UNESCO’s urges commitment to invest on youth and skills

Islamabad: The tenth Education for All Global Monitoring Report (EFA GMR) titled “Youth and Skills: Putting Education to Work” of United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognizes dire need for investment in the future of young boys and girls in terms of quality education and skills building initiatives. The report was officially launched in Islamabad on 18th October 2012, to share Pakistan specific statistics and analysis with major stakeholders.

Dr. Kozue Kay Nagata, Director, UNESCO Pakistan, in her opening remarks quoted from the global speech of the Director-General of UNESCO, Ms. Irina Bokova said, “I would like to dedicate this ceremony to Ms. Malala Youafzai, a young brave activist for the right of girls to the education of Pakistan, assaulted last week, because she wanted to go school”. Also, Dr. Nagata added, “Gender equality in education constitutes a basic human right as well as an important means of improving economic outcomes”.

The report reveals that there are 5.1 million out-of-school children in Pakistan, of which 63% are girls; this calls for coordinated action to bring these children to school.
Dr. Roshan Chitrakar, Programme Specialist, UNESCO said that the challenge is to tackle the problem of lack of foundation skills among youths, which are acquired in primary and secondary school but unfortunately 7.2 million adolescents, are out of school in Pakistan.

Senior National Education Specialist UNESCO, Mr. Arshad Saeed Khan, highlighted in his presentation that according to Global Monitoring Report only 40% of females of age 15 and above are literate, which is projected to be 47% by year 2015; thus special attention is needed to eliminate gender disparity.

“Education is the best investment in the societies we want, in the economies we need. The Report estimates that every $1 you spend on child’s education yields $10-$15 in economic growth over that person’s working life time,” Dr. Nagata quoted from Director – General UNESCO’s comments for Global Monitoring Report.

The Global Monitoring Report urges on faster progress for quality education and adult literacy to meet its goals by the deadline of 2015.