

LEAD UPDATE

Entrepreneurship and Skills Development through School-based Enterprises: Has it worked for women?

Panel Discussion on 'Gender and Entrepreneurship; Exploring the Potential of Self Sufficient schools as a model of Entrepreneurship, Skills Development and Income Generation'

Serena Hotel Islamabad, August 10th 2010

Background

LEAD Pakistan and IDRC are conducting research on an innovative model of high-quality, demand-driven, workplace-based skills and entrepreneurship development – self-sufficient schools. The pivotal feature of this model is school based enterprises, which the school owns and students are involved in all aspects of their operation – from production, sales, marketing and accounting. One of the best examples of self-sufficient schools is San Francisco Agricultural High School, Paraguay, owned by Funadacion Paraguaya. A Research team from LEAD Pakistan visited San Francisco Agricultural High School and an all-girls school, Mbaracayú, in Paraguay in March 2010 to understand the features of self-sufficient schools, the experience of women and girls who have been trained using this methodology; these findings were shared with stakeholders to see if and how such a model could be replicated in Pakistan, and identify organisations and schools who were interested in implementing the model and develop a business plan for a selected institute.

LEAD Pakistan arranged a series of three stakeholders meetings in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad which were attended by 40 participants representing 34 organizations.. The participants were confident that the model of self-sufficient schools could be replicated in Pakistan, and that it was an effective way of providing relevant, high quality and much-needed skills and entrepreneurship development training. Some schools had already experimented with business activities, with varying success, and with a little refinement, could be modelled along the lines of San Francisco Agricultural High School.

34 draft business plans were submitted by the



participants who drafted their initial ideas for school enterprises, focusing on the resources they already have and those they would need in order to implement the model. These business plans were evaluated against several criteria including potential impacts on gender equality and poverty alleviation, clarity of business idea, proximity to appropriate markets and previous experience of school-based enterprises. Each of the eleven assessment categories was assigned a score of 5, and all plans scoring above 35 were shortlisted for the stage of field evaluation. Umeed-e-Noor, based in Lahore is a school for children with special needs run by the philanthropic Hashoo Foundation, the social arm of the Hashoo Group of companies. The Pakistan Readymade Garments Technical Training Institute in Lahore is a public-private partnership, between the Ministry of Textiles and the Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association. The College of Tourism and Hotel Management, Lahore is a completely private sector, commercial venture, and the Government Polytechnic for Glass and Ceramics, Shahdara is a public sector TVET institute under the administrative purview of the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA), Punjab.

Field Appraisal

The field appraisal was undertaken by LEAD with the help of Nik Kafka, Managing Director 'Teach a Man to Fish', a UK based NGO and sister organisation of Fundación Paraguaya's, who has been involved in the establishment of several self-sufficient school in the developing



Session in progress



Question Answers in session

world. Nik Kafka developed the field appraisal and conducted interviews with staff who had conceived the business ideas. The interviews and site visits assessed features such as financial strength, clarity of ideas, organisational capacity, resources, the business environment, commitment to social objectives and social impact. He also helped with developing the framework for the business plan, which LEAD and the partner institutions would be following.

As a result of the field appraisals, the College of Tourism and Hotel Management, Lahore was chosen for which to develop a detailed business plan.

Panel Discussion

After selecting the institute LEAD Pakistan arranged a Panel Discussion with concerned government, corporate and donor agencies to discuss the model of self-sufficient schools in terms of determining a way forward for successful and effective implementation.

Objectives

The objectives of the Panel Discussion were:

- To develop a sound theoretical understanding of revenue generating, school based productive enterprises as a model for delivering vocational and entrepreneurial skills among the audience.
- For Government representatives and policymakers, to discuss the relevance of this model in terms of its relevance to policy and national skills development and education goals
- For the business and finance community to discuss the model in terms of its financial soundness as a business model.
- For the international development community to discuss the model of self-sufficient schools in terms of its sustainability and quality of education it can deliver.

Discussion

The discussion opened with a welcome note by Ali Tauqeer Sheikh CEO LEAD Pakistan. He said that LEAD was pleased to present a revolutionary way of providing relevant and high quality

entrepreneurship development training. Subsequent to the introduction Frida Khan, Senior Research Analyst LEAD Pakistan presented the concept of education and training through school based enterprises and an introduction to the San Francisco Agricultural High School. The participants were also shown a short film about the San Francisco Agricultural High School.

Ms. Agnes Luz, Chief of Party USAID Entrepreneurs began the panel discussion by giving her comments on the model. She said she found the model very business proficient as it is closely linked to the skills required in the job market as well as the service market. Rural enterprises established with the help of this model, she said would be ensured as product specific and industry specific. Ms Luz stressed that opportunities stemmed from the problems a community faces hence it is very important to have an eye for opportunities.

The second panellist Mr. Fayyaz Baqir, Director Akhtar Hameed Khan Resource Centre urged that entrepreneurship was the only way to engage the youth in community development. He commented on the model saying it had a strong component of community participation.

Following the panel discussion, Babar Sheikh, Director Coordination presented the business plan developed by COTHM. He introduced a new course, Hospitality Skills for Employability and Entrepreneurship (HSEE) at the institute, which was to be aimed at girls and boys from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

He said that it was the first time an institute like COTHM laid emphasis on entrepreneurship and maximizing social impact fundamental to or explicit in their work. The Hospitality Industry he said had the biggest chunk of career opportunities than any other sector of the economy for the trained and skilled males and females of Pakistan.

The enterprises established for this business plan included a small bakery from a general store on COTHM premises. The bakery would be expanded providing the core school enterprise where students would work and learn. Secondly, COTHM would set up a third party

cafeteria at clients' premises. These cafeterias will be run, under supervision, totally by the students on the Hospitality and Entrepreneurship course, and they would be involved in all aspects of the production chain. The school enterprises he said were expected to break even between years 2 and 3, and start making an increasing profit from year 3. The Revenue generated would be invested in subsequent years to cover the cost of training.

Feedback on Business Plan

Overall the panellists and participants were hopeful that the business plan developed by COTHM reflecting the innovative new model of School- Based Enterprises would be a viable business venture.

Agnes Luz said the presented plan was a workable option in terms of finances and the costing just needed to be elaborated a little more to make fully transparent the cost to be endured. She said from a donor's perspective the business plan would be a feasible and implementable project.

Ahmed Shafiq, Executive Director of COTHM presided over the Q&A session. He assured the business plan had a strong element of entrepreneurship training as the original model. He also emphasized that the financial plan of the business could be further elaborated on request.

Local organizations were also content with the practicability of the model and said it could be

