



As a nod to the centenary of **International Women's Day** 2011, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UNWomen and the Islamabad Capital Territory District Administration Women Development Wing organized a mega event at the Potohari Arts and Crafts Village on Thursday 17th March. This was conceptualized and coordinated with a consortium of development organizations including Empowerment thru Creative Integration (ECI) Pvt Ltd, Ethnomedia, and The Sisters' Trust Pakistan.

The event was planned as a day for information dissemination, networking and celebrating the successes achieved for women development in Pakistan. It emphasised the thirteen key areas identified under Pakistan's national plan of action, clustered around five thematic enclosures:

Women and the Economy	Women and Health	Women and the Media	Women and Human Rights	Women in Education and Training
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The **Women and the Economy** enclosure, organized by ECI, brought together organizations and individuals working towards enhancing women's livelihood and enterprise development. ECI's stall was a visual demonstration – and piloting – of the organization's newest initiative: 'ERADA' a business growth center for women entrepreneurs. A membership based platform, the business growth center aims to bring together a range of organizations with a shared mandate of supporting women's enterprise development and through member organizations provide support services for enterprise development to women entrepreneurs across the country. Business growth center members present at the event included: the Behbud Association, The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE), Punkh Livelihood Development Society, the Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry as well as Badbaan Enterprise Development Forum.



A range of activity-based stalls were piloted by ECI under the Business Growth Centre.

1. **Karobari Shifa Khana** (Business Clinic), featured an enterprise trainer as a “doctor” for people experiencing problems in their businesses. Diagnosis focused on identifying constraints that ‘patients’ may be facing at specific steps of the business cycle, i.e. opportunity identification, resource mobilization, business implementation or marketing and sale.
2. **Forun Fun** (Immediate Skill), in which technical trainers provided registered participants with 20 minute skill demonstrations on: jewellery making, dough-work, gur papri (a traditional sweet) and fomic flowers.
3. **Ao Karobar Barhain** (Make Your Business Grow) video training booth: Using six training videos developed by ECI, a senior trainer worked with groups of participants including local entrepreneurs, university students and other interested participants to provide orientations on Business Feasibility, 6-Steps of Marketing and Personal Entrepreneuria Competencies.
4. **Aik Mulaqat, Kamyab Karobari Kay Saath** (Meet a Successful Entrepreneur) Ring, where all participants had an opportunity to informally meet and interact with a number of successful women entrepreneurs, including Ms. Zeenat Aisha, owner of Papasalli’s restaurant and Ms. Nasim Akhtar, a successful female Business Development Service Provider based in Peshawar.
5. **Boojho to Janay** (Guess and Know), a quick hands-on activity in which an enterprise trainer asked individuals questions where knowledge and competencies vis-a-vis enterprise could be gauged. Winners were given special prizes!

The Economy enclosure also housed a canopy reserved solely for entrepreneurs and organizations with products for sale. These ranged from embroidered clothes from Peshawar, Abottabad and Haripur, to mobile phone pouches made by beneficiaries of the Acid Survivors Foundation, to the award-winning honey of the Hashoo Foundation.



Each enclosure added a different flavour to the event and was individually appreciated by the Chief Guest **Mr. Tariq Mahmood Pirzada**, Chief Commissioner, Islamabad Capital Territory. The participating organizations presented a complete spectrum of the work done to support the cause of women in Pakistan, at an event that turned out to be a colourful celebration of positive potential.