



Australia Awards

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AAA-Pakistan

Australia Awards Alumni - Pakistan



Editor's Note

By M. Tariq
President AAA - Pakistan
Executive Committee

As the sixth edition of the Newsletter reaches you, the scholarship cohort for academic year 2014-15 has already reached Australia and the awardees have commenced their studies at their respective Australian universities. Similarly the 25 member cohort of Pakistani professionals selected for Australia-Pakistan Agriculture Scholarships have completed their exciting experience of invaluable training in Australia. We wish all of them the very best of luck in their endeavours and sincerely hope that they achieve their goals and objectives associated with this fabulous scholarship.

This edition of our Newsletter contains inspirational accounts of foundation awardees which highlight how commendably Australia Awards in Pakistan is contributing to the



development of marginalized Pakistanis hailing from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Given the increasing number of AAA-P members every year, I think it is high time that we reinvigorate our alumni association through active participation and by re-connecting with a manifest passion to contribute to the development of Pakistan. Your ideas and voluntary contribution

to the alumni association are crucial and therefore anxiously awaited. Together we can transform this network into a highly vibrant one. HAPPY READING.

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Pre-Departure Briefing for 2014 scholarship intake awardees

By Erum

A Pre-departure Briefing (PDB) was held at the Serena in Islamabad on 2,3 December 2013 for 58 Pakistani professionals who successfully received the Australia Awards Scholarship to undertake master level studies in Australia in 2014.

The PDB provides an ideal opportunity for awardees to receive essential information about living and studying in Australia. The PDB is also an occasion during which the Australian High Commissioner meets the selected awardees and says farewell to them. For the 2014 intake Awardees, a farewell dinner was included as a new activity which was attended by the Australia Awards in Pakistan, Australian High Commission teams and Australia Awards alumni and their spouses. A motivational speech, briefing by the representatives of DIBP (Department of Immigration and Border Protection) and AFP (Australian Federal Police) were also included in the 2 days of PDB.

On the opening day, the Team Leader Australia Awards Pakistan welcomed guests and gave a brief introduction of the Australia Awards program in Pakistan and the program for the PDB. The Australian High Commissioner Mr Peter Heyward graced the occasion with his presence as the Chief Guest. In his welcome address, Mr. Heyward

reassured those present of the Australian Government's continued commitment to strengthening the relationship with Pakistan and its people. He bid farewell to all the Awardees and urged them to return to Pakistan after a successful completion of their studies. To commemorate the occasion, a group photograph was taken of all the Awardees with the Chief Guest.

The DIBP representative shared his advice on the process which is followed for individual and family visas along with visa obligations with the Awardees. This session was followed by a Q&A session.

In the evening a farewell dinner was something to look forward to. A talk show was organised in which a panel of three guests were invited, representing the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Managing Contractor (Coffey International Development) and the Australia Awards Alumni Network Pakistan to share how the whole package of the Australia Awards Scholarships has been developed and delivered in Pakistan. The Awardees and alumni along with their spouses openly shared their views and comments in the live discussion which gave an informal understanding to many of their unanswered questions. The second highlight of the evening was the live performance by

a local musical band along with karaoke and dance performances by the Awardees and alumni. The farewell dinner was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone and ended close to mid night.

On the closing day of the PDB, an inspirational motivational speech was delivered by Dr Anne Glover, Program Mentor for the Australia Awards program in Pakistan. In her speech Dr Glover emphasized the importance of educated people for the development of Pakistan and urged them to return and contribute to the development of their country after completion of their studies.

A representative of the AFP briefed the Awardees on Australian law, reporting an incident, transport laws and response in case of emergencies followed by a Q&A session. The final segment of the day was the round table discussions facilitated by designated alumni who covered four key areas including: (1) budgeting, (2) family, (3) adjusting to the academic environment and (4) culture in Australia. The PDB closing day ended with awardees exchanging good wishes and goodbyes.

E-Governance in Pakistan

By Tayyaba

During recent years, E-Governance has emerged as a core practice to deliver governance - as an efficient way to eliminate corruption, increase efficiency, and engage people. It will increasingly be adopted around the world in the next few years. A positive start has already been made by some developed countries like USA, Australia and some countries in Western Europe. Developing countries are also making progress

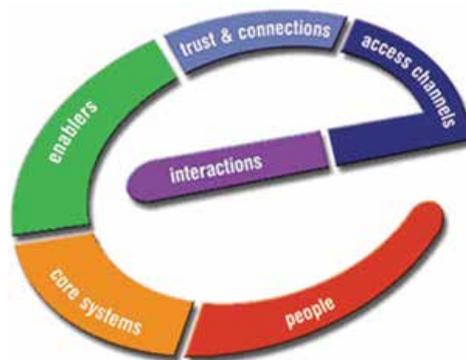
towards the adoption of E-Governance but with a sluggish pace and hindered by many political, technological and economic factors.



What is E-Governance?

E-Governance, also known as E-Government or digital government, is a term used to refer to the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to achieve improved outcomes in the governance sector.

According to The World Bank, "E-Government refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies (such as Wide Area Networks, the Internet, and mobile computing) that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government. These technologies can serve a variety of different ends: better delivery of government



services to citizens; improved interactions with business and industry; citizen empowerment through access to information; and more efficient government management. The entailing benefits are less corruption, increased

transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth, and cost reductions." The strategic objective of E-Governance is to support and simplify governance for all parties: government, citizens and businesses. Generally, an E-Governance model is defined as:

- **Publish** – Expand access to government information using ICT.
- **Interact** – Increase people engagement in government.
- **Transact** – Making government services available online.

E-Governance Adoption in Pakistan

The first step towards the adoption of E-Governance in Pakistan was made in October 2002 by establishing a cell within the Ministry of Information Technology called the Electronic Government Directorate (EGD). This was the result of the IT policy published by the Federal Government in 2000. The purpose was to make the public sector efficient and responsive and to bring transparency within government processes. Since its inception, EGD has implemented following notable projects.

- Online Processing of Hajj Applications and Status Tracking for arrangements for Hujjaj.
- Automation of Prime Minister Secretariat, Islamabad.
- E-Enablement of Senate & National Assembly of Pakistan.
- Online Access to Statutory Case Laws at District Bar Associations.
- Automation of Estate Offices.

Along with the Federal government,

provincial governments are also making efforts to integrate ICT within government processes to deliver quality services. Punjab government has made some noteworthy efforts in this regard and implemented some key projects such as: Online Vehicle Registration system; Electronic access to Land Records; and Electronic Fleet & Ticketing Management system (under development). The Sindh Government is also following the footsteps of the Punjab Government

and has recently launched a limited version of vehicle registration information system. However, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan Governments have still to make a start. The KP Chief Minister has nevertheless vowed to introduce E-Governance for transparency.

Despite a long list of E-Governance projects being available on the Electronic Government Directorate (EGD) website, the progress towards the adoption of e-governance is slow and unsatisfactory. Along with the IT policy (2000), the Federal Government has also issued an E-Government strategy and a 5-year plan for the e-governance adoption. However, many of the targets set out in the above document remain a distant dream as most of the public

businesses in Pakistan continue to be managed with non-electronic Victorian-era bureaucracy.

If we analyse implemented projects according to the defined E-Governance model (Publish, Interact, Transact), we notice that mostly projects fall under 'Publish' and 'Interact' phases. This is an indication that these projects mainly provide information and civic engagement without making core government services accessible to people. For example, the website of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) does not provide the facility to track the status of an Identity card application. Electronic Federal Board of Revenue (E-FBR) project which digitised the Federal Government's tax collection

system is one of the early E-Government projects that went up to the 'Interact' phase only.

The United Nations conducts an E-Government Readiness survey every 2 years and issues a ranking of countries on the basis of human capacity, infrastructure and access to information and knowledge. In 2008, Pakistan secured the 131st position. In the following years, neighbouring countries like Bangladesh and Iran improved their ranking however Pakistan fell to 146th place in 2010 and 156th in 2012 respectively. A similar ranking, issued by the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2009, ranked Pakistan 66th out of 70 countries assessed.

Barriers to E-Governance Adoption

The benefits of E-Governance are abundant and prevalent. It's a proficient way to eliminate corruption, increase efficiency, and engage people. It is disappointing when we observe little effort from the government towards the adoption of ICT in the governance system. Being a developing country we cannot claim that government and bureaucracy is the only hurdle in adoption of E-Governance; there are many social, economic, and technological factors too. For under-developed countries like Pakistan where

infrastructure is not appropriately developed; implementing IT related projects is a daunting challenge. Most of the population is based in rural areas and therefore many social factors need to be addressed such as people's readiness to adopt new systems, willingness to get trainings and the like. Similarly, economic aspects related to E-Governance like funding, cost-savings, business models are also critical in its successful adoption.

Regardless of how challenging the social, technological, and economical barriers are, they can be overcome through political determination and power. Pakistan can move towards the adoption of ICT for good governance, primarily, with the support and commitment of bureaucracy and by fostering knowledge about the benefits of ICT.



Good governance is a dream of every Pakistani. Chronic issues like corruption, lack of transparency, and poverty directly emanate from bad governance. E-Governance has the potential to bring efficiency to government processes, reinforce democracy

and it can provide solutions to Pakistan's persistent governance issues characterised by corruption. Critical elements in the successful E-Governance transformation are process reforms, strategic investment, and collaboration. This means

that the barriers to E-Governance must be reduced by strengthening infrastructure inadequacies, and the drivers must also be strengthened particularly in the areas of institutions, laws, leadership, human capacities, technology, and data systems.

Scholarships: The Goal is Pakistan

By Kashif



I was recently invited by Australia Awards to attend a couple of visa briefing sessions arranged for the fresh batch of scholarship awardees for the 2014-intake. As one of the alumni I was there to answer questions on my experience of Australia, its people and dealing with different ground realities which the Awardees could face during their studies.

I asked the Awardees whether they have a clear goal in mind while pursuing their scholarships in Australia. Apart from focusing on their family's wellbeing and career growth, the idea was to help them realize a significant and a purposeful goal that is worth pursuing. I wanted them to see development of Pakistan as one of their key goals in life. So, I drew an illustration of this mindset of progression from 'Existing You' before winning the scholarship to a 'Better, Different, Improved, and

Changed You" after successful completion of studies.

I was motivating and inspiring them to come back to Pakistan to assist their country and its people by contributing in the areas of their expertise and interest. This was not much to ask; in-fact it was a humble request from a Pakistani to fellow Pakistanis. Pakistan needs assistance from its educated people and it is the duty of every educated Pakistani to contribute to the development of this country sincerely and honestly. The Australia Awards scholarships are a wonderful opportunity for eligible and high performing citizens of Pakistan in specific fields which must not be missed if awarded. It is a gift of knowledge, exposure and progress for selected Pakistanis from the Government of Australia that should be valued and utilized with responsibility and commitment. Before winning the scholarship, I

served in the corporate sector for more than 10 years. After completing my Masters degree in human development from the University of Melbourne and returning to Pakistan in January 2013, I made a critical but right decision to work in the development sector and thankfully this decision is paying off already.

To date, my working experience in the development sector has been truly rewarding and has completely transformed my perspective towards developmental issues in Pakistan as challenges are everywhere and there is so much to be done. Simultaneously I am committed and hopeful that together we can make a difference in people's lives. There is definitely a silver lining.

A dream come true –Thanks Australia Awards

By Dilshad

My wish to earn an international degree goes back to early 2000 when I was studying in a community based girls school in Booni - a village in the northern most district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, some 450 km from the provincial capital Peshawar and situated at the border of Afghanistan. In June 2005 due to sad and sudden demise of my father I was compelled to discontinue my education and I joined a Non-Government Organisation (NGO). Another reason for joining this prestigious NGO was my desire to continue the un-accomplished mission of my father "to educate his children". As the proverb goes it was a 'blessing in disguise'. In this organisation I came across people with international degrees who had a vision, who were technically sound and confident as compared to those staff members who had no international exposure. These factors fascinated me more and rekindled my desire to earn a degree from an internationally renowned university. I began searching for scholarship opportunities and also continued my education as a private student of a Masters degree in Political Science. In 2009 I completed my Masters degree but my yearning for an international degree was still not satisfied. I applied for scholarships but for multiple reasons ranging from difficult eligibility criteria, lengthy application processes, tough prerequisites and lack of guidance, I was unable to get through the initial screening for any scholarship. Achieving my goal seemed really difficult while living in an area with limited internet and other communications facility due to its geographic location of isolation and remoteness but I know that it was not impossible.

Though I had some basic information about the prestigious Australian Awards scholarships, I had never

applied for it in the past. In 2012 my husband, who was applying for an Australia Award, encouraged me to apply for the 2013 intake. We both applied for the 2013 intake but very soon, in early May, my husband received a regret letter. I thought that I too was rejected and probably my regret letter might have been sent to my home address in Chitral which usually takes some time to be delivered.

In June 2013 unexpectedly, I was checking my routine emails and I saw a letter from the Australia Awards office informing me that I was selected for a Foundation Award. I was very excited to learn this, though I was unaware of the nature and importance of the Foundation Award. Despite that, this seemed to me as an opportunity to turn my wish into reality. Later on, in a meeting with the Australia Awards team in Islamabad, I was told that the Foundation Awardees would be trained in English language, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and other related skills to prepare me to apply for the 2014 intake. After a couple of meetings with the Australia Awards team, I finally started my training which turned out to be the most fruitful learning experience of my life. Under the able guidance of the trainers, I successfully completed a two days per week training stretched over a period of three months in Peshawar. I travelled to Peshawar every week along with my one year old baby girl and spouse from my work station in Haripur located at a distance of about 150km from Peshawar. Though it was hectic to travel to and from Peshawar, the excitement and hope which I had after the initial briefing of the Australia Awards staff kept me motivated. My trainers in Peshawar and the Australia Awards office were always very cooperative and helpful. Without fail, every time I asked for any kind of

support regarding logistics, or any other information, I would get that support in no time. During the course I received focused training in English proficiency, IT skills, academic and presentation skills. After my training I took the IELTS test and succeeded in getting the required band in my first attempt. Before the training I was unfamiliar even with the pattern of IELTS.

In March 2013 I again applied for the Australia Awards Scholarships 2014 intake and was selected as one of the prospective scholarship awardees. The achievement would not have been possible without guidance of Australia Awards team members and generous financial support of Australian Government. I also take the opportunity to sincerely thank all those who helped me in achieving this great milestone in my life.

My Story

By Faiz

I belong to a middle class family with a rural background. In my district, the literacy rate is below 40% and there is no university located in the district. The major source of livelihood is agriculture and livestock. The place where I live and the areas beyond it are some of the most regressive regions of Pakistan in terms of education, health and development. This is due to wide spread abject poverty; seeking education is not a priority or possibility in the first place. The best that the privileged few can

very praise-worthy scheme of Foundation Awards. Foundation Awards give deserving applicants a level playing field to compete with applicants from less disadvantaged regions.

Before finding out about the Australia Awards Scholarships I could not even imagine going overseas for higher studies as I had a mixed educational background i.e. partly private (graduation) and partly as a regular student (post-graduation). When I learnt about this great opportunity, I

lifetime opportunity, I requested the Australia Awards Scholarships Manager to give me one month time for preparation. My request was denied on the grounds that the schedule was too tight for each intake. I was left with no option but to appear in the test.

I hired an English teacher at a private academy for 12 hours in order to know the pattern of IELTS tests and to learn some techniques. The teacher told me that there were four sections of the test namely Listening,



do is to send their children to other adjoining provinces like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. In other words, neither is there any trend nor opportunity available to the people for overseas studies in world renowned universities. Due to the poor quality of education, the youth of Balochistan are not able to compete with their counterparts hailing from other provinces. This explains precisely why Balochistan has the least representation in almost every sector.

Australia Awards Scholarships is the most favourable opportunity for the youth of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA because these regions have been marked by Australia Awards as priority areas. Selected applicants from these areas who have the potential to work towards the sustainable development of Pakistan are groomed through a

felt that my dream of studying abroad could be realized. I became more confident when I attended an orientation for Australia Awards Scholarships in Balochistan. I carefully filled the application form keeping in view the criteria and compatibility of application with my proposed program of study and my educational background and work experience.

On 16th of May, while I was in Karachi on an official visit, I got this great news via email from the Australia Awards that I had been shortlisted and was required to appear in the IELTS test on 19th of May. I was both happy for being shortlisted and worried for having no preparation of IELTS test. I had no idea about the basic format of the IELTS exams. Since I did not want to lose this

Reading, Writing and Speaking. After a quick introduction to each area, he instructed me to practice in each area and with this he left the room. I was rather furious as I had paid him a modest fee but he got rid of his responsibility in just few minutes. Late in the evening, he came and asked me how I was doing in practice and he gave me a test. He told me that I could obtain the required bands provided I performed confidently.

On May 19th 2013, I appeared for my IELTS test. After biometrics and verification, I was given my roll number and entered the hall and occupied my seat for the Test. Despite focusing hard I could not do well in the listening and because of my morale was low as I had not performed well in reading.

However, I regained my confidence in writing and speaking parts of the test. As per my expectations my result in 'Listening' and 'Reading' was below the mark i.e. 5.5 while 'Writing' and 'Speaking' results were 6.5 and 7.5 respectively. Overall result was 6. The result shocked me and my dream of going to Australia for higher studies was ruined.

After nearly a month my hopes re-energized when I received an email from the Australia Awards stating that I was shortlisted for a Foundation Award. I was told that a Foundation Award is given to those potential applicants who have the assessed potential to improve their English proficiency and Computer literacy through a foundation course. The Australia Awards Interview Panel selected me for Foundation Course in 2012. It was a big challenge for me to manage the classes along with office work as the foundation classes were scheduled from 3pm to 6pm and my

office timings were 9am to 5pm. I requested my office to allow to me to attend my classes from 3pm to 5pm and I offered to compensate the work hours by returning to work after 6pm. As luck would have it, my employer accepted my request and I entered into an agreement with my office administration regarding my new office timings.

Despite the cooperation from my office, it was really hard to daily go to the university in a rickshaw while the security situation was poor as in my town frequent incidents like target killing, bomb blasts, sectarian clashes were occurring frequently. The zeal to avail the scholarship along with the hard work of my teachers and the kind support of the Australia Awards team were the driving forces in my struggle to get selected for a scholarship. I considerably improved my skills in all four areas of IELTS. In addition, we were given a very useful training on communication and

presentation skills in Islamabad. After the Foundation course I was not only confident to achieve the required bands in IELTS but also I found myself to be a more competent professional. I was able to develop a better application this time. Furthermore, I extended help to many other friends and relatives.

I am really pleased that I got the required score in IELTS and I got selected for 2014 intake. I have also been promoted by my organization to the position of Program Education and Critical Pedagogy. I feel i am one of the luckiest persons in the province for having been bestowed with this golden opportunity. This miracle would not have been possible without the support of the wonderful team of Australian Awards and guidance from the Foundation Awards teachers and resource persons.

Disaster Response in Pakistan and Australia

By Dr. Zeeshan

In 2011, Australia's north-eastern state of Queensland was hit by the worst flooding on record. Floods inundated almost half of the state's land area and around 200, 000 people were affected and thousands were forced to evacuate. The economic cost of the disaster was estimated to be billions of dollars and its ripples hit the world economy as well. Coal and cotton exports from Australia were badly affected and resulted in raised prices for these commodities in countries which imported them.

Fortunately, despite the huge economic fallout of the floods, the human loss was not that high given the scale of disaster and resulted in less than 20 deaths.

A similar devastating flood hit Pakistan in 2010 caused by excessive and unprecedented monsoon rains. The flood hit more than one-fifth of country's land area affecting 25 million people (almost equal to the population of Australia).



Around 2000 people died during these floods and hundreds died in the aftermath of the floods due social and economic implications post the flood. Thousands were rendered shelter-less and thousands were accessible only through helicopter or boat. The estimated economic cost was around USD10 billion.

The response of the Australian Government to the Queensland floods minimized the damage and resulted in fewer deaths than the deaths caused by flood of equivalent

proportion in Pakistan. The flood added misery to people of Pakistan who are already facing challenges of militancy, corruption and a weak economy.

The difference in response of the two governments to the disaster is the determining factor accounting for the difference of human casualties and sufferings arising out of these two floods. The density of population in Pakistan is high (500 people per square mile) as compared to Australia's (8 per square mile) which

means more people were at risk during and after the disaster. Huge economic disparity between the countries is evident by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of these two countries viz. Pakistan (\$2,900) and Australia (\$43,000).

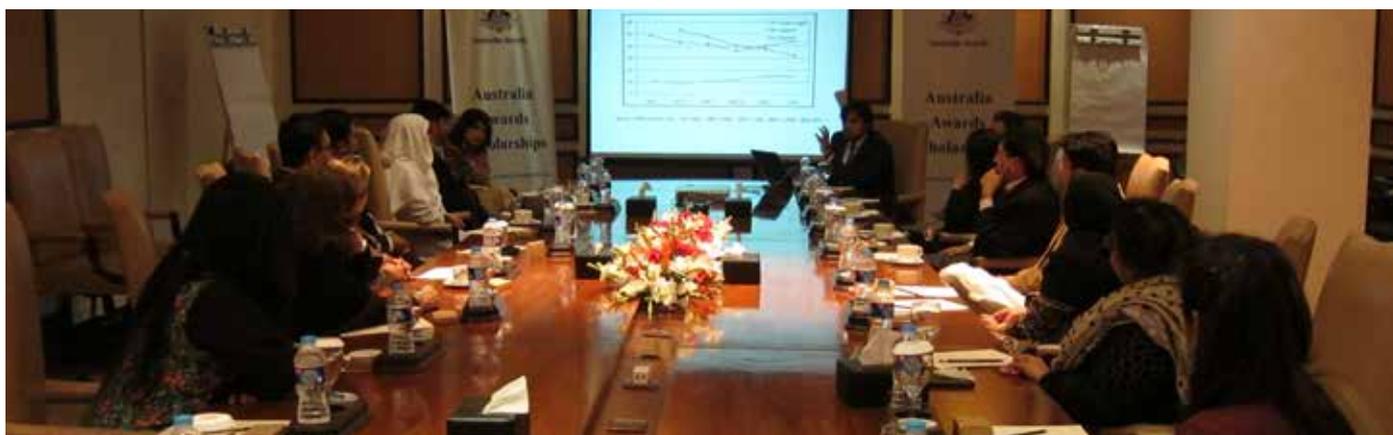
Due to geographical location and the

nature of the climate, extreme weathers and calamities such as floods and earthquakes will continue to hit Pakistan in future. However we need to ensure that these extreme weathers and natural calamities do not turn into big scale disasters. Pakistan government must take steps

to develop policies and strategies to counter these challenges. Pakistan can learn from Australia and other developed countries about disaster management and prevention strategies and interventions.

The Australia Awards Alumni Network – A strong communion!

By Faizia



The Australia Awards Alumni Network (AAAN) grows in strength when a fresh cohort of scholarship awardees head out to Australia to return home with advanced skills and a degree to support it. Being a member of the AAAN provides an ongoing connection with Australia and fellow alumni members that builds on their experience as award recipients and allows them to contribute to the ongoing enhancement of the Australia Awards. The Network not only benefits the alumni but also the Australian Government, participating countries and institutions through promotion of social, intellectual, educational and political understanding between Australia and participating countries.

The AAAN seeks to establish a functional global network of alumni to enhance the visibility and identity of the Australia Awards. It allows the alumni to explore opportunities for contributions towards development, research and collaborations among alumni to achieve common goals. To gain maximum benefit from the network, a global Australia Awards Alumni Network Strategy (AAANS) has been devised. This strategy focuses on engaging alumni in various activities for the successful delivery of the Australia Awards. These activities include alumni's support during promotion when scholarships are announced for an intake, for shortlisting of scholarship applications and as members of the

interview panel for final selection of prospective scholarship awardees. Once the final list of prospective awardees is determined, the alumni mentor them in visa briefings, pre-departure briefings and bid them farewell before they depart on their quest for learning.

Alumni contributions do not stop there. The AAANS encourages alumni to impart their learning among the alumni network. On a voluntary basis alumni members conduct professional development workshops/seminars/lectures on priority sectors falling under the Australia Awards program in Pakistan.

White Collar Crimes

The first of the Australia Awards Alumni seminars was held on 31st October 2013 in Karachi. The topic of discussion was 'White Collar Crimes' and was conducted by one of our alumni Mr Rauf who completed his Masters in Transnational Crime Prevention from the University of

Wollongong. The seminar focused on identifying different types of White Collar Crime, their impact on society and the development of Pakistan as well as the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of white collar crimes. The participating alumni were of the view that the talk was of

great value to them for they knew that such crimes prevailed in the world but were unaware of the extent of how easy it was for anyone to become a victim. Feedback indicated that the alumni had an increased interest in the subject matter after attending the seminar.

Malnutrition seminar

In light of the new Australia Awards Alumni Network Strategy, the second seminar was held on 14th December 2013 in Islamabad and was also conducted by one of our alumni members Dr Khizar who completed his master in International Public Health from the University of Sydney

and currently is employed by an international development organisation which focuses on food security. The topic of the seminar was 'Malnutrition in Pakistan, its mitigation and a way towards a healthy nation'. The seminar allowed the participating alumni to realise that any person may

suffer from malnutrition irrespective of which income group he or she may belong to. It outlined the main reasons of malnutrition in Pakistan and what needs to be done to eradicate it.

Working with the Australia Awards team

The Australia Awards continues to announce opportunities for its alumni to engage in short term and long term activities with its team. Recently, Ms Rabia joined the Australia Awards team as Manager Australia Pakistan Agriculture Scholarship – Short Course. Ms Rabia completed her Masters degree in Assessment and Evaluation from the University of Melbourne in 2009. She has extensive experience in working as a Monitoring and Evaluation expert in the education sector. We hope that Ms Rabia's education and experience will add value Australia Award Scholarships program in Pakistan.

The Australia Awards Alumni have been involved with the program on a short term basis during different stages of the scholarship cycle. Alumni have been involved in shortlisting of scholarship applications; they are present as sector specialists during scholarship interviews and assist with promoting the Australia Awards Scholarships when they are announced. The alumni web forum is a good resource for you to stay informed about such opportunities posted by the Australia Awards team and by your fellow alumni members. If you have not logged on to the forum, you must do

so at your earliest convenience by visiting <http://www.australiaawardspakistan.org/alumni> If you have trouble logging in, please let us know via email on alumni@australiaawardspakistan.org and we will help you out.

Launch of the Small Grants Scheme for the Australia Awards Alumni

By Faizia

Upon their return to Pakistan, Australia Awards Alumni are motivated and ambitious to bring about change in the existing systems pertaining to the sector in which they are working. However, there are usually many challenges creating hindrances in the execution of such activities. Consequently, many feasible, practical and highly-needed development plans remain untapped.

To facilitate its alumni across Pakistan, the Australia Awards is happy to announce the launch of the Small Grants Scheme of up to AUD 5,000. The small grants scheme is an initiative of the Australia Awards to facilitate alumni contributing to sustainable development in Pakistan. Under this scheme, alumni will get an opportunity to access a small grant to assist in executing an approved development activity related to the



Australia Awards priority sectors of maternal, neonatal and child health services, basic education services, rural development and food security and governance with specific focus on pro-poor service delivery.

The activity could be related to research, advocacy, developing and implementing new practices or

processes for increased efficiency or improving existing systems. The expected outcomes of proposals awarded with small grants are:

- Increased sustainability of development in Pakistan by achievement of program objectives, through alumni contribution, either individually or in a group.

- A pooling of the capacities of skilled professionals to achieve common development objectives.
- A platform for sector specialists/organisations to develop linkages/consortiums that can continue to work with or without the support of a small grant.

All Australia Awards Alumni - Pakistan who have successfully completed their scholarship program of study are eligible to apply for a small grant. It is anticipated that alumni may draw upon linkages they have with the Australian universities/institutions from where they obtained their qualification. The grant can be given to an individual alumnus, a group of alumni or to an alumnus/alumni employing organisation which is willing to take

ownership of the proposed activity.

Grants can be used for the following:

- Organising in-Pakistan professional workshops or short training courses, focusing on Australia Awards' priority sectors (maternal, neonatal and child health services, basic education services, rural development and food security and governance- with a particular focus on improving pro poor service delivery) to transfer/share knowledge/skills gained from Australia adaptable to Pakistan's context.
- Advocacy activities aimed at improving community awareness of issues relevant to advancing development in Australia Awards' priority sectors.
- Supporting an in-Pakistan

research study or component of a study in one or more of Australia Awards' priority sectors that can inform future policy development or promote or facilitate better practice.

These grants will not support:

- Pre-investment/feasibility studies or pilot demonstration projects related to potential commercial activities.
- Academic or short course training for individual alumni in-country or in any other part of the world (The grants will not be awarded for individual capacity building).

Details for applying for a Small Grant are given on the following website www.australiaawardspakistan.org.

Australia Awards 2015 Scholarship Intake Promotional Activities

The Australia Awards announced its 2015 scholarship intake on 9th February 2014 with its last date for application being 21st March 2014. With its announcements, the Australia Awards team began its promotional activities utilising its most reliable resources: its alumni. Our alumni based in Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad and Quetta identified potential applicants who were interested in

apply for an Australia Awards for the 2015 intake. They were then invited to attend promotional seminars in their respective cities. The seminars focused on explaining the objectives of the scholarship programs. It also encompassed a detailed presentation on how an applicant should determine his/her profile, chose an institution and course that best suits their future goals linked to the

sustainable development of Pakistan and the application procedure. Separate seminars were held for people working in the public and private sector explaining the dynamics of the scholarship according to their sector type.



The Australia Pakistan Agriculture Scholarships (APAS) Third Short Course Award Promotional Activities

By Rabia

The APAS Third Short Course Award was announced on 13th February, 2014. These award opportunities are highly targeted and are offered to qualified Pakistani nationals working in the agriculture sector. For the third cohort, the priority area is "Training trainers in irrigation and sustainable water resource management at grass roots level".

A two tier targeted approach was adopted for promotions of these awards. In the first round APAS team

organised meetings with senior officials from a selected group of public, private and civil society organisations in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi. These organisations are actively engaged in planning and conducting trainings related to irrigation and water resource management. These organisations were asked to nominate relevant people for the short course.

In the second round, promotional seminars were arranged in

Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi for nominated candidates giving them details of the third short course and return to work plan which is an important part of application this time.

25 successful applicants are expected to travel Australia to commence their course in September-October 2014.

The Australia Awards goes ONLINE!

The Australia Awards Pakistan has now commenced receiving scholarship applications online. For the first time, potential applicants for the 2015 scholarship intake can apply online

using Over Australia awards information System OASIS. OASIS is an online system used for this purpose in all countries where the Australia Awards are offered. Submission of

application in hard copy is also accepted for the 2015 intake. Australia Awards aims to shift entirely to an online application system in the coming years.



Newsletter Feedback

Register yourself in the lucky draw by completing and submitting this feedback form through email or post. 5 lucky winners will receive a surprise gift!

Q1. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the highest) how interesting did you find this newsletter?

1 2 3 4 5

Q2. Did you like its design?

Yes No

Q3. Which article did you enjoy the most?

Q4. What would you like to see included in future editions?



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