

POVERTY ALLEVIATION  
YOUTH EMPOWERMENT



JOB CREATION



# ENTERPRISING PAKISTAN

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT





**ENTERPRISING  
PAKISTAN**

# FOREWORD

At a time when more than 75 million young people are unemployed worldwide, promoting an entrepreneurial mindset and culture, unleashing entrepreneurial and innovative capabilities of young people and boosting their role in society has become more important than ever.

The British Council vision is one where employers are fully engaged in skills development and young people possess the skills needed, not just to support economic prosperity, but to tackle future international challenges. We use the themes of skills and enterprise to develop international collaboration and support social and economic development, to give young people new opportunities, higher aspirations and a greater global perspective, and prepare them better for the world of work and enterprise.

This booklet presents inspirational stories of young people from Pakistan we have worked with to enable them to be more creative and self-confident, to encourage innovative business start-ups and to enhance their role in society, such as tackling critical problems in their local communities. These young people became socially conscientious entrepreneurs who understand the positive impact they can make to society, by using creative approaches to promote community inclusion and prosperity. Each of these entrepreneurs is a passionate role model for many other young people, encouraging them to foster their entrepreneurial talent for the wider community and societal benefit. I believe you will find the stories in this booklet inspirational, powerful and exciting and I hope they will encourage potential entrepreneurs to go for it!

**Tracy Ferrier**

Head of Skills  
British Council

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The British Council builds trust between the UK and other countries in order to create international opportunities for organisations and individuals across the world. Each year, our work directly engages with more than 30 million people worldwide, and reaches nearly 600 million people through digital media, radio and television. In the UK, we provide opportunities for more than three million people to improve their skills and gain international experience. We have worked in partnership with businesses, national associations and institutions, professional networks, local communities and government ministries for more than 75 years, partnering with more than 300 international organisations each year in order to help them meet their strategic and business aims through cultural relations.

For more information, please visit [www.britishcouncil.org.pk](http://www.britishcouncil.org.pk)



#### **YES Network Pakistan**

The YES Network Pakistan was established in 2002 with the vision to promote youth-led development in the country. YES has played a pioneer role in introducing and institutionalizing the concepts of service learning, youth service and youth social entrepreneurship in the leading public and private institutions of the Pakistan.

We design and deliver innovative and supportive youth engagement programs to demonstrate the impact of youth-led development on youth and the society. YES assists over 15,000 youth every year in starting and running community-based ventures to carry out national and local missions otherwise left without funding. We have sensitised, educated and facilitated the representatives of over 1200 educational and technical institutions to undertake organized youth engagement approaches to mainstream youth into the development process of Pakistan.

YES Network Pakistan is certified by Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy as a 'Best Practice Institution' in the year 2011.

For more information, please visit [www.yesnetworkpakistan.org](http://www.yesnetworkpakistan.org)

# About Social Enterprise

The British Council's Skills for Employability programme works through the themes of skills and enterprise to support the development of education strategies - ensuring young people are better prepared for the world of work. It also aims to help employers become fully engaged in skills development so that young people have the skills needed, not just to support economic prosperity, but to tackle future international challenges.

We bring together international agencies, governments, employers, educators and young people from the UK and across the world through seminars, conferences, competitions and collaboration projects. The aim of this activity is to foster education and training systems that are better able to respond to market demands. We share the UK's knowledge and understanding of effective approaches to skills development, whilst raising the profile of vocational and technical education and enterprise skills.

One part of the Skills for Employability programme focuses on entrepreneurship and enterprise skills, introducing young people to the concept of social entrepreneurship and developing their enterprise capability. The challenge was to cultivate the entrepreneurial spirit at an early age - targeting students between the ages of 16 and 21 studying in Technical Education and Vocational Training (TVET) institutions.

Spread over three phases the process starts by developing Enterprise Champions. The British Council trains selected teachers and experienced former students to become Master Trainers. In the second phase, the Enterprise Champions hold orientation sessions for teachers and principals of TVET colleges across the country. This is followed by awareness sessions for the students and teachers on Social Enterprise and project development - enabling colleges to develop ideas. In third phase the British Council and YES Network shortlist the ideas and then hold a National Competition amongst the short listed teams. All the short listed ideas get seed money as a prize to initiate their project while the winners get additional reward too.

This booklet contains stories of such forward looking young girls and boys from TVET institutions across Pakistan who took the challenge and came up with innovative ideas to solve issues in their communities. All while generating income for themselves as well as in some cases creating employment for other young people.

The British Council with the help of their partners YES Network Pakistan encouraged these students to be creative, innovative and become efficient problem solvers.



# Numbers and Statistics

Over **70,000** youth across Pakistan have been trained over a period of three years.



**1000** TVET colleges across Pakistan have been engaged

**41** Teams of young social entrepreneurs being facilitated

The British Council's **Enterprise Award** inspired **Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTTC)** to incorporate a mandatory social entrepreneurship course in their curriculum.

**250 students** engaged in designing and implementing social business ideas under '**Show Your Creativity**' project.





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# ABDUL LATEEF

## CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

In life there are times when we wish to change things for the better but lack focus and direction. When Abdul Lateef, a resident of Mansehra, attended the workshop on social entrepreneurship, a whole new world of possibilities opened up for him.

The devastating earthquake of 2005 brought massive destruction to his area. Amidst all the chaos of search & rescue and rehabilitation he felt that someone needed to attend to the pressing need of providing health care to the survivors of the calamity - especially women and children.

He decided to establish a health care service center to provide medical and referral services for the people of his community. He organised several awareness sessions in which he told people about the services provided at the centre and also informed them about the importance of basic health care.

His vision and sincere intention to play a contributing role in his society paid off and now Lateef and his team are catering to the health needs of over 200 children and women per month. His team sustains its operations by charging a nominal fee from the patients.

At present, Lateef is studying Civil Engineering. This experience taught him a very valuable lesson of self reliance. He learnt that the best way to overcome problems is to take personal responsibility instead of waiting for help. He hopes that the youth of the country will step up to challenges in life and take local social entrepreneurship initiatives.

**A**t the young age of 18, Asia Kousar has already designed a strategy to address the rapid increase of Hepatitis B and C cases among the poor families in Pakistan.

A student of the Vocational Training Institute, Asia got involved in the Social Enterprise competition initiated by the British Council and YES Network Pakistan. Her entry focused on ways to reduce the threat of Hepatitis B and C among impoverished communities in Lahore.

Backed by her training and the seed money, Asia developed a system of services that addresses prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. She starts with going door-to-door in selected communities to carry out tests to efficiently identify people at risk; recommends interventions to manage health issues before they get worse; and then gives reference support to people who are suffering from Hepatitis.

Breaking down social and cultural barriers to create awareness, and establishing her own credibility among the community proved challenging. Dedicated to her cause, Asia has provided services to more than 5,000 poor people so far.

‘Participation in the social entrepreneurship project was a life-changing experience for me. I used to only see problems and never bothered to look for solutions.’ says Asia, ‘Now all I think about is finding solutions to problems.’

Asia also prepares girls of her community to participate in such projects. Determined to take her idea to the national level, Asia wants to establish collection centers in Lahore and its adjacent areas and to construct a hospital for patients of Hepatitis.



# ASIA KOUSAR

## ASIA V/S. HEPATITIS



# MOHAMMAD YOUSAF

## YOUSAF BATTLES THE DENGUE DILEMMA

Childhood is an age of playfulness, dreams and freedom from the cares of the world. For Yousaf, a young man from Multan, childhood memories included the haunting images of many men, women and children from around his community dying from the much-feared Dengue fever.

Now, many years later, the threat of the fatal fever was still present. Yousaf knew that using mosquito repellent was not enough to keep the threat of Dengue at bay. He wanted to come up with a solution that would help keep away all types of mosquitoes and other insects too.

When Yousaf found out about the Social Enterprise Challenge Competition, he rushed at the opportunity to participate. His idea of creating an effective and economical insect repelling device, was appreciated, and Yousaf was granted the seed money that he needed to start his project.

After receiving the required technical training and finances, Yousaf set about creating the insect repelling device. He faced initial hurdles and delays of importing most of the components of the device but he kept on working on his dream of a Dengue free environment.

His perseverance paid off and he was able to complete his project. He spread awareness amongst the people about his device by going door-to-door and convincing people about its affordability and usage.

At present, over 250 households in Multan use his device. Yousaf has managed to make over Rs. 45,000 because of his hard work and feels proud that he made such a positive contribution to his community.

Opportunity sometimes knocks in the most unexpected of ways. A young graphic designer from Faisalabad, Sadaf had little idea what impact attending a workshop on Social Entrepreneurship would have on her and her community.

The workshop taught the participants to take initiatives to make a change in their community and taught them to think of creative ideas for social enterprise.

For Sadaf, this opportunity was a Godsend; she wanted to do something to help the people of her community to be safe from the potential danger of the Dengue Fever. And the workshop gave her the inspiration to start up on her project.

She held awareness workshops in her area and her institute, where she and her team demonstrated precautionary measures against Dengue. They not only created awareness about the menace of Dengue but also sprayed homes with anti-mosquito spray.

'We disinfected a large area and managed to earn Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 25,000 monthly by spraying 100 homes,' says Sadaf.

Sadaf believes that the youth of Pakistan have talent, ability and passion and if offered a platform and a direction, then they can easily become contributing members of society.

# SADAF

## DRIVE TO DRIVE-AWAY DENGUE

# TASKEEN

## A CLEAR VISION

A college student, Taskeen was an ordinary person with big ideas and a helping nature. When the Social Entrepreneurship workshop was held in her college, she jumped at the opportunity of making a change in society.

Taskeen had weak eyesight, and therefore, the first thing that she thought of was to open an Eye Clinic for the people of her community, which would provide eye examinations and referral services. Taskeen arranged awareness sessions about the eye clinic, and even went door to door to provide people with the information required to get their eyes checked.

In the beginning, she met with discouragement at the idea of a young girl starting such an ambitious project. However, with her positive approach and hard work she was able to convince the skeptics of her effort when her eye clinic provided treatment to over 120 people within her area.

‘Though we are not getting any profits but we are neither in loss. I will continue investing my time and efforts for the success of my enterprising idea and will definitely succeed one day,’ says Taskeen.

Through her words, she sums up the whole concept of social entrepreneurship perfectly, being a source of assistance for others without looking for financial returns.

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# ADNAN RASHEED

## THE MAN WITH THE GREEN THUMB

Opportunity is always attracted to talent and it presented itself to Adnan at a session on social enterprise challenge. ‘Sometime dreams become a reality in the most unexpected ways. Something similar happened to me when I found myself a part of the British Council and the YES Network Pakistan’s social entrepreneurship program.’

Adnan took keen interest in making his surroundings clean and hygienic. He noticed that people did not keep their surroundings clean due to lack of awareness. He was of the opinion that this situation can change drastically if this aspect of social sciences is taught in the school curriculum.

His deep concern for the gradual, yet consistent deterioration of the environment encouraged him to start a plant nursery. He started working from a vacant plot near his house, which was being used as a local garbage dump, and turned it into a beautiful plant nursery, fulfilling his dream of providing a healthy and green environment for his community.

Adnan is also earning by decorating people’s lawns and houses. He has more than 10,000 plants, which he sells at an affordable price. He has rendered services to over 6,000 people and earns around Rs. 30,000 per month.

‘My aim is to provide people a healthy environment which can refresh them.’ Adnan said.

Nowadays, Adnan is planning to expand the operations by building partnerships with the Agriculture Research Center.

Adnan said, ‘I must thank and acknowledge the support provided by the British Council and the YES Network Pakistan; if today I am able to do something for my community it is due to their efforts. Both these institutions have given me strength and have broadened my vision. I am thankful to them for having trust in my abilities.’



A native of Balakot, Ateeq used the platform of the Social Entrepreneurship Challenge to promote making furniture of aluminum instead of wood.

Aware of the amount of deforestation carried out each year for the construction of housing and furniture, and its harmful impact on the environment, Ateeq wanted to introduce an environmentally friendly alternative to the people of his town.

He attended the Social Entrepreneurship workshop without any idea of how the valuable training would change his life. He learned the basics of starting a private social enterprise and the benefits it could reap for him and his society. The workshop gave him the motivation and confidence to believe in himself and his ability to make a positive change around him.

Changing the minds of people to shift from the conventional use of wood furniture to aluminum was a formidable challenge for Ateeq. Backed by his newly found confidence, he marketed his idea by highlighting the advantages of his product. Aspects such as cost effectiveness, portability, design considerations as well as overall strength gradually convinced the people to make the change.

His determination and focus has seen him earn between Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000 a month.

The heartening reality for Ateeq is not the profit he earns, but that his effort is helping save the environment without people having to forego the comfort of having quality furniture.

# ATEEQ LATEEF

## ALUMINUM ALTERNATIVE



# BABAR MEHMOOD

## BRINGS BIOGAS TO HIS COMMUNITY



**B**abar resides in a small village near the city of Faisalabad. Ever since he was a young child, he had a vision to do something in order to help his community and the environment. However, due to the lack of resources and improper guidance, he was unable to make his vision come to life.

All of that changed when the YES Network Pakistan, along with the British Council held their social entrepreneurship workshop in his area. After attending it, he was inspired to do something, and came up with an ingenious concept.

One of the facets of living in a village is the presence of cow dung wherever you go. Babar wanted to rid his community of this unpleasantness by converting it into a safe and renewable fuel called biogas.

In his village, women used wood burning stoves for cooking. Not only did the use of wood threaten to harm the environment, the smoke it generated was also very harmful for their health.

Now with his biogas initiative, Babar manages to earn a livelihood of Rs. 9,000 a month with this enterprise. He is serving approximately 20 houses in his community. Babar tries to reach remote areas and provides them with the means of generating biogas so that they are able to make their lives easier and also help the environment by stopping the use of burning wood for cooking.



The morning of 8 October 2005 changed the lives of everyone in Balakot, a town in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan. A devastating earthquake hit the region, bringing down houses and buildings, killing thousands of people and left the once beautiful town in ruins.

Fawad was a witness to the calamity and a survivor of the destruction. Once rehabilitation started, he saw people chopping down trees to provide for emergency makeshift shelters. Fawad had the presence of mind to realise that the massive cutting of trees would result in soil erosion that could pose an environmental threat to the area.

He discovered the world of social innovation through the Social Enterprise Competition by the British Council and YES Network. This led him to start a drive to save his beloved town from environmental devastation; he started making pre-fabricated aluminum houses. 'The best feature of these houses is that they are portable, repairable and cost effective,' says Fawad.

Success was not easy; the biggest challenge was convincing people to take his idea seriously, because of his age. He overcame this hurdle by making a model house to show to people that there was good sense behind his idea.

Over the last two years, he has expanded his project and has even received financial assistance from Canadian International Development Authority. What started as a drive to save the environment has now become a successful business for Fawad.

# FAWAD AHMAD

## FORESIGHT IN CALAMITY



# Q. KAMRAN

## SANITISING THE STREETS

**K**amran belongs to an underdeveloped city called Shorkot, near Khanewal in Punjab. At 20 years of age, he felt a sense of social responsibility and wanted to do something for his community but did not know how to get started. When his college provided him the opportunity to participate in the Social Enterprise Challenge Award, it was like a dream come true for Kamran.

Poor sanitation and no proper toilets in his community were the cause of a major health hazard; human faeces, sputum and animal dung floating in the running water were causing serious preventable diseases such as Diarrhoea, Cholera, Dysentery and Pneumonia. He presented a plan for the improvement of the sanitation system, and with the seed money, he launched his venture successfully.

He developed a drainage system to channel the polluted water of the area separately, leaving water drains clean and free of disease causing elements. People started realizing that improvement of the sanitation system and supported his effort. 'My community knew that it is for their benefit and better living standard,' says Kamran.

With his untiring efforts and passion, he has managed to serve his community and make a good amount of income as well. Kamran makes a monthly income of Rs. 15,000. He aims to expand this project so that he can support his family and improve the quality of life of his community.



**R**ida is a bright, 20 year old woman from Jhang who is very popular at her college for her warm and friendly nature. One of the top students in her college, Rida actively participates in all social events held at her college. Her peers look up to her because of her passion for always thinking of doing something beneficial for her community. She firmly believes that people can achieve their dreams if they stand strong against any odds and work hard with diligence.

When she attended the YES Network Pakistan challenge workshop at her college, she proposed her idea of leading an awareness campaign about the long term and harmful effects of plastic shopping bags on the environment. She wanted to introduce shopping bags made of cloth as a much better and environmentally friendly alternative.

Rida created an entire business strategy herself and managed it intelligently in order to gain profits from it. 'We manufactured very beautiful bags, our range includes pocket bags, zippers and strawberry shaped bags, etc.', she explains, confident and spirited.

Not only did Rida manage to generate money for herself and her team members through the campaign, but she also managed to reduce the usage of plastic bags in her city.



# RIDA ZAHRA

## SHOPPING BAG WITH A CAUSE



# USMAN

## ENERGETIC ENDEAVOURS

A young man hailing from Toba Tek Singh, Usman is a firm believer in the power of the human spirit. He believes that there are no boundaries and limitations to what people can achieve, and if they work hard enough, they can get whatever they want.

Fate provided him the opportunity to follow his belief when he participated in the Social Entrepreneurship workshop held by the YES Network Pakistan and the British Council.

His city suffered from a major energy crisis with 20-hour long load shedding on a daily basis that crippled its entire infrastructure. Businesses came to a grinding halt; daily household chores became an impossible task and life in general became miserable. Usman decided to help his community by manufacturing solar energy panels for homes.

Armed with the technical training and finances required for his project, Usman started installing solar panels in people's homes. His community welcomed his brilliant effort, no longer having to worry about prolonged power outages.

Attending the workshop proved a major turning point for Usman; it gave him the training to use his idea to benefit his society and make a positive difference in the quality of life of his community people.

**W**hen Zohaib wakes up every morning, he does so with a sense of purpose and pride. His life has taken a direction that has allowed him to fulfill his dream of helping to preserve the environment.

A nature-lover at heart, Zohaib always felt strongly about the lack of awareness among people regarding the careless use of paper and its effects on the environment.

His dilemma was how to make people aware about the concept of responsible use of paper and recycling. 'It is always very difficult to change the attitude of people on the re-usability of a material which they throw away as garbage on a daily basis.' says Zohaib.

Armed with confidence and the guidance he received during his Social Entrepreneurship training, he started his awareness campaign by going to schools, colleges and offices and educating people on using paper effectively.

He asked people to donate used and unwanted paper and with the help of some students from a local technical institute, started a small business of making paper mache models and decoration pieces, which he sells at his shop.

This idea has enabled him to earn sufficient money and serve the community in a productive way.

Zohaib is aware of the benefits of recycling. 'Recycling a ton of newsprint saves about 1 ton of wood while recycling a ton of printing or copier paper saves slightly more than 2 tons of wood'.

This knowledge gives Zohaib the motivation and drive to continue his effort of helping to save what he loves most as he wisely puts it 'every little helps'.

# ZOHAIB KHALIL

## GIVING NATURE A HELPING HAND



# MOHAMMA D NAZIM ZAFER

## GARBAGE IS GOLD



Like his peers, Nazim believed that people in his community did not possess any social conscience or desire for prosperity and development as they had become accustomed to poor living conditions and a sub standard lifestyle.

His instructor at the Vocational Training Institute where he studied, attended the social entrepreneurship workshop organised by the British Council and the YES Network Pakistan and then encouraged his students to participate as well. The information and encouragement he received from the workshop revived his faith in the human spirit and he started to believe that if a change was needed then all one had to do was take the initiative.

He formed a team to pitch an idea to help the environment by starting a community-based solid waste management system, in which they would collect, manage, reduce and transform waste material to manure and biogas.

They faced a lot of discouragement and skepticism from their families and community members about the nature of their job. The Local Municipal Corporation and sanitary workers also refused to cooperate in this unpleasant project.

However, the team did not give up and decided to collect and lift the garbage themselves. They helped 342 households by collecting their waste material and improving their sanitation system.

He feels that the government should provide training and financial support to the youth for social entrepreneurship, as it will promote innovation, self-responsibility and bring a change in our society.



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# ASIF

## JOB HUNTER

A resident of Jhang, Asif, displayed from a very young age a sense of responsibility and dreamt of making a positive change to help steer his city to prosperity.

Many youngsters of his community were without jobs and Asif wanted to do something to help them get employment. He realised that jobseekers and employers had no platform to reach each other and decided to bridge this gap by starting a publication that specifically offered employment opportunities.

Though the first push came from his training by the YES Network Pakistan and British Council, Asif displayed remarkable determination towards his project and proved that when someone decides to make a difference, all they need is a little bit of faith and confidence.

Asif contacted employers who had vacancies but could not advertise in newspapers. He managed a database of vacancies from the local market and from newspapers, canvassing jobs from the private and public sector.

In order to reach young people in his community, Asif stocked his employment journal in bookshops and in return, printed their ads in his publication. 'We sold 300 copies in two months and benefited 500 people in one week. In one month's time, we offered 45 jobs on average from private and public sector, and several jobs from foreign countries as well,' says Asif.

Asif earns around Rs. 12,000 per month from this project. He is happy that he has helped the youth of his community to find employment.

Being a humble resident of Rawlakot, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Bilal Akhtar did not have the faintest idea of the turn his life was going to take a few months down the road.

He was a natural-born entrepreneur, but his dreams of making a difference lacked direction. When the YES Network Pakistan visited his hometown, he was more than just keen to attend the workshop and learn from it. Guided by the training provided by the workshop, Bilal put forth his idea of setting up a beekeeping farm to produce honey on a large scale.

After conducting an initial market survey on honey farming in his area, Bilal began setting up his own farming facility with the help of the money granted by British Council and the YES Network Pakistan. He hired six young people from his locality and was soon producing honey for his community. He says that even though running a beekeeping business was not an easy profession to choose, he took it very seriously and was soon reaping profits from his hard work. In the first year of production, he and his team earned a profit of Rs. 150,000.

At present, Bilal runs a private technical institution in Rawlakot where he encourages innovation, creativity and self-employment among his students. According to him, 'Participation in the social enterprise challenge was the most rewarding experience of my life. It altered my thinking and philosophy of life. I learnt that one has to take personal responsibility for living a better and happier life.'

# BILAL AKHTAR

## BRINGING SWEETNESS TO PEOPLE'S LIVES



# GHUFRAN AHMAD

## SEEING OPPORTUNITY IN FAULTS

**A** bright student of electronics from Multan, Ghufuran is one of those students who implements what is taught. Using his expertise as an asset, his motive was to progress professionally and also make his society progress collectively.

His inspiration was sparked at a seminar on Social Entrepreneurship held at his institute. It was here that he presented an idea of reutilising operational electronic kits of faulty devices. With the help of positive reinforcement by YES Network Pakistan and the British Council, and with technical support, Ghufuran started working on his project.

Firstly, he started replacing faulty kits from devices to ensure reusability and eliminate any chances of short circuits, which can prove fatal. Secondly, he fixed faulty gadgets and sold them at an affordable price. He also carried out repair work on people's broken devices.

'People can save money by getting their electronic items repaired for reuse instead of wasting money on buying a new device,' says Ghufuran.

Earning Rs. 75, 000 last year from his social enterprise, Ghufuran trained 20 young people under his guidance to recycle, reutilise and repair. By doing so, he not only made a profitable business for himself, but also directed his success towards promoting environmental care, creating job opportunities for and helping people save money.

**20** year-old Muhayuddin started an online jobs advertising business after attending the Youth Social Enterprise workshop. Not many young people have the will and motivation to start a private enterprise but for Muhayuddin, the motivation to make a change came from personal experience.

In his hometown of Rahimyar Khan, the internet was still a scarce resource and he had to travel to the nearest city in order to get to a cyber cafe. He wanted to change this situation and provide the youth of his community access to the internet close to home so they could learn basic IT skills and use their knowledge to earn a living.

Muhayuddin went to work by exploring different online employment opportunities and techniques that could benefit the people of his community.

With true entrepreneurial spirit he took the initiative and went ahead to train several people within the community with IT skills such as surfing, uploading and distributing useful employment information.

His story soon became an example of how passion and willingness to make a change can help spur a society to prosperity. Today he looks back and all he can do is smile. He stresses the importance of students to work part time and not rely solely on their guardians for support. This way, they develop their entrepreneurial skills as well as contribute to the development of their society.

# GHULAM MUHAYUDDIN

## GETTING CONNECTED



# IQRA JABEEN

## WOMAN ON TOP



A resident of Karimabad; a very underdeveloped and conservative area of Karachi, Iqra was a strong advocate of the independence and self reliance of women and felt that women should have an equal opportunity to become active members of society. The idea of equal participation for females was frowned upon, in her community. In order to change this restricting and antiquated norm, and help women become confident contributing members of society, Iqra needed help.

When she attended the Youth Social Enterprises programme held in her hometown, she hoped to turn her idea into reality. Iqra decided to start her own skills training center exclusively for women to train them to learn necessary skills to help them generate some income for themselves and their family and progress in society as individuals.

Changing the prevalent mindset of the people of her community proved to be the biggest challenge for her to overcome. With the help of dedicated team members, and the seed money that was provided to her, Iqra launched an aggressive awareness campaign where she went door-to-door convincing people of the advantages of her vision.

All her effort and hard work paid off and she established the skills training center, which offers a variety of courses such as beautician courses, handicrafts, stitching and computer courses. 'All of our courses are quality oriented and cost effective', said a very proud and happy Iqra.



**F**or the people of Rawalakot, a scenic town set in a valley high in the mountains in Azad Kashmir, eating fresh fish used to be a rare luxury until now. Due to the foresight and determination of a young man, the townspeople can now enjoy fresh and affordable locally produced fish.

The remote location of Rawalakot made it difficult for its inhabitants to have access to fresh fish; the delays and difficulty in transportation greatly affected the quality of the fish that reached them. Khurram, a young man of 20, wanted to change that.

When a workshop on Social Entrepreneurship was conducted in his town, Khurram participated eagerly and presented his idea of fish farming.

The locals considered the plan too ambitious for someone as young as Khurram. Undaunted by the criticism, Khurram took the initiative supported by the training.

Khurram hired a team of youths to set up the facility and started importing small fish for breeding. They faced initial setbacks of theft of fish but the loss did not deter Khurram. He now successfully produces locally farmed fish; and receives a lot of support and encouragement from his community.

Khurram plans to pursue fish farming as a profession. 'I am blessed that I got the required training and support from the YES Network Pakistan. Now I am able to create jobs for my people and expand this project further,' says Khurram.

# KHURRAM ILTAF

## AMBITION KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES





# NAUMAN BUTT PROVIDES IT SOLUTIONS!

A young boy with high hopes, Nauman made a name for himself in his hometown when he managed to create his very own software solution center with the help of his team mates. His program was very well received, and gained positive reviews.

Hailing from Mirpur and being a bright child, Nauman learnt about the project initiated by the YES Network Pakistan and the British Council through his teacher. In order to contribute, he and his team created three different projects for approval, and finally, one of them was chosen. The idea of creating a 'Software Solution Center' was a completely new one, and highly innovative for the students of Nauman's college.

The main problem faced by Nauman and his team during this time was the provision of financial resources. It was solved by the financial assistance provided to him by the British Council and the YES Network Pakistan.

He learnt that if a person is determined to do something, he or she will ultimately manage to do it, and for him, it was a completely new experience of working with a team. He managed to make a profit on every unit sold, and a number of different students, teachers and professionals managed to take advantage of the project.

Nauman believes that maximising upon the opportunity in order to gain revenue while providing a solution to society's problems is what social entrepreneurship is all about.

At present, Nauman is completing his studies and he says that once he is done, he will choose to become self reliant and invest in his own business, so that he is able to help a greater number of people achieve benefits.

Nauman participated in the Youth Social Enterprises programme.



**29** year-old Nazia Parveen is a student of the Vocational Training Center in Sahansa, Kotli. During her time at the Vocational Training Center, Nazia developed a desire to utilise her skills to help young girls and women around her.

After consulting with her teacher Madam Farzana, Nazia set about her dream by conducting stitching classes of her own for young girls. She is a firm believer in the independence and self-reliance of women and by teaching them how to stitch, Nazia says she can help them achieve that goal.

Through unparalleled devotion to her work and a sheer passion for pursuing her dream, Nazia manages to earn up to Rs. 20,000 per month.

Forever thankful to her teacher for her guidance and opening a completely new world of possibilities for her, Nazia is looking to expand her business and explore new avenues of providing entrepreneurship opportunities for the women of her area.

At present, Nazia teaches around 20 to 25 girls how to stitch, and urges more women to come forth and play an active role in society and participate in new projects and initiatives.

She wants the government to undertake projects, which are beneficial for the youth, so that they can realise their potential and can become contributing members of society. She believes that everyone has special qualities that can be brought to light with a little help.

Nazia started her own shop for women after participating in the Youth Social Enterprises challenge.

# NAZIA PARVEEN

## A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION



# REHMAT ALI

## SHINES A RAY OF LIGHT IN HIS COMMUNITY

Rehmat Ali, a resident of Multan, participated in the Social Entrepreneurship workshop with an aim to get guidance on ways to contribute to his society. His vision was to alleviate the suffering of his community from prolonged power outages. 'When you live in a society which is under developed and people don't have enough means to meet their daily needs then it becomes imperative for you to take a stand and become a shining star of change,' says a smiling Rehmat.

He was part of a team that presented the idea of manufacturing low cost UPS (Uninterrupted Power Supplier) systems, which has become a necessity in Pakistan due to the acute energy crisis in the country. He received training in communication skills and gained confidence, as he was able to convey his ideas and vision articulately.

The training had a two-fold advantage for Rehmat; with his newfound confidence and skills of communication, he found employment as a lecturer in an institute in his area.

Rehmat is a new man, with a sense of responsibility and ownership towards his society because of his initiative of helping people with affordable alternative energy solutions.

Rehmat says 'Formal education provides you the livelihood; self-education will make you a fortune and my day of moving towards fortune was when I met the team of YES Network and British Council Pakistan.'



Since he was a young boy, Saifullah was an unusual child; he was much more aware of his surroundings than other children of his age. By the time he reached college, he aptly observed that unemployment was one of the largest factors due to which people in his community were suffering.

He realised that industries were saturated, and with the recent economic downturn resulting in lay offs, an increasing number of people were finding it difficult to make a living.

When the British Council and the YES Network Pakistan visited his hometown to offer workshops on Social Enterprise, he eagerly took part and was more than inspired to come up with a plan.

Saifullah realised that one of the main reasons of unemployment was the fact that the people lacked skills, which could help them attain productive jobs. Therefore, he thought about starting a skills coaching center. Saifullah set up his own center where people learn skills such as laptop repairing, mobile repairing, computer repairing and other important skills that can help people to start making a living.

His efforts in creating employment opportunities have brought prosperity to his hometown.

## SAIFULLAH

### A VISIONARY AT WORK



# SAIQA YASEEN

## A STITCH IN TIME

**S**aiqa, 28, belongs to the Sahansa District in Kohli. She was studying at the Vocational Training Institute in her town when a workshop on social enterprise was held at her institute.

Inspired by the proceedings, she decided to do something to contribute to her society. Saiqa started giving stitching classes to girls and also opened a small shop for women and began providing a variety of different goods and materials for young girls and women.

She trained around 40 girls to learn stitching. Saiqa met a number of different people during this project, which helped her gain confidence and improved her communication skills.

However, due to ill health, she had to hand over the project to her colleague Ms. Shazia. During her time on the project, she was able to earn an average of Rs. 40,000 per month. Saiqa thanked the British Council and YES Network Pakistan for the help and support they provided, and believes that this project has benefited her greatly.

Saiqa still has the desire to continue working so she can provide better opportunities to others and help make them self reliant and independent.

She feels that the government must try to introduce opportunities to the youth to establish themselves.

At present, she is working on her own social entrepreneurship venture.

‘Working as a female social entrepreneur in a strictly male dominated society is a challenging job,’ says Shaiza, a young resident of Kotli, Azad Kashmir.

The women of Kotli had great difficulty in purchasing certain items of necessity like undergarments from shops run by men because of the community being strictly conservative. With the seed money received as part of the Social Enterprise challenge, Shazia, along with a group of girls, decided to open a shop exclusively for women, which was also run by women.

Shazia is a strong advocate of female empowerment and this shop is a bold step in her effort to bring the world of social enterprise to the women of her community.

‘Becoming an entrepreneur at this very young age feels great. Women come to me and appreciate my effort and get inspired to do something of their own,’ she said. Shazia is now considered a successful entrepreneur in her community; she has employed 2 women who support their family through this job.

She gives the credit of her success to the British Council and the YES Network Pakistan. From their platform, she learned to be socially responsible and was equipped with the skills and abilities that have enabled her to work for her community. Shazia is currently planning to expand her business with the vision that you can only bring gender equality if you give women equal opportunity and recognition to work.

# SHAZIA KHATOON

## GIRL POWER

# WALEED AHMED

## THE YOUNG FARMER



**W**aleed is a determined and energetic young boy, which makes him widely popular amongst his peers. Since an early age, Waleed dreamt of prosperity for his hometown of Rawlakot, a scenic and peaceful town set in a beautiful valley in Azad Kashmir.

The majority of farming done in Rawlakot is of corn, wheat and a few vegetables on a very basic level. Therefore, all vegetables were imported from neighbouring towns and villages, which were sold at an increased rate. Waleed wanted the people of his town to be able to eat fresh, local and affordable produce.

After gaining the required technical training at the Social Enterprise workshop, he started his own vegetable farm.

Starting on this project was not easy for Waleed; he faced a lot of discouragement from his townspeople who thought his effort to be ambitious and impractical for someone so young and inexperienced. Waleed used their lack of faith to fuel his motivation. He had a vision of bringing prosperity to his town was determined to prove that his dream could be realized.

Success shone on Waleed when, with the implementation of his project, people started getting fresh and affordable local vegetables.

‘We do face hardships in the beginning but in the end everybody realises your efforts and those who oppose in the beginning ultimately become your greatest support.’ says Waleed.

He has earned Rs. 100,000 from this project so far, and is looking forward to expand his business further.





<http://www.britishcouncil.org/skills-for-employability>

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