



# Launching of **InnoVATIONHUB** PAKISTAN

@ Jamshoro District

7th December 2018



## 1. Introduction

Innovation Hub Pakistan is established by Oxfam Gb and executed by Research and Development Foundation (RDF) and TIE Islamabad at Jamshoro district under EYW project to facilitate and mentor the youth to become 'Empowered' socially and economically so as to fight the growing challenges of access to opportunities, unemployment, social injustice and life skills.

The Innovation Hub aims to provide training and mentoring support to Jamshoro's youth to help them develop entrepreneurial skills, seek employment opportunities and establish their own enterprises. Young girls, especially those aged between 15 to 29 years, are a priority target to be trained under the EYW project.

## 2. The Launching Ceremony



The colorful and youth led launching ceremony was held in the morning of 7th December 2018, wherein **Mrs. Syeda Shehla Raza**, Minister for Women Development at Government of Sindh together with **Mr. Mohammed Qazilbash**, the Country Director of Oxfam in Pakistan and other dignitaries from implementing partners RDF and TIE, Government Departments, academia, NGOs and the media unveiled the plaque of the Hub, which is first of its kind facility in semi urban area that facilitating youth be empowered socially, economically and politically.

The minister visited the Innovation Hub, she interacted with the young girls who are already trained.

## 3. Proceedings

The passionate young girls of EYW project warmly welcomed the delegates and took them to the unveil the plaque and briefed them on the Innovation Hub Model and what they aim for and what the Hub is equipped with.

### Presentation on EYW Project By Seher Afsheen, Program Manager Oxfam



**Ms. Seher Afsheen**, Program Manager Oxfam briefed the delegates with a presentation on EYW project and how it work to empower the youth from rural areas of Jamshoro. She discussed various strategies embedded by the project, of that the focus is on employment, life skills of the youth, protection of young girls, women.

Ms. Seher Afsheen, Program Manager Oxfam, said that EYW project is closely-related with the 'Dreams of Youth', through this project youth is empowered and skilled in a way that they can negotiate for their rights and access the opportunities. On the role of Innovation Hub, Ms. Seher Afsheen, said the 'through Innovation Hub,



father encouraged me to participate in debate competitions; later I became actively involved in political activities & completed my Masters from Jail" She emphasized on the training and development programs referring to the training programs she was sent in by former Prime Minister, leader of Pakistan People's Party, Benazir Bhutto.

She reflected on interventions made under EYW project and proposed the youth to stay committed and active.

the youth's capacity is enhanced by training them in multiple-ways that enable them to deal with life and career related challenges. We are training them to start a small business, make their CVs, realize their ideas, and use Innovation Hub's space to work, accessing jobs online and how to create links.'

Mrs. Shehla shared her story of life with the Innovators and young Group Members and participants that how she struggled during her student life and broke the barriers to girls participation in politics. She not only appreciated young girls of being active in the empowerment process, but also encouraged them to explore the different fields of economic development and politics. Moreover, she invited young girls in Sindh assembly.

The Minister asked various questions and suggested that the project should also work for political empowerment of the women, particularly the young girls and facilitate them making a leader.

### **A Round Table on EYW Opportunities with the Minister**

### **Conversation of Youth with the Minister**



After the inauguration of Innovation Hub and project's presentation, the youth jubilantly had discussions with the Minister and other delegates. Later, Minister for Women Development, Mrs. Syeda Shehla Raza had a very motivational conversation with the youth. While interacting she shared the perils of gender-based inequality she faced and the significant success of her career. To answer a young girl's question, she said "My

A round table discussion was held with the Minister Mrs. Shehla Raza, around the issues related with youth, women and the role of Government. While discussing the youth issues on the table with the Minister, Mr. Qazilbash discussed that private sector is one of the largest employer and development player in Pakistan, that the Government should acknowledge and facilitate as it could perform well and meet the growing challenges.

Public Private Partnership, model could help out the Government better meet the aspirations of the youth, who are unemployed.

Friends of Hub Forum, also took part in discussion with the minister and other officials from Youth and Sports Department, Govt of Sindh, Women Development Department.

## 4. Young Girls Festival



On the occasion of the launching, a festival by young girls was held at US-PAK Center for Advanced Studies in Water at Mehran University of Engineering and Technology Jamshoro, which was attended by around 350 young girls, students of the universities, Government Officials and NGO representatives. The festival featured stalls selling handicrafts, micro finance banks and providing informational material about micro-finance.

### Stories of the Youth

Two young girls Miss Saba and Miss Khushbu grabbed full auditorium's attention and the big applause when they shared their stories of empowerment. Miss Saba shared that she works on 'Cakes for You' an enterprise she runs online and sells the cake, while the other Miss Khushbu, aiming for a strong enterprise of selling 'applique' work handicraft items. They shared, how EYW program helped them to start their business.

Through the series of trainings, Ms. Khushbu, a young girls living in a village Karo Khao, has got a set of skills, self-confidence and abilities that she has started a small business of 'Aplique'. She sets designs on the clothes and sell them in the market. She is developing links with markets in urban areas.

Miss. Saba has also gone through same training packages under the project. She got the skills of enterprise development. She plans to open a bakery for women. She belongs to Kotri, a small and industrial area of Jamshoro district.

The minister and all other speakers appreciated the way youth presented their stories and appreciated the efforts generated through EYW project.



### Speech of the Minister Women Development, Govt of Sindh



Addressing the seminar, Mrs. Shehla Raza, Minister for Women Development Govt of Sindh, while addressing the seminar said that the Government

of Sindh through her department is executing a campaign on sixteen days of activism in Sindh to control harassment against women. First time the women development department has formed its five years strategy that aims to work together for women empowerment and take advantage of each others capacities, she added. Sindh Government is seriously working on women's Economic Empowerment, she informed. Indus civilization is not only old, but glorious too as it always leads in women empowerment and evident of gender equality. This was the glorious view of the civilization where women had rights. She quoted examples of brave ladies of Sindh the Marvi, Sohni, Sassui, Noori, Moomal, Benazir Bhutto and Mai Bakhtawar.

She further added that we all need to work together to control worries of the women, particularly from rural areas of Sindh. Political empowerment is necessary to development leadership skills of young people in Sindh. She told that they can visit Sindh Assembly as to get inspiration to become leaders. Sindh Assembly for the first time in Pakistan passed 'protection against harassment of Women at work place 2010' which safeguard the dignity of working women. Sindh Government also made laws of controlling early child marriages. We need to be inspiration for our young girls, she opined.

### **Speech by the Country Director Oxfam in Pakistan**



Speaking at the event, Oxfam in Pakistan Country Director Mohammed Qazilbash said "Among the

biggest challenges young girls face in Pakistan are social and cultural barriers to economic opportunities, particularly issues in mobility; by providing them with new avenues, we empower women youth to live up to their full potential." He said that working women face great issues including no access to the opportunities and having less expertise to seize those opportunities.

EYW addresses such other issues of youth and contributes in women empowerment.

### **Speech by Vice Chancellor MUET**



Prof. Dr. M. Aslam Uqaili, Vice Chancellor of MUET said that universities are the places wherefrom change takes place and the graduates of engineering universities have not only need to get the jobs but they need to create the jobs while developing the industry. This young girls festival is basically inspire the youth and MUET would celebrate this festival every year. We should celebrate special events for the girls as they could explore opportunities to become productive and contribute for the wellbeing of the nation, of that they have the potential.

Seher Afsheen, Project Lead - EYW, MR. Ashfaqee Soomro of RDF, Mr. Mansoor Malik of TIE Islamabad and Dr. Bakhshal Lashari of MUET also talked in the seminar stating that such events are evident of the potential the young girls has.

Economic opportunities should be extended to young girls making them able hunt the jobs in the competitive markets.

## Awarding Training Certificates and Distribution of Farming Kits to the Young Innovators



Through the EYW project, two batches of Young Innovators and entrepreneurs were trained at the Hub in Jamshoro, were awarded certificates during the launching ceremony. Additionally the innovators were also given 'Farming Kits' to strengthen farming enterprises and increase their incomes.

## Theater Performance by Young Innovators



A group of youth trained on theater performance under EYW, performed a theater to highlight the gender-based inequality was also played named 'SUJAAGI' that means AWARENESS. Through the SUJAAGI theatre, the theatre group of innovators tried to highlight the youth issues, women issues, gender based discrimination, importance of education and role of youth in a balanced and developed society.

During the theatre, the actors (innovators) delivered very impactful dialogues that created silence for some moments and made all viewers realize the role of youth, particularly of young girls, in the development of friendly and equal society where youth can access the opportunities and contribute in the betterment of their fellows living in rural and far-flung areas.



two young girls in a jubilant mood at the Hub Launch



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