

## **Panel: Role of Social Sciences in Sustainable Development – South Asian Perspective**

The state of Social Sciences in Pakistan and other South Asian countries is not promising. Universities and other higher education institutions are not able to produce relevant knowledge for sustainable development. The poor state of Social Sciences in Pakistan is a huge challenge for the development sector and job market. Various issues including discrimination between social and natural sciences; research gaps; new ways of research; the job market for social science students; role of policy makers and institutions particularly that of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Pakistan (SSHRC), amongst others, will be discussed in this panel.

Under the auspices of Pakistan's Higher Education Commission (HEC), SSHRC was established with the task of '*identifying realities of diverse social and human issues which Pakistan is facing*' (HEC n.d.). It has initiated '*plans for social transformation besides building knowledge and expertise on key social and cultural issues*' (Ibid.). It also encourages and assists '*Social Scientists and Researchers in carrying out meaningful research for national benefit*' (HEC n.d.). In this panel, the HEC representative scholars and other panelists will focus on the aims and objects of SSHRC which are to:

- link social science research for solving social problems of the society to achieve Sustainable Development.
- promote and achieve excellence in social science education and research in the country.
- encourage scholarly cooperation and collaboration at national and international level in social sciences and humanities.
- identify indigenous needs and priorities to address issues of national importance.
- enhance interdisciplinary research within social science fields.

### **Reference**

HEC n.d. 'Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities', Higher Education Commission Website, <<http://www.hec.gov.pk/INSIDEHEC/DIVISIONS/AECA/SOCIALSCIENCESARTSHUMANITIES/Pages/Introduction.aspx>>, accessed 18 November 2014.

### **Panel Organiser:**

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