



Context

Gender equality is at the centre of the development process supported by the UN in Pakistan and is considered essential to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's). UNIDO's Women's Entrepreneurship Development Program is funded under the Joint UN Programme "Towards Gender Parity in Pakistan" which is a critical component of the One UN approach in the country. UNIDO recognizes that expanding (self) employment and creating livelihood opportunities for women, through productive work and income generating activities, are the most effective ways to alleviate poverty and promote female economic empowerment. The main challenge women entrepreneurs in Pakistan face are limited access to information and support services, ineffective linkages within the supply chain and limited access to markets. This weakens their bargaining position with middle men and women who enjoy the bulk of the revenues.

Strategy

Expanding employment and creating livelihood opportunities for women has been achieved by the establishment of the Business Growth Center which aims to work towards enhancing ability, mobility, visibility and connectivity of women entrepreneurs. Moreover, linkages with the Universities, private sector, and Vocational Training Centers are created through the foundation of Creative Industries Centers (such as in IQRA University). The strategy focuses on making all sectors of the economy more gender inclusive, by finding ways to include women into the traditionally male dominated sectors of the economy. This identifies and inserts value adding sub-sectors with high potential for women to access the already existing, male dominated, value chains. Such creative sub-sectors harness women's creativity with the outcome of highly marketable products. These non-traditional parts of the economy mostly rely on creative, culture based designs and heritage based knowledge in which women play a pivotal role through their non-transferable, creative skills. These sectors include marble mosaic, gems and jewels, as well as home textiles.

Results

- Three sectors of Marble, Gems & Jewelry and Home Textiles have been upgraded by inserting value-added sub-sectors in value chains
- Twenty institutions have been created and strengthened to facilitate synergies between industrial sectors, stakeholders and women entrepreneurs
- 45 partners from private, public and government sectors have been strengthened due to the pilot programme implementation
- 5,000,000 individuals have been reached through media advocacy campaigns in South Punjab, KPK and FATA

Impact/Outlook

In the distant future this project looks to empower 680 "Master trainers" in these creative arts, to pass their knowledge and skills directly onto others. In the near future the project aims to reach 6000 direct beneficiaries, specifically women entrepreneurs. The project will deliver enterprise development training to over 2000 people, with a further 20,000 set to benefit from exhibitions and sustained marketing programmes. 60 additional people will be involved in international study and/or exchange visits to facilitate advanced training.

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For more information about UNIDO: www.unido.org

At a glance:

Goal:	Towards Gender Parity in Pakistan
MDG:	1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger 3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
Thematic area:	Poverty Reduction through Productive Activities
Donor:	One UN Fund/Ministry of Small-Scale Industry
Partner:	Pakistan Stone Development Company (PASDEC)
Budget:	USD 1,312,083
Status:	Ongoing
Duration:	2009 - 2013