

PAKISTAN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS NETWORK FOR TRADE (WE-NET) Newsletter

“Encouraging Women Entrepreneurship”

Pakistan Women Entrepreneurs Network for Trade hosted an exclusive morning session on “Encouraging Women Entrepreneurship” on January 24, 2018 to discuss challenges faced by women engaged in trade, business expansion, customs procedures and digital marketing. The session was attended by women entrepreneurs, diplomats, trade attaches, government officials and representatives from multilateral organizations.

Speakers included Her Excellency Ms. Ingrid Johansson, Ambassador of Sweden, Mr. Tariq Huda, Director General, Pakistan Customs, Ms. Hilde Heye, President, FCEM Monaco, Dr. Ani Atanasova, CEO, Pixelhunters, Maheen Khan, CEO, Gulabo, Shamaeel Ansari, House of Shamaeel, Ms. Sonya Battla, fashion designer, Ms. Tuba Ilze, Author and Mr. Qashif Effendi, CEO, Reem Rice. The session gave approximately 100 women entrepreneurs the opportunity to network and benefit from knowledge sharing through panel discussions on trade facilitation, technology, branding and business expansion among others.



Sabrina Dawood; Mariya Sohail; Ana Ruffino, Consul of Italy; Sadeqa Tayebaly; Tuba Ilze; Lubna Farooq; Dr. Ani Atanasova; Hilde Heye; Tariq Huda; Yasmin Hyder; Reshma Aftab; Dr Mahnaz Shah; Hafeez Mastoor; Qashif Effendi



Mr. Qashif Effendi, CEO, Reem Rice, Mr. Tariq Huda, DG Customs and fashion designer Ms. Sonya Battla discussing customs procedures.

Furthermore, Pakistan WE-NET collaborated with representation from Pakistan Customs to provide women entrepreneurs in the SME sector the opportunity to express the challenges they are faced with in terms of trade facilitation and customs procedures. The issues discussed included gender sensitization of Pakistan Customs, stringent documentation requirements and lack of an adequate merit system in trade support programs. Delay in getting responses and need for persistent followup were also some of the challenges expressed by women entrepreneurs.

Collaboration With RLCC for Supply Chain Inclusion

To promote women economic empowerment and to explore opportunities for collaboration, Pakistan WE-NET's project team visited Ra'ana Liaquat Craftsmen's Colony (RLCC), Karachi. Pakistan WE-NET is collaborating with RLCC for the integration of its skilled workforce into global value chains. This also contributes to increase the women's economic participation especially for their household accounts. The gifts given at Pakistan WE-NET's launch event contributed to the income of 300 women in RLCC's livelihood department.



Pakistan WE-NET visited RLCC.



Hafeez Mastoor, Yoko Watanabe, Anna Ruffino, Yasmin Hyder and Mehdi Hasnain at The Hunar Foundation's main campus.

The Hunar Foundation

Pakistan WE-NET's team led by Yasmin Hyder along with Anna Ruffino, Consul of Italy, and Yoko Watanabe, Researcher, Consulate of Japan in Karachi visited The Hunar Foundation's main campus to learn more about the vocational training institute that converts unskilled labour into skilled labour for local and international employers. Pakistan WE-NET discussed ways to encourage Hunar graduates to set up their own businesses and integrate them into supply chains. Mehdi Hasnain, CEO THF, and Hafeez Mastoor, Board Member THF detailed the efforts of Hunar Foundation that has to date, trained and provided employment for 4,000 men and women.

Engagement with Women Entrepreneurs

Pakistan WE-NET engaged with approximately 200 women entrepreneurs and professionals at several events including Working Women Welfare Trust's event on "Dynamic Participation of Women in National Development" as well as a talk with Jacqueline Novogratz, a leading social entrepreneur, Founder and CEO of Acumen, hosted by fashion designer, Sonya Battla. Issues addressed at the events included women's participation in non-traditional sectors, advantages of networking, scaling up a business and the benefits of networking. Additionally, Pakistan WE-NET participated in a talk with French social entrepreneur and Shift Balance Founder Aurélie Salvaire at the Alliance Française de Karachi where participants discussed challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, and opportunities to access new markets for global trade.



Jacqueline Novogratz, CEO of Acumen in conversation with Yasmin Hyder, Pakistan WE-NET.

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