Towards a Digital-Ready Workforce

The world is rapidly adopting new technologies in the form of Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics and automation. The process is creating new jobs which have not existed before, but on the other hand, there are losers in the form of workers who may not be well equipped to seize new prospects or the nature of their current work changes as a result of technological advancements. While machines and algorithms could replace physical hardship and manual labour, the analytical, critical and creative aspects at work will become key variables in the competitiveness equation.

Rapid technological change is being embraced at a time when demographic trends in the form of youth bulge and ageing population are also exerting pressure on labour markets and social security systems. This in turn, demands policy interventions which address aspects related to new forms of labour rights (in the digital space), and laws and regulations around labour mobility and job security. There are concerns how automation, digitalisation and robotisation could also have implications for privacy of those at work. The vulnerability to cyber crime has already become a serious issue in both developed and developing countries. It is not just the legal and policy institutions that have to respond to such issues. Higher education, and technical and vocational education and training systems across the developing world also need to revisit their ways of working and curriculum.

In view of the above, this session aims to discuss:

- In what ways digital culture will impact our workspaces?
- How can challenges associated with the digital shift be mitigated through policies under SDG-8 i.e., promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all?
- What are the opportunities, risk and challenges for Pakistan?

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