

National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) has participated in the "International Youth Conference" inaugurated by Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mr. Qamar Zaman Kaira on Monday December 6, 2010. The conference aims at bringing together participants from across the world to create a network of young people who can learn from each other – not just about each other's cultures, but about the many ways in which they can mobilize to formulate strategies for social uplift.

Talking at the panel discussion titling "Volunteerism in Literacy Promotion" the Director General NCHD Mr. Zulfiqar Ahmad said "Improved literacy can contribute to economic growth; reduce crime; promote democracy; increase civic engagement; prevent HIV/AIDS and other diseases through information dissemination and enhance cultural diversity. However, the benefits of literacy come out when broader rights and development frameworks are in place and operating effectively." He said that literacy should be taken as a social issue to eradicate militancy, terrorism, and unemployment. He also described the potential areas where the volunteers can be mobilized.

The Director Education NCHD Mr. Iqbal-ur-Rehman, addressing the gathering, highlighted the role of volunteers to bring positive social change in society. He said that NCHD has made integrated plans for universal primary education including literacy which have been evolved in

consultation with the provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Federally Administered Areas (Fata) and Gilgit-Baltistan. The volunteerism is inbuilt in the program design of the Literacy Program of NCHD. The communities

are coming forward in providing us the venue and utility voluntarily along with supervising and supporting the literacy centers free of cost. The Literacy teachers and the supervisors engaged in this program are working on a much low wage clearly meeting the international definition of volunteers.

The other panelists include Deputy Education Advisor Dr. Muhammad Saleem, Director of Mass Education at Sarhad University of Science and Information Technology Dr. Zafar Iqbal, Chairperson Bunyad Ms. Shaheen Atiq-ur-Rehman, and Professor Islamic University Dr. Allah Rakha Saghir.