Indus Consortium
Humanitarian Environment and Development Initiatives

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Grow Green Assembly Focuses on Energy Transition

The Grow Green Network (GGN) Annual Assembly 2026 centred on Pakistan's energy transition, highlighting policy challenges, regulatory shifts and the importance of community advocacy. The first day of the annual assembly was held at a local hotel in Karachi on April 6.

Fiza Qureshi, moderating the session, traced the evolution of GGN since 2014, outlining its work on tax justice, climate advocacy and renewable energy, alongside achievements including debt relief efforts and capacity-building initiatives.

Majid Bilal, Programme Manager for Just Energy Transition, discussed Pakistan's energy landscape, stressing the "Four A's" of energy security and warning of geopolitical risks linked to LNG imports, while calling for a shift to domestic renewable sources.

Zubair Khan explained the transition from net metering to net billing, noting reduced financial incentives for solar users, while Qudsia Latif highlighted the need for phasing out fossil gas and gathered participant input on transition readiness.

Closing the day, Indus Consortium CEO Hussain Jarwar summarised key discussions.

Experts Examine Pakistan's Green Mobility Transition

Policymakers, industry leaders, academics and climate advocates gathered on April 7 for the Grow Green Network (GGN) Annual Assembly 2026, where experts assessed Pakistan's green transition with a focus on sustainable mobility and climate action.

The event, organised by Indus Consortium and Grow Green Network with support from Sustain X Partners, brought together key stakeholders at a local hotel in Karachi for discussions on policy direction, industry preparedness and implementation challenges.

The first session centred on the automotive sector's transition to greener alternatives, highlighting structural barriers alongside emerging opportunities. Speakers included Prof Dr Naveed Arshad, Director of the LUMS Energy Institute; Yasir Hussain, Director of the Climate Action Center; Muhammad Usman, Head of Sustainability at Thyssenkrupp Materials North America; Shuja ul Haq Siddiqui, Vice Chairman of the Pakistan Association of Automotive Parts and Accessories Manufacturers (PAAPAM); and Bilawal Suhag, Head of Research at FPCCI.

Panellists identified inadequate infrastructure, policy inconsistencies and financial constraints as key hurdles to green mobility. Prof Arshad outlined the vision behind Pakistan's New Energy Vehicle Policy, stressing that clear targets and long-term commitment were essential. He added that rising fuel prices amid global tensions could make the policy's goal of 30 per cent electric vehicles by 2030 more achievable.

Hussain noted gradual progress in implementation but pointed to gaps in execution and coordination. Suhag emphasised the need for alignment with global trends, describing innovation as a key growth driver, and underscored the importance of policy continuity.

The discussion also addressed emissions, with Usman noting that Scope 3 emissions remain the largest contributor in the transport sector. He called for addressing lifecycle emissions without significantly raising costs, highlighting biofuels as a practical option for reducing emissions from existing heavy transport.

Siddiqui said the auto parts industry was under pressure, with firms struggling to adapt to electric vehicle technologies due to limited technical capacity and uncertain demand. He also pointed to gaps in policy support, particularly in incentives for localisation and implementation. "Electric vehicles are still within the reach of the elite class, and there is a need for more localisation and incentives," he said.

Kanwal Nizam Bhutto, Managing Director of the Sindh Mass Transit Authority, outlined the provincial government's plans related to electric vehicles and the Karachi Circular Railway. She said progress on the railway project would move forward once land issues were resolved, adding that a memorandum of understanding would be signed with the railway ministry to revive the system.

Panellists Stress Financing for Green Mobility Transition

Financing took centre stage in the second session of the Grow Green Network (GGN) Annual Assembly 2026, as experts underscored the need for stronger financial support to accelerate Pakistan's transition to sustainable mobility.

The session, titled "Banking the Automobile" under the broader theme of "Greening the Wheel", focused on the role of climate finance, renewable energy investment and incentives in driving the shift towards greener transport. Participants also examined how local initiatives and grassroots networks can complement national strategies to deliver inclusive and scalable climate action.

Rashid Azeem, Divisional Head of ESG at UBL Bank, outlined both barriers and opportunities in innovative automotive financing, while Wajih Zaman, Head of Operational Risk and Green Banking at Soneri Bank, highlighted the financial sector's role in developing green automotive products. Sadia Bukhari of Sindh Bank discussed the current financing landscape and ongoing initiatives within the sector.

Mashood Ali Khan, Director of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), emphasised the importance of targeted green financing. He noted that electric vehicles have been promoted in developed economies through strong government policies, supported by enabling infrastructure. He said battery localisation was achievable in Pakistan and called for subsidies to support SMEs in developing EV components, adding that two-wheelers would play a critical role in the transition.

Khan also pointed to the potential for technology transfer through joint ventures and stressed the need for policy consistency to address what he described as a prevailing trust deficit among investors and industry stakeholders.

Mushtaq Ahmed Shaikh, Director for Industries and Commerce, Sindh, briefed participants on provincial initiatives aimed at supporting the transition, while Asim Jaffry of Pakistan Fair Finance highlighted concerns around air quality linked to the automotive sector.

Participants agreed that improved access to climate finance and coordinated policy support would be essential to scale up green mobility efforts and align Pakistan's transport sector with broader climate goals.

Community Voices Highlighted in Energy Transition

Community perspectives took focus in the final session of the Grow Green Network (GGN) Annual Assembly 2026, as experts and stakeholders highlighted the social dimensions of Pakistan's shift towards a low-carbon future.

The session, titled "Challenges in the Just Energy Transition" under the broader "Greening the Wheel" theme, brought forward voices from affected communities, policymakers, and researchers to examine climate justice and inclusive energy policies.

Imdad Hussain Siddiqui, Director of the Climate and Disaster Justice Unit at the Provincial Ombudsman's Office, reflected on lessons from the 2022 climate-induced floods, stressing the need for stronger institutional preparedness and community-centred responses.

Dr Khalid Waleed of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) offered a critical assessment of carbon markets, questioning their effectiveness in addressing ground realities, while Advocate Shazia Nizamani of the Sindh Women Lawyers Alliance highlighted barriers limiting women's participation in energy decision-making.

Iqbal Hayder of the Laar Humanitarian Development Programme (LHDP) drew attention to communities displaced by projects financed by multilateral development banks in the Indus Delta. Tayyab Ur Rehman spoke on behalf of upstream populations affected by large hydropower projects, while Kamal Palari of the Keenjhar Maroo Arra Welfare and Development Organisation outlined challenges faced by communities living in the wind corridor of Thatta district.

Participants emphasised that a just energy transition must incorporate community voices, address displacement risks and ensure equitable access to resources, warning that climate strategies risk falling short without inclusive implementation.

Grow Green Network Members Visit Indus Motor Plant

Grow Green Network (GGN) members and Indus Consortium team visited the production facility of Indus Motor Company at Port Qasim Industrial Area on the third day of the event, gaining first-hand insight into Pakistan's automotive manufacturing landscape and localisation efforts.

The exposure visit was facilitated by the company's team, who also delivered detailed presentations on the evolution of Pakistan's automobile sector, with a particular focus on Indus Motor Company's role in shaping the industry. Participants were briefed on the company's journey since its establishment in 1989 as a joint venture with Toyota Motor Corporation and House of Habib, which led to the local production of Toyota vehicles in the country.

During the visit, GGN members toured the assembly plant, observing various stages of vehicle production, including welding, painting, and final assembly. The company highlighted its ongoing efforts to increase localisation, with a significant portion of vehicle components now sourced from domestic vendors. Officials said this approach has contributed to the development of Pakistan's auto parts industry and supported thousands of jobs across the supply chain.

Indus Motor Company is widely regarded as one of the leading players in Pakistan's automotive sector, producing popular models such as Corolla, Hilux, and Fortuner. Over the years, the company has invested in technology transfer, workforce training, and vendor development, helping to strengthen local manufacturing capacity.

Company representatives also shared insights into their sustainability initiatives, including energy efficiency measures, waste reduction practices and efforts to align with evolving environmental standards in the automotive sector.

Participants said the visit provided a practical understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing Pakistan's transition towards greener mobility, particularly in terms of localisation, industrial capacity and the adoption of new technologies.

The exposure visit concluded the three-day assembly, reinforcing the importance of collaboration between industry and civil society in advancing sustainable development and climate-responsive growth in Pakistan.

Training for Coordinated Flood Emergency Health Response

Under the project "Strengthening the Health System and Women's Role in Climate Adaptation", Indus Consortium organised a series of eight cross-training sessions in Rajanpur district to enhance coordination and preparedness among key community stakeholders. The sessions brought together health workers, community volunteers and local leaders to strengthen their collective capacity to respond effectively before, during and after floods and heavy rainfall, which frequently affect vulnerable communities in the region.

The trainings were conducted at cluster level and delivered within villages to ensure accessibility and maximise participation, particularly among women and marginalised groups. This community-based approach not only improved attendance but also encouraged stronger engagement and ownership. In total, eight clusters were covered, spanning 10 union councils, two tehsils and 49 villages.

A total of 250 participants attended the sessions, including women, persons with disabilities, frontline health workers and influential community members. The inclusive design ensured representation of diverse perspectives while strengthening the role of women and vulnerable groups in local disaster preparedness and response.

The sessions focused on practical skill-building, improving communication channels and promoting coordinated action among stakeholders. As a result, communities are now better equipped with the knowledge and networks needed to manage health risks associated with climate-induced emergencies. The initiative demonstrates how integrated, community-based approaches can reinforce local health systems while empowering communities, particularly women, to play an active role in climate adaptation and resilience.

Partnerships with Schools to Expand Health Awareness

The same project has also strengthened health awareness and education outreach through partnerships with local schools. Recognising schools as vital platforms for community engagement and knowledge-sharing, the initiative collaborated with the education sector to promote health education and climate awareness among students and their wider communities.

An initial Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the District Education Authority of Rajanpur to formalise the collaboration. Following the privatisation of schools in the area, the project team adopted a flexible approach by engaging directly with individual institutions, ensuring continuity of activities despite structural changes.

In April, an MoU was successfully signed with 15 schools, laying the foundation for integrating health awareness sessions, climate education and community outreach within school environments. By working closely with school administrations, teachers and students, the project is fostering a culture of awareness, preparedness and proactive health practices at the grassroots level.

This initiative strengthens the link between the health and education sectors while empowering young people to act as agents of change within their communities. Through school-based engagement, the project continues to promote informed decision-making, resilience and sustainable practices, contributing to healthier and more climate-resilient communities in Rajanpur district.

Improving Range and Watershed Management in the Hill Torrent areas of Rajanpur

Implementation activities for the project "Improving Range and Watershed Management in the Hill Torrent Areas of District Rajanpur Through Locally Owned Watershed Management Solutions" have made significant progress during the reporting period, enhancing community resilience and promoting sustainable natural resource management. A key milestone achieved was the construction of ten water ponds in strategically chosen locations within the target area.

These water ponds were developed using a participatory approach, ensuring strong community ownership and alignment with local needs. The site selection was conducted in close consultation with community members, technical experts, and local stakeholders to maximise water retention capacity and support both livestock and limited irrigation requirements. Additionally, the construction process created short-term livelihood opportunities for local labour, contributing positively to the socio-economic well-being of the communities.

The newly constructed ponds are expected to play a crucial role in improving water availability in the hill torrent areas, which are highly vulnerable to erratic rainfall and seasonal water scarcity. By capturing and storing rainwater and runoff during the monsoon season, these structures will help reduce soil erosion, recharge groundwater, and support rangeland restoration. Moreover, improved access to water will enhance livestock productivity, which is one of the region's primary sources of livelihood.

This intervention represents an essential step toward integrated watershed management, combining ecological restoration with practical, community-driven solutions. The successful completion of these ten water ponds underscores the project's commitment to sustainable resource management and strengthens local communities' capacity to adapt to climate variability while protecting their natural environment.

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Indus consortium pledges to highlight the environmental, disaster risk, and development issues of riverine communities living along the river Indus basin and its tributaries in Pakistan.