Pakistan Martha Morsing said climate change, water scarcity and resource constraints posed growing threats to economic stability worldwide, requiring urgent cooperation between governments, businesses and research institutions.

Sharing Denmark's experience, she said economic growth and environmental protection were not mutually exclusive, noting that her country had expanded its economy while reducing carbon emissions. She described energy efficiency as the cheapest available energy resource and expressed Denmark's commitment to strengthening commercial cooperation with Pakistan in green energy, energy-efficient technologies and sustainable industrial solutions.

The ambassador emphasized that the expo could connect Pakistani innovators and businesses with international expertise, financing and potential partners, helping transform sustainable development ideas into commercially viable initiatives.

Representing the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI), Umar Ahsan described climate change as an existential challenge for Pakistan, warning that repeated climate disasters were undermining economic stability, livelihoods and development prospects.

He said the devastating floods of 2022 had caused more than $30 billion in damage and economic losses, diverting resources that could otherwise have supported education, healthcare and productive investment.

Citing OICCI's climate report, “Climate Acceleration: From Commitment to Competitive Edge in a Decisive Decade,” he said Pakistan required more than $550 billion in climate-related investment through 2035, equivalent to approximately $50 billion annually, against combined federal and provincial development budgets of around $15 billion.

He stressed that public financing alone could not bridge this gap and called for stronger private investment, bankable climate projects, predictable policies and improved access to concessional financing.

Mr Ahsan also underlined the importance of social equity in climate action, saying women, small farmers, vulnerable communities and small businesses must have access to resources enabling them to adapt to water scarcity, flooding, extreme heat and agricultural disruptions.

He urged businesses to adopt credible environmental reporting and avoid greenwashing, while calling on policymakers and financial institutions to facilitate investment in climate-resilient infrastructure and sustainable production.

The event also featured the Sustainability Awards, recognizing practical initiatives across climate adaptation, circular economy, clean energy, sustainable agriculture, digital innovation and inclusive development.

Packages Group received recognition for climate adaptation and resilience, while Ismail Rezan Private Limited and Nestlé Pakistan were honoured in the circular economy and resource efficiency category, including Nestlé's Clean Gilgit-Baltistan initiative.

Mari Energy Limited received an award for its solar programme in North Waziristan and Ghorki, while PepsiCo Pakistan was recognised for regenerative agriculture practices supporting soil health, water conservation and biodiversity.

Coca-Cola received recognition for Pakistan's first plastic road initiative, while the University of Lahore was honoured for research promoting sustainable urban water management and climate awareness.

Fruit of Sustainability received the digital innovation and responsible AI award, while Laurel Pakistan was recognised for investing in women's skills and livelihoods to promote inclusive growth.

Press Coverage Details →

SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

Packages Group climate adaptation and resilience	**Ismail Rezan Private Limited** circular economy and resource efficiency	**Nestlé Pakistan** Clean Gilgit-Baltistan initiative
Mari Energy Limited solar programme in North Waziristan and Ghorki	**PepsiCo Pakistan** regenerative agriculture practices	**Coca-Cola** Pakistan's first plastic road initiative
University of Lahore sustainable urban water management and climate awareness	**Fruit of Sustainability** digital innovation and responsible AI award	**Laurel Pakistan** investing in women's skills and livelihoods

PLENARY 1.3 2:00 PM • Zaki Auditorium • UNEP, Southern Voice

Climate action requires decentralization, empowerment of local authorities, say experts

Pakistan's Judiciary lead the world in defining climate law: Justice Jawad





ISLAMABAD (02 November 2026): Chairperson of Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman, while drawing a parallel between two eras of ecological neglect: the historical period when industries consumed massive amounts of fossil fuels and emitted carbon while the world looked away, and the present day, where Artificial Intelligence and data centers are consuming immense quantities of water, has said the world is still not paying enough attention to all the critical issues.

She was speaking at a plenary, titled: 'Strengthening Climate Action: Priorities and Proposals for Effective Implementation', organized on the inaugural of 4-day Sustainable Development Conference held by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute at the Allama Iqbal Open University here on Monday. The overarching theme of this year's conference is 'Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption'.

> *What happens in Pakistan won't stay in Pakistan; be it heat waves, floods, or cost of living crisis and protests.*
>
> SENATOR SHERRY REHMAN

"We are in an Axial Age. The advent of El Niño means that we are in a century of water scarcity," the Senator said, noting that Pakistan is stuck in recovery mode. "Every summer, there is a disaster and even if there is a gap, the country remains in recovery mode," she said and added that AI, climate impact, and water scarcity are all connected and it is the high time that the world pays attention, because "What happens in Pakistan won't stay in Pakistan; be it heat waves, floods, or cost of living crisis and protests."

Justice Jawad Hassan of the Lahore High Court (LHC) while highlighting a number of initiatives by the Pakistan's judiciary towards climate action, noted that Pakistan has led the world not only in turning soft laws and climate warnings into hard laws

enshrined in the constitution, but also become the country to have complied with all climate related international provisions in the ESG framework.

"Judgments issued by the courts of Pakistan have been commended all across the world, and have also been included in a Cambridge University's book on Islam and the environmental law," Justice Hassan said, adding that Pakistan has been developing environmental and conservation strategies since the seventies.

Minister of State for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr Shezra Mansab Ali Khan Kharal, said that climate change and disaster know no boundaries, "Nepal's disaster is a recent example, and our mountains are very similar." She said that these changes are also affecting our economies, and "the Government of Pakistan recognizes this urgency". She listed multiple policies and plans that the government has issued to tackle environmental challenges, including the National Adaptation Plan, National Drought Plan, National Climate Finance Strategy, and the Climate Prosperity Plan. "An Investor Book has also been developed to streamline projects and investment," she added.

Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) Executive Director Dr. Abid Suleri highlighted the challenges in climate adaption approaches, potential solutions and the challenges in the implementation of those solutions. "Climate action is as good as it is implemented, and not a lot of it actually does. As they say Islamabad is a graveyard of very good policies," he said, adding that in the upcoming UN General Assembly there will be a discussion on the post SDG-era roadmap, which is why Pakistan needs actionable and potent "macro, meso and micro level implementation of climate action."

Climate action is as good as it is implemented, and not a lot of it actually does. As they say Islamabad is a graveyard of very good policies.

DR. ABID SULERI

Sharing the findings of UNEP Report on Global Emissions Gap, he noted the shocking revelation that the global temperature will increase by 2.8 degrees by the end of this century, far ahead of the 1.5 degrees predicted earlier. Dr. Suleri also noted that 99% of the climate action falls outside the ambit of the Ministry of Climate Change, which necessitates integration between multiple ministries.

Tracy Mamoun from Southern Voice said climate action should not be in silos. Multiple countries are facing similar issues and require a coordinated approach to their resolution," she added. She also raised a few questions regarding the current level and approach of climate action across the world. She said, "impact of climate change is often localized, so there is a question of decision-making authority, which often does not lie with the local governments."

Mamoun also spoke on broader projects that can impact the climate and environmental realities on a local level but local parties often do not have a say in what projects should be taken on board by the central governments. Thirdly, she linked the same issues to the financing for climate issues, saying that decentralized financial mechanisms are needed. Finally, she raised the point of integrating climate action into development priorities, instead of dealing with projects as additional administrative responsibilities.

Mozaharul Alam, Climate Change Programme Regional Coordinator at the UN Environment Programme said that while the UNEP report has warned of the higher temperature hike globally, an even more significant point to consider is the uneven rise. "Asia Pacific experiences global warming at twice the rate as the rest of the world," he noted, adding, "the rise in temperature will be different across different countries and across different sectors, such as water and food, and even health." He said that "context specificity" is extremely important while considering the impact of climate change on our current development and infrastructure, as well as on future development and infrastructure.

Alam also spoke on private climate financing and said that while the private sector offers an important source of financing, "we need to be mindful of their capacity and limitations," since private sector financing is almost always focused on resolving private and specific issues, such as clearing one supply-chain, instead of broader goals that can only be catered to through public climate financing.

Press Coverage Details →

PLENARY 1.4

4:00 PM • Zaki Auditorium • PepsiCo Pakistan

Rumina calls for shift to regenerative agriculture as water scarcity, food insecurity threaten Pakistan

Climate change, shrinking cultivable land making farming a riskier livelihood, warns Dr Suleri





ISLAMABAD (02 November 2026): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change Rumina Khursheed Alam has called for an urgent transition towards regenerative agriculture, warning that worsening water scarcity, climate-induced disasters and declining soil health are threatening Pakistan's food security, agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods.

She was speaking at a plenary, titled: Rethinking agriculture through regenerative practices; restoring soil, water and nature's balance, organized at the 4-day 29th Sustainable Development Conference held by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with PepsiCo Pakistan on Monday,

> *It's now or never. The way we grow our food must therefore be part of our response to water scarcity.*
>
> RUMINA KHURSHEED ALAM

"It's now or never. The way we grow our food must therefore be part of our response to water scarcity," she said, stressing the need to restore soil health, conserve water and strengthen the resilience of farming communities against climate shocks.

Rumina said agriculture contributed 23.44 per cent to Pakistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provided employment to roughly one-third of the country's workforce, making climate-related disruptions in the sector a threat to the wider economy.

She said Pakistan's per capita water availability had declined to around 1,000 cubic metres annually, approaching the water-scarcity threshold, while more than 90 per cent of the country's water resources were consumed by agriculture.

She attributed mounting pressure on water resources to increasingly unpredictable rainfall, extreme weather events, groundwater depletion and rising demand, arguing that improved agricultural practices were essential to address the crisis.

Referring to the devastating 2022 floods, she said more than eight million people were displaced, while damage to agriculture and livestock was estimated at $3.7 billion. She said climate disasters were not only destroying crops and livestock but also causing psychological trauma, displacement and forced migration among farming communities.

Highlighting the regional dimension of the crisis, Rumina said the Indus was part of a transboundary river basin and called for cooperation on water data and early warning systems, as climatic changes in upstream mountain systems could directly affect farming communities downstream.

Parliamentary Secretary for National Food Security and Research Dr Shaista Khan Jadoon revealed that the proportion of Pakistani households experiencing moderate or severe food insecurity had increased to 24.3 percent in 2024-25 from 15.92 percent in 2018-19.

She said food security was not simply about the availability of food but also whether families could afford nutritious diets and farmers had the economic capacity and confidence to continue investing in their land.

She said the government was developing the Pakistan Food Security Information System under the Prime Minister's initiative, bringing together agricultural production and market-price information through commodity dashboards covering wheat, vegetables, pulses and cereals to facilitate timely policy decisions.

Dr Jadoon said the government was also working with provincial administrations on an agriculture sector roadmap focusing on mechanisation, access to finance and youth-related reforms.

SDPI Executive Director Dr Abid Qayum Suleri warned that climate change, shrinking cultivable land and increasingly extreme weather conditions were undermining agricultural productivity and making farming a riskier livelihood, discouraging younger generations from entering the sector.

He said the weakening of traditional family support systems was forcing farmers to depend on middlemen for diesel, fertilizer and pesticides on credit at exorbitant premiums, further eroding their earnings after harvest.

At PepsiCo, we consider a farm as a living system and approach agriculture as one complete ecosystem.

ZAWAR KAZMI

Zawar Kazmi, Head of Agro at PepsiCo Pakistan, said Pakistan's agricultural ecosystem was deteriorating, with soil quality, water availability and biodiversity facing growing pressure from environmental degradation and climate change.

He revealed that soil organic matter had fallen below 0.5 percent against an ideal level of more than 2 percent, warning that declining soil health was threatening the sustainability of agricultural production.

“At PepsiCo, we consider a farm as a living system and approach agriculture as one complete ecosystem,” he said, stressing that healthy soil, adequate water, energy and biodiversity were interconnected requirements for better crop yields and agricultural resilience.

Silvia Giada, Programme Manager at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Thailand, called for integrating ecosystem-based adaptation into agricultural practices to protect farmers and communities from climate change.

She said regenerative agricultural practices could contribute to ecosystem-based adaptation by strengthening agricultural resilience and protecting the ecosystem services on which farming depended.

She cautioned against adopting a uniform approach to climate adaptation, saying interventions must be tailored to the economic, environmental and ecological conditions of individual regions.

Anila Hakim, Agro Sustainability Lead at PepsiCo Pakistan, emphasised stronger collaboration between the private sector, government and farmers to build climate-resilient agricultural value chains.

She called for greater investment in modern technology, knowledge-sharing and sustainable farming practices to improve productivity, conserve natural resources and make Pakistan's agriculture sector more competitive.

Press Coverage Details →

Experts call for integrated climate resilience, social protection framework to protect vulnerable communities





ISLAMABAD (02 November 2026): Pakistan needs an integrated approach linking climate risk assessments, disaster management, nature-based solutions, development planning and social protection to protect vulnerable communities from increasingly severe climate shocks, say experts and development practitioners.

This was the consensus developed at a high-level plenary, titled: 'Building Climate-Resilient Communities: Linking Nature-Based Solutions and Social Protection', organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) here at the Allama Iqbal Open University on Monday.

Johanna Knoess, Head of Adaptive Social Protection at GIZ Pakistan, said linking social protection databases with climate and disaster risk information was essential to ensure timely assistance to vulnerable communities. She said Pakistan had considerable data through institutions such as the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), the National Socio-Economic Registry, NADRA and the National Disaster Management Authority, but these databases had traditionally operated separately.

Ms Knoess said GIZ, with support from the German government and the European Union, was helping the government link BISP data with provincial databases and improve coordination between disaster management and social protection authorities.

She cited the launch of Pakistan's first-ever disaster risk policy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, under which social protection played a key role in enabling early action based on climate risk information.

Highlighting the exclusion of informal workers, particularly agricultural workers and women, from official databases, she said an initiative with the Sindh government had registered 600,000 households. She added that 800,000 women across Pakistan had received digital financial literacy training.

Abid Suleri, Executive Director of SDPI, said the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), established in 2016 with a $200 million Asian Development Bank loan, would focus

on innovative solutions rather than conventional infrastructure projects.

He also highlighted NDRMF's National Catastrophe early-warning model, which identifies disaster-prone areas. Integrating its information into the Planning Commission's project approval process would help incorporate preventive measures into development schemes from the outset.

Arif Goheer, Executive Director of the Global Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC), said fragmented data collection and the absence of an integrated framework linking climate projections, sectoral impacts and vulnerability assessments remained major obstacles to effective climate adaptation.

He said several agencies collected climate-related information, including baseline data, climate projections and casualty figures from floods and earthquakes, but the information was not interconnected, preventing policymakers from developing a comprehensive picture of climate risks.

Dr Mohamad Saleem, Director and Head of the SME, Housing and Sustainable Finance Department at the State Bank of Pakistan, said promoting a green and inclusive financial system was a key pillar of the central bank's five-year strategic plan.

He said the SBP introduced Green Banking Guidelines in 2017, with technical support from GIZ, requiring commercial banks to identify climate-related risks and develop policies to mitigate them. Banks were also advised to establish dedicated green banking departments, allocate resources and train staff.

Dr Asmat Nawaz, BISP Additional Secretary, said climate resilience and social protection were indispensable to improving the lives of marginalized communities. He said BISP data had played a key role in extending assistance whenever calamities struck, including during the 2022 floods, when the database supported initiatives such as house construction.

He said the introduction of social protection wallets and an interoperability mechanism would allow beneficiaries to withdraw their fixed cash assistance from any point-of-sale agent instead of being restricted to a designated agent. The change was intended to reduce beneficiaries' dependence on individual agents and eliminate opportunities for exploitation.

Meriem El Harouchi, Programme Manager for Migration, Forced Displacement and Resilience at the EU Delegation to Pakistan, said climate shocks quickly became economic and social liabilities, affecting poverty, livelihoods and inequality.

She said Pakistan's existing social protection programmes need to be connected with climate resilience and disaster management. Citing a 160-million-euro European Investment Bank package for rebuilding homes in Sindh and improving water quality in Karachi, she said better housing and safe water could reduce health risks and household expenses, helping families avoid falling into poverty.

Wolfgang Hesse, Cluster Coordinator for Energy, Climate Change and Just Transition at GIZ Pakistan, said the country contributed less than one per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions but remained among those hardest hit by climate change.

He said the 2022 floods affected 33 million people, claimed more than 1,730 lives and caused $14.9 billion in damage, while the 2025 floods affected 6.5 million people, claimed over 1,039 lives and caused $2.9 billion in damage.

Mr Hesse identified understanding risks, protecting natural resources and infrastructure, and directly supporting vulnerable families as essential components of climate resilience. He cited nature-based initiatives including a sponge city pilot in Multan, green roofs and rain gardens in schools in Charsadda and Peshawar, and agroforestry and climate-smart farming in Punjab.

Sanaullah Khan Hassanzai, Integrated Team Lead for Climate Risk Analysis at GIZ Pakistan, said climate risk assessments must go beyond hazard maps and incorporate satellite imagery, ground-level information and, most importantly, the lived experiences of communities.

Mr Hassanzai stressed that nature-based solutions should not be treated as an afterthought in infrastructure projects, such as simply planting trees alongside roads or irrigation channels. Instead, planners needed to consider wider environmental impacts, including developments upstream and their consequences downstream, as well as the benefits these interventions could deliver over decades.

COMPILED FOR E-NEWSLETTER

Day 1 Press Coverage – 2 November 2026

1. English Press Coverage (Day 1 Event Reports)

ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN (APP)

Musadik Malik calls for rights-based development, climate justice at SDPI conference

Dr Musadik Malik's speech at the Inaugural Plenary

ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN (APP)

Continuity in sustainable development policies vital amid global uncertainty: Ahsan

Prof. Ahsan Iqbal's keynote address

URDUPOINT (ENGLISH)

Musadik Malik Urges Climate-resilient Development To Protect Poor Communities

Same coverage as APP on Musadik Malik

NEWSMAN.PK

"Rethinking in an age of disruption", SDPI conference 2026 begins in Islamabad

General opening coverage including both ministers

NAZRANA TIMES

Pakistan's Wheat, Rice, Maize and Cotton Yields Could Fall Under High-Emission Scenarios: Experts

Islamabad, November 3, 2026 · By: Ali Imran Chattha

NAZRANA TIMES

Ahsan Iqbal Calls for Global Financial Reforms to Address Debt, Climate Disasters and Technological Disruption

Islamabad, November 2, 2026 · By: Ali Imran Chattha

DAWN

Continuity in development policies vital amid global uncertainty: minister

Islamabad, November 3, 2026 · By: Staff Reporter/APP

DAWN

Climate change a multi-layered crisis, says Senator Sherry Rehman

Islamabad, November 3, 2026 · By: Bakhtawar Mian

THE NEWS INTERNATIONAL

Pakistan needs long-term strategies to navigate global disruptions: minister

Islamabad, November 3, 2026 · By: Our Correspondent

THE NEWS INTERNATIONAL

Climate crisis, AI, energy security must be tackled together: Sherry

Islamabad, November 3, 2026 · By: Our Correspondent

2. Urdu Press Coverage (Day 1 Event Reports)

PUBLIC NEWS

ایس ڈی پی آئی کی 29ویں پائیدار ترقی کانفرنس، احسن اقبال، مصدق ملک شریک

Coverage of both Ahsan Iqbal and Musadik Malik

RADIO PAKISTAN (URDU)

احسن اقبال کا پائیدار ترقیاتی پالیسیوں کا تسلسل اور معاشی استحکام پر زور

Ahsan Iqbal's speech

DUNYA NEWS (URDU)

پائیدار ترقی کے لئے پالیسیوں کا تسلسل ناگزیر ہے: وفاقی وزیر احسن اقبال

Ahsan Iqbal

URDUPOINT

پائیدار ترقیاتی پالیسیوں کا تسلسل اور استحکام... ناگزیر ہے، وفاقی وزیر منصوبہ بندی

Ahsan Iqbal (APP Urdu version)

PTV NEWS (X/TWITTER)

اسلام آباد: وفاقی وزیر احسن اقبال کا ایس ڈی پی آئی کے زیر اہتمام 29ویں پائیدار ترقی کانفرنس سے خطاب

Video coverage of Ahsan Iqbal

DAILY NAWA-E-WAQT

غریب ممالک پر قرض، عالمی مالیاتی اداروں کو پالیسی پر نظرثانی کرنا ہوگی: مصدق ملک

Islamabad, November 3, 2026

DAILY NAWA-E-WAQT

موسمیاتی تبدیلیوں کے تناظر میں ترقیاتی پالیسیوں کا تسلسل ناگزیر: احسن اقبال

Islamabad, November 3, 2026

DAILY DUNYA

پائیدار ترقی کے لئے پالیسیوں کا تسلسل ناگزیر، احسن اقبال

Islamabad, November 3, 2026

URDUPOINT

پاکستان میں پائیدار ترقی اور ماحولیاتی تبدیلی کے چیلنجز سے نمٹنے کے لیے نجی شعبے کا کردار ناگزیر ہے،ڈاکٹر عابد قیوم سلہری

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

URDUPOINT

پاکستان میں موسمیاتی تباہ کاریوں کے درمیان وقفہ مسلسل کم ہو رہا ہے ،قومی موسمیاتی وعدوں کو عملی اقدامات میں تبدیل کرنا ناگزیر ہے،شیری رحمان ،ڈاکٹر شذرہ منصب علی خان

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

URDUPOINT

موسمیاتی تبدیلی کے اثرات کا سب سے زیادہ بوجھ غریب طبقات برداشت کر رہے ہیں،ڈاکٹر مصدق ملک

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

BUSINESS RECORDER

SDPI conference: Pakistan recommends new global financial architecture

Islamabad, November 3, 2026 · By: Tahir Amin

THE NATION

Sherry Rehman warns of mounting global challenges

Islamabad, November 3, 2026 · By: Shafqat Ali

THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE

Musadik seeks climate-resilient development

Islamabad, November 3, 2026 · By: Our Correspondent

THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE

'Closed for debt but open for business in equity'

Islamabad, November 3, 2026 · By: Shahbaz Rana

URDUPOINT (ENGLISH)

Ahsan Iqbal Urges Policy Continuity, Preparedness To Navigate Global Uncertainty

Islamabad, November 2, 2026 · By: APP

URDUPOINT (ENGLISH)

Sherry Rehman Warns Pakistan Faces Repeated Climate Disasters And Water Scarcity

Islamabad, November 2, 2026 · By: APP

THE GREEN POST

Policy Continuity, Economic Resilience Vital Amid Global Uncertainty and Climate Challenges: Ahsan Iqbal

Islamabad, November 2, 2026 · By: Web Desk

3. Pre-Conference Press Coverage (English)

THE NATION

Nestlé Pakistan to participate in 29th Sustainable Development Conference

Islamabad, November 2, 2026 · By: Press Release

NAZRANA TIMES

SDPI's 29th Sustainable Development Conference to Be Held in Islamabad from November 2 to 5

Islamabad, November 1, 2026 · By: Ali Imran Chattha

BUSINESS RECORDER

SDPI to host its flagship 29th SDC moot on Nov 2-5th

Islamabad, October 28, 2026 · By: Tahir Amin

THE NATION

SDPI to host 29th sustainable development conference in Islamabad from November 2

Islamabad, October 28, 2026

ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN (APP)

29th SDC to gather over 300 global experts of 20 countries on key development challenges

Islamabad, October 27, 2026 · By: APP

ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN (APP)

'Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption' SDPI's four-day 29th SDC opens on Nov. 02

Islamabad, October 27, 2026 · By: APP

SABAH NEWS

پاکستان ایک کے بعد دوسری موسمی آفت میں پھنس چکا، بحالی کا وقت سکڑ گیا، شیری رحمان

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

SABAH NEWS

پاکستان کا قرضوں اور موسمیاتی تبدیلیوں سے متاثرہ ممالک کے لیے نئے عالمی مالیاتی نظام کا مطالبہ

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

4. Regional Language Coverage (APP)

APP SARAIKI

موسمیاتی تبدیلی دے اثرات دا سب توں ودھ بھار غریب طبقہ سہندا پئے، ڈاکٹر مصدق ملک

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

APP BALOCHI

دیمروئی کنوکیں ملک آنی جیڈھ آنی گیواری ءِ واستہ جھان ءِ مالیاتی نظام ءِ تہ ءَ اصلاحات المی انت، پاکستان ءُ بنگلہ دیش ءَ دمگی کمک ءِ سر ءَ زور پر داتگ

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

APP BALOCHI

پاکستان ءَ موسمیاتی مول ءُ مراد ءِ سرجم کنگ ءِ واستہ سالے 50 ارب ڈالر ءِ ضلورت اِنت، مالی وسیلگ ءِ کمی چاگردی رکھینگ ءِ واستہ مزنیں ھترہ اِنت، ڈنمارک ءِ سفیر

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

APP PASHTO

د تل پاتې پرمختيايي پالېسيو تسلسل او استحکام د نړيوال غېر يقيني صورتحال, رامخې ته کېدونکې ټيکنالوجيز او د موسمياتي بدلون چيلنجز مخنيوي لپاره ضروري دے: احسن اقبال

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

APP PASHTO

د موسمياتي بدلون اثراتو زياتره بار پې وځله طبقې پورته کوي۔ ډاکټر مصدق ملك

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

APP SINDHI

پائيدار ترقياتي پاليسين جو تسلسل ۽ استحڪام عالمي غير يقيني واري صورتحال، اُپرندڙ ٽيڪنالاجيز ۽ موسمياتي تبديلين جي چئلينجز کي مُنهن ڏيڻ لاءِ اثرُ آهي: احسن اقبال

Islamabad, November 2, 2026

5. Pre-Conference Press Coverage (Urdu)

DAILY NAWA-E-WAQT

29ویں پائیدار ترقی کانفرنس 2 سے 5نومبر تک اسلام آباد میں ہو گی

Rawalpindi/Islamabad, October 28, 2026

DAILY DUNYA

ایس ڈی پی آئی کے زیر اہتمام پائیدار ترقی کانفرنس 2نومبر سے شروع ہوگی

Islamabad, October 28, 2026

SABAH NEWS

اسلام آباد میں ایس ڈی پی آئی کی عالمی پائیدار ترقیاتی کانفرنس 2 تا 5 نومبر ہوگی

Islamabad, October 27, 2026

URDUPOINT (ENGLISH)

29th Sustainable Development Conference To Bring 300-plus Speakers From 20 Countries To Islamabad

Islamabad, October 27, 2026 · By: APP

SABAH NEWS

'Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption'; SDPI's fourday 29th SDC opens on November 02

Islamabad, October 27, 2026 · By: SABAH

URDUPOINT

پالیسی ادارہ برائے پائیدار ترقی کی چار روزہ ''پائیدار ترقی کانفرنس ''2 نومبر سے اسلام آباد میں شروع ہوگی

Islamabad, October 27, 2026

PARTNERS AND DONORS

The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) acknowledges the contributions of its donors and partners to the Sustainable Development Conference (SDC), listed below:

