GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

TRADE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF PAKISTAN

**MULTAN**

Subject: **Post-Event Report of Webinar on “Women in Trade – Women Entrepreneurship in South Punjab” held on October 1, 2021, 10.30 am to 1 pm**

Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, Multan, organized the subject Webinar in collaboration with State Bank of Pakistan, Punjab Small Industries Corporation, National Productivity Organization, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, and SMEDA. The objective of the Webinar was to bring together on one platform all relevant government organizations working towards the uplift and facilitation of Women Entrepreneurship for the benefit of the audience which included Women Entrepreneurs from South Punjab. A total of 39 participants attended the Webinar.

In his opening remarks, **Mr. Hasnain Haider Langah, Director, TDAP Multan,** welcomed the speakers and the participants, and shed light on the role of TDAP in promoting & strengthening Women Entrepreneurship across Pakistan. He stated that uplifting women entrepreneurship require vertical and horizontal linkages across government, industry and trade, and that organizations working in isolation cannot achieve desired results. In response to audience demand, he stated that trainings on Amazon, which will be conducted by Master-Trainers hired by the Ministry of Commerce, will be arranged in South Punjab soon by TDAP.

**Mr. Imran Sadaf, Deputy Director (Development Finance Division), SBP**, informed the audience about the various ways in which SBP is serving and facilitating women entrepreneurs. He dilated upon SBP’s Credit Guarantee Scheme which offers subsidized loans at 5% mark-up to Women Entrepreneurs. Limit of this loan is up to PKR 5.0 million and 2900 women-owned businesses have so far availed PKR 796 million. He also stressed upon SBP’s efforts to make commercial banking women-friendly, and to promote digitalization, financial literacy and an enabling environment for women entrepreneurs.

**Ms. Ammarah Manzoor, Director, PSIC**, talked about her organization’s focus on cottage industry and its relevance for Women Entrepreneurs. She informed the audience about the microfinance schemes, credit schemes, CM’s self-employment scheme in collaboration with Akhuwat Foundation, and the Covid-19 scheme beneficiaries of which are 57% women, that artisans, craftsmen and women entrepreneurs can avail through PSIC. She also told about the Handicrafts shops and Artisans Well-Being Villages being run by PSIC. She stated that 800 entrepreneurs were benefiting from PKR 450 million credit through PSIC.

**Mr. Ali Ahsan, Assistant Manager (In-Charge), NPO**, delivered a presentation on his organization and its services for women entrepreneurs. He spoke at length about NPO-administered APO Support Programs, i.e. Technical Expert Services, Bilateral Cooperation between NPOs, Individual Observational Study Missions, and Development of Demonstration Companies, that Women Entrepreneurs can make use of.

**Mr. Kashif Islam, Additional Joint Registrar, SECP**, delivered a much-appreciated presentation that served as a complete training on how to register a company/business with SECP. He presented both the online method as well as the traditional format of company registration, and ensured the audience that SECP is totally geared towards serving businesswomen. He stressed that with SECP’s online company registration portal, the need to personally visit any SECP office, barring any exigency, has been eliminated.

**Ms. Tasneem Bashir, Regional Manager Small & Medium Business Facilitation Center, SMEDA,** talked about the opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs in SMEDA’s 105 training programs. She stated that SMBFC is involved in preparing a holistic databank of SMEs across South Punjab, and also running a BDSP network. SME profiling is done so as to offer optimal marketing services to individual SMEs. An Information Corner exists on the SMBFC website for the purpose of marketing SMEs. She highlighted the challenges in developing confidence and trust among women workers and entrepreneurs. She stated that SMEDA One-Window operation is a major opportunity for Women & Youth Entrepreneurs, as it is offering subsidy on business & logo registration.

**Ms. Filza Shah, Founder, Women Economic Empowerment Network,** and leading Women Entrepreneur from South Punjab, spoke at length about the challenges and road-blocks she has had to face in her own career. She emphasized the need for uplifting South Punjab’s cottage industry with which the livelihoods of many women workers & artisans is linked, and urged PSIC to play a more vigorous role in this regard. She opined that until artisans graduate to being entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship in general, and women entrepreneurship in particular, will continue to have a small footprint. Furthermore, women entrepreneurs can only move towards export when the supply chain and baseline working conditions are strong.

The floor remained open for interactive Q&A throughout the session. The audience appreciated all the presentations and requested website links / email addresses of the presenters which were provided to them through the chat-box. The participants also appreciated TDAP’s synergistic effort in bringing together relevant organizations on one platform, paving the way for collaboration and greater service-orientation. It was also noted that despite repeated invitations & reminders, there was minimal representation from Women Chambers from Bahawalpur, Layyah and DG Khan.

The Webinar concluded with a vote of thanks by Director, TDAP Multan.

**Picture Gallery:**

**A person sitting in a chair

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**A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated with medium confidenceA picture containing text, monitor, electronics, screen

Description automatically generatedGraphical user interface, application, Teams

Description automatically generatedA screenshot of a computer screen

Description automatically generatedA screenshot of a person

Description automatically generated with medium confidenceA person wearing glasses

Description automatically generated with medium confidenceA person with the eyes closed

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