

Making football an inclusive sport: Standard Chartered-Karachi United Youth Football League introduces differently-abled children to participate in the tournament

Karachi, Pakistan, 15 January 2020 – In its third year, the Standard Chartered – Karachi United Football Youth Football League introduced differently-abled children to participate in the tournament. Over the years, the Football League has been striving to be more inclusive by including girls' participation in 2018 and then focusing on introducing differently-abled children in 2019.

This year, Karachi United Academy (KUA) won the Girls and Lyari won the U-14 Boys Standard Chartered Karachi United Youth Football League Final which was recently held in Karachi. Earlier, Karachi United Academy and Baldia had won the U-10 and U-12 boys editions respectively. This league was sponsored by Standard Chartered, as part of its community service mandate to promote sports amongst children.

The final tournament was held at the Karachi United Stadium and was attended by more than 400 spectators hailing from different areas of Karachi.

The objective of the "Standard Chartered -Karachi United Youth Football League" was to provide a platform for Youth football teams from Karachi who came together, broke barriers across genders and ability and inculcated the spirit of competition. Over 1000 boys' and 100 girls' teams participated in the league which kicked off at Karachi United Stadium in September 2019. There were 177 matches that were played amongst children from 14 community centres and the matches were played in different locations including Old Golimar, Clifton, Malir, Baldia, Lyari, Korangi and Mauripur.

Standard Chartered has been sponsoring this league since 2017. Since then, over 2,400 children have been supported through sports, many of whom would otherwise have been engulfed in self-injurious activities such as violence and drugs.

Commenting on the sponsorship, Mr. Shazad Dada, Chief Executive Officer, Standard Chartered Pakistan said, "I am really proud of how far the Standard Chartered-Karachi United Youth Football League has come. Starting with engaging 600 children from underserved communities, today we have engaged over 1000 children. Furthermore, we introduced girls' participation in 2018 and the participation rate has increased by 60per cent. Not only that, it gives me immense pleasure that this year, in line with our Diversity and Inclusion agenda of providing more inclusive opportunities, we encouraged participation from differently-abled children.

The SC-KU league has enabled us to create opportunities, build healthy competition and inculcate respect in the local communities, while breaking barriers across class, genders and abilities, through sport. We hope that through football we can bring a positive social benefit that is a unifying force across our communities in Karachi."

Commenting on the league Mr. Imran Ali, Director Youth and Community at Karachi United said "This is the third edition of the SC KU Youth League. It has been a bigger competition with more participants and matches giving excellent exposure to over 1000 boys and girls. We have witnessed some excellent competition which has also resulted in talent development. The winning teams of last year were invited to Qatar and beat Aspire Academy. We will now look to use the League platform to push talent development and create positive role models in the communities to further perpetuate this culture of sports and the benefits it brings."

--- ENDS ---

For further information please contact:

Farhan Ahmed

Head of External Communications

Tel # +92 21 32450239

Cell# 0302-8241311

Farhan.ahmed@sc.com

Tasneem Mirza

Associate Director, External Communications

Tel # +92 21 32450942

Cell# 0302-8204852

Tasneem.Mirza@sc.com