

Youth Entrepreneurship Development

The problem:

Pakistan is a country of burgeoning young people as almost 60 percent of the population is below 30 years of age. While unemployment in the country continues to rise, it is not possible for the government to provide jobs to this huge mass of youth in the public sector.

The Practice:

*The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) established in 1984 and **is the first Chamber of Commerce in Pakistan that took initiatives for Youth Development and promotion of Entrepreneurship.** A Young Entrepreneurs Forum (YEF) was created to motivate youth towards entrepreneurship so that youngsters could enter the mainstream business world, embark on an entrepreneurial career, and contribute positively to developing the national economy. To achieve this purpose, ICCI held youth forums, conferences, roundtables, Global Entrepreneurship Weeks, and mentorship training programs in which a large number of university students, policymakers, and academicians participated to deliberate on issues with particular focus on entrepreneurship development. A draft National Youth Policy was also discussed in detail with focus on entrepreneurship, microfinance, skill development and internship. The participants came up with many ideas and suggestions for providing youth opportunities to enter the entrepreneurial world and play their role in development. Recommendations were also distributed to relevant public forums for consideration and positive outcome.*

Strong linkages have been developed with important local universities and colleges to promote entrepreneurship. Our Chamber is also creating links with international youth groups and forums through youth exchange programs. We are sure this strong networking will provide youth with excellent opportunities for sharing innovative ideas and learning best practices for entrepreneurship development. Cultural exchange programs are also undertaken to understand culture and develop people to people contact.

Why and How:

In the Chamber's activities and programs, youth were not playing an active role and university students as well as prospective business starters were looking for a platform to gain guidance on starting entrepreneurial careers. Through the support of CIPE, youth were encouraged to come forward and share their views about the hurdles of entering the entrepreneurial world and ideas for entrepreneurship development. As a result, youngsters started taking interest in the Chamber's activities and every year they contest in ICCI's annual elections. Now in almost every Executive Committee, they have 25-30 % representation, where they express their views on important issues for the Chamber's development. Apart from this, Young Entrepreneurs Forum (YEF) with a participation of about 60 members is involved in carrying out many new initiatives for entrepreneurship development.

Steps and tips for implementing the practice:

Following steps were followed to start and continue this initiative:

- In 2007, a proposal was submitted to CIPE for support of the youth initiative, as we felt that youth should be engaged in productive activities through entrepreneurship.*
- A Youth Committee was formed and given the responsibility of creating relationships with universities and colleges, relevant public institutions, and policymakers to advocate for youth issues.*
- Youth forums, conferences, Global Entrepreneurship Weeks (GEW), focus group meetings and roundtables were organized to obtain input and recommendations from youth on the Draft of National Youth policy. Recommendations on entrepreneurship, microfinance, skill development and internship were submitted to the Government.*
- Young business professionals visiting important public and private universities started giving lectures to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in youth.*
- Youth exchange programs with other countries around the world were started that helped in sharing innovative ideas and connecting youth to bring close to each other.*
- Business plan competitions were organized that gave opportunities to youngsters to throw innovative and brilliant ideas to start profitable ventures.*
- Youth were given representation in the Executive Committee/Board.*
- Youth representatives were given the opportunity to participate in international forums including the World Chambers Congress.*
- Youth delegations visited many countries to meet youth groups to undertake business ventures.*
- Young Entrepreneurs Forum of ICCI celebrated Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) that has particularly attracted a large number of universities students who shared their views on important aspects of entrepreneurship development.*
- In December 2012 YEF Pakistan youth delegation participated in Commonwealth CAAYE Summit.*
- With the support of CIPE, an Entrepreneurship Development Center has been established in the Chamber*

Results:

- **Jinnah Youth Award:** In recognition of ICCI services towards the promotion of Entrepreneurship culture amongst the Youth of Pakistan, Jinnah Youth Award was conferred by the Government of Pakistan. Jinnah Youth Award is the highest award in the field of youth activities and achievements in Pakistan.
- **2nd Place in CIPE Leading Practices contest:** In the CIPE Leading Practices Contest -2012, 2nd place was awarded to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry for the Young Entrepreneurs Forum (YEF) on submitting a paper on “**Policy Advocacy for Youth Entrepreneurship**”
- Formation of **Young Entrepreneurs Forum (YEF)** with a continuously **growing membership**.
- The **Entrepreneurship Development Center** has been established and interaction with the universities has increased as groups of students regularly visit the Chamber to receive guidance on starting a business venture and the business process.
- Businessmen provide **internships for university students** so that they may experience the entrepreneurial culture.
- An **anti-corruption report** was published by the YEF in 2012.
- The ICCI Youth Conference developed various recommendations that were incorporated in the **National Youth Policy of the Government of Pakistan**.
- The ICCI Youth Conference “**Inspiring a new wave of Entrepreneurship**” brought together students across the country, policymakers, public sector and development sector representatives, CEOs of successful enterprises who gave their insight that as to how entrepreneurship can help in achieving economic prosperity and growth.
- The effort ensured significant **representation of youth in the Executive Committee/ Board** that comes through a democratic election process.
- **Links between youth groups of local Chambers across the country** have been created resulting in visible participation of youth in business associations’ activities and exchange.
- Through the Export Display Center, which would be operational within a year, **Incubation Centers** shall be established to develop new entrepreneurs.
- **Participation of YEF representatives in the international Forums.**
- **Other Chambers in the country have also formed youth committees** looking at the successful venture of ICCI that has created a new wave of entrepreneurship in the country.

Project initiatives

Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry started youth initiative in 2007 in collaboration with Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) with focus on entrepreneurship development because entrepreneurship offers an essential avenue for young people to support themselves and their families, prosper in business career, provide employment to others, and play a part in strengthening their country's economy.

This was the first ever project undertaken by any Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Pakistan, which from different segments brought together youth at one platform to discuss various issues for entrepreneurship development. This initiative of ICCI greatly motivated youth as result they actively started participating in various youth related activities of the Chamber.

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Forums and Conferences

Youth Forums

In the beginning of the project youth forums were held, in which a large number of young business professionals and students were invited who discussed many aspects of youth with a particular focus on entrepreneurship development. The goal of the Forum is to encourage young entrepreneurs to take on a role in policy advocacy and nurturing the next generation chamber leadership.

National Youth Conference:

*In 2008 ICCI, CIPE and Ministry of Youth Affairs jointly organized a National Youth Conference which brought together 130 students and young entrepreneurs across the country to provide direct feedback to policymakers in formulation of the National Youth Policy. In the conference following four important areas of the draft National Youth Policy were discussed, **Entrepreneurship, Skill Development, Micro Finance and Internship.***

Youth Conference “Inspiring a New Wave of Entrepreneurship” – YEC 2012

In 2012, a big youth Conference on the theme of “Inspiring a new wave of entrepreneurship” was held as part of the Young Entrepreneurs’ Forum and conference held in 2008, The main objective of the conference was to help promote the culture and spirit of entrepreneurship amongst the upcoming and young individuals of the country. The conference highlighted the main challenges and opportunities the youth faces when it comes to venturing into entrepreneurship. The aim was to encourage a wave of entrepreneurial development which is not only limited to providing encouragement to potential entrepreneurs of the future through technical assistance, mentoring and capacity building, but the same would ultimately lead to positive contribution to the overall economy by creating job opportunities, revenues for the businesses as well as the government.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton gave the following message in the conference:

“It is an honor to help bring so many talented young people together in one place to talk about how entrepreneurship can promote economic growth, peace and prosperity in Pakistan – The United States is working to promote entrepreneurship around the world through initiatives like our Global Entrepreneurship Program and by working with organizations like Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry”

Conference website and Facebook page YEF

At the occasion of the conference www.yec2012.com was created. YEF Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/yeficci?ref=ts>

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Business Plan Competitions

Business Development Plan Competitions with NUST

In 2009, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry held a Business Development Plan Competition at ICCI in collaboration with National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in which students of MBA gave presentations on following 11 innovative projects and floated new ideas for starting various kinds of business activities, *Funeral services, Women transport, Women clothing, Home delivery services of food items, Oxygen bars, Consultancy services for students' career counseling (2-projects), Unique Business cards, Car repair and maintenance shop with unique idea, Fruity expression, Use of innovative tools for the Improve of resource management in hotels,*

National Business Plan Competition, Pakistan

The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) hosted final round of all Pakistan Business Plan Completion in collaboration of the Ministry of Youth Affairs (Government of Pakistan). The member of Young Entrepreneurs Forum (YEF) of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry was amongst the judges to evaluate the projects of the contestants. The motive of this competition was to encourage the youth generation to come up with new interventions and make business proposals that are bankable. Initially 31 entries were received; they were sent for assessment to 3 different jury members along with the judging criteria. After receiving the results, 10 proposals were picked for live presentations in front of an extended panel of judges: 6 along with the officials of MOY & ICCI. The Ten Final Proposals were : *The Intra City Bus Services (for Female Passengers), Feed Lot Farming for Beef Farming, Wealth Management, Production of Bio Fertilizers, Primed Instruments (Surgical and Beauty), Thirst Busters (Sugarcane juice and other local juices), Home Dairy, Mushroom Farming, Online Shopping, Divine Living (Dubai).* At the end certificate and cash awards were given to top three proposals.

Entrepreneurship Development Center

Establishment of Entrepreneurship Development Center

Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry established the Entrepreneurship Development Center with the objective: *To help existing entrepreneurs for business development and to build their capacity on entrepreneurial skills, to provide mentorship and guidance to prospective entrepreneurs especially to youth and deprived economic for setting up and how to manage a business, to carry out research activities in collaboration with research institutes and universities to provide support to the existing and prospective entrepreneurs, to organize training programs for skill development and capacity building in different areas (both for prospective and existing entrepreneurs, to create linkage with the universities to promote entrepreneurship culture in youth.*

GEW celebrations

Global Entrepreneurship Week-Pakistan 2011 & 2012

YEF of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) held [Global Entrepreneurship Week](#) in collaboration with the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), the Kauffman Foundation and Junior Chamber International. The Islamabad event was attended by over 80 chamber members, diplomatic community, young entrepreneurs and students. The students underlined the need to develop a better entrepreneurial culture by making entrepreneurship an integral part of educational curriculum. They were of the view that private sector support in mentorship programs at college and university level could greatly help in promoting entrepreneurial culture in the country.

Students discussed many challenges they have to face to start a new business venture. It was stressed that Business Development Centers should be established for incubation and mentorship of students and to help assist aspiring entrepreneurs. They said that government support is needed to promote entrepreneurship culture, whereas, universities should introduce entrepreneurship subjects in the curriculum. Participants suggested that Chambers should provide platform to students help them in entrepreneurial career.

Anti-corruption Survey -

Anti-corruption survey “Unpacking Corruption”

The anti-corruption survey report “[Unpacking Corruption](#)” presents the opinions of the business community on the perceptions, manifestations, causes, effects and remedies of corruption in the business environment of Pakistan. Young Entrepreneurs Forum (YEF) of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) undertook this survey, with support of Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), to understand the perceptions of young entrepreneurs on corruption in Pakistan and how it acts a barrier to entry into their entrepreneurial carrier. This document will become part of

an advocacy campaign by the YEF to improve the business environment by addressing reforms needed. An important message to be conveyed through this report is that corruption is viewed as a governance issue, which includes poor law enforcement, archaic regulations and weak internal compliance system. Thus the survey calls for improving both public administration and corporate governance. <http://www.cipe.org/blog/2012/12/12/unpacking-corruption-in-pakistan/>

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Business Delegations

Business Delegations to Europe and China

To encourage trade and economic activity, promote better business practices, and to experience innovation firsthand, YEF members were invited on business delegations to Germany, Belgium, Poland, Czech Republic, and China. One key focus of the delegations was to assess possible solutions in alternate energy area suitable for Pakistan. Meetings were held with multiple organizations including Volkswagen, Arcelor Mittal, and Junior Chamber International (JCI).

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Youth Exchange

Youth Exchange Programs

Young Entrepreneurs Forum of ICCI is developing a close and strong linkage with various chambers around the globe for the exchange of youth delegations and information. This strong networking has created excellent opportunity of sharing innovative ideas and to learn the best practices of each other. More than 100 member Chinese delegations visited twice ICCI.

YEF Pakistan Youth delegation participation in Commonwealth CAAYE Summit – December 2012

A youth delegation of young and aspiring entrepreneurs, led by the Young Entrepreneurs Forum of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has recently participated in CAAYE Summit in Mumbai. This was a cross representation of entrepreneurs from across Pakistan, with delegates from Punjab, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, and Sindh, made their mark during the proceedings of the Summit. CAAYE (Commonwealth Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs) which is the a Commonwealth Secretariat supported initiative represents 8 countries from the Commonwealth Asia region, namely Malaysia, India, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Brunei, Maldives. The focus of this year's Summit was to share best practices and prepare recommendations for improving "access to finance" to young entrepreneurs. [The flag of the Commonwealth was handed over to Pakistan to host the next Summit at Islamabad, Pakistan in June. For more information please visit http://www.icci.com.pk/event/detail/1082](http://www.icci.com.pk/event/detail/1082)

Representation at international Forums

Representation of ICCI at World Chamber Congress and other international programs:

Two representatives of YEF of ICCI participated in the World Chambers Congress in Malaysia in June 2009. *They talked on: ICCI initiative on Youth Development and leadership role of youth in ICCI, Good governance practices and sharing of information with the business leaders in the congress.* In the congress about 900 delegates from 90 countries participated, and discussed many ideas about the leadership role of youth in the Chambers.

President Obama's on Entrepreneurship 2010

In April 2010 Chairman of YEF participated in President Obama's Presidential Summit on Entrepreneurship, as a member of group of seven participants from Pakistan. The summit highlighted the importance of social and economic entrepreneurship, and strengthening mutually beneficial relationships with entrepreneurs in Muslim-majority countries and Muslim communities around the world. Participants from 50 countries were selected from around the world to represent their home countries, regions, and sectors at the summit.

The Global Entrepreneurship Summit 2011, Istanbul Turkey

In December 2011 two representatives of YEF participated in the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Istanbul on the invitation of the Turkish Government. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN of The Republic of Turkey hosted the summit whereas the keynote speaker of the summit was Joe Biden, Vice President of USA. The summit revolved around the key theme of "Entrepreneurship, Values and Development: A Global Agenda". Participants from over 50 countries included entrepreneurs and innovators, university faculty and students, nongovernmental organizations, government officials, and business leaders.

Commonwealth Asia Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Youth Entrepreneurship

Ministry of Youth Affairs selected one of the Member of YEF of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry, who successfully represented YEF in Commonwealth Asia Regional capacity building workshop in India.

South Asian Capital Markets Conference 2010 (Mauritius)

One of the YEF female member participated as a speaker at the South Asian Capital Markets Conference in Mauritius in 2010. She spoke about the investment potential in Pakistan as an integral part of the South Asian region.

Mentorship

Mentorship programs with universities

*To inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in business students and young leaders, YEF members continuously offer their services as mentors to students of various universities. YEF members volunteer their time for mentoring sessions on campus sites as well as to invite students at the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Some of the Universities where such mentoring sessions were carried out include: **NUST Business School, Preston University, Allama Iqbal Open University, COMSATS Institute of Management.***

Entrepreneurial workshop for underprivileged students

To encourage junior entrepreneurship YEF team conducted a very successful workshop with over 40 high school students at Teach a Child School whereby they were introduced to the concept of entrepreneurship. The purpose of the workshop was to induce in students' minds ideas about businesses and inspire & encourage them to undertake businesses activities in future. included series of interactive activities focusing on: what it takes to be an entrepreneur, what are the traits of a good entrepreneur, starting up of a business, value of customers, competitive advantage, and ethics for good business.

Pak-US Alumni Network's Seminar: Job Seekers vs. Job Creators

YEF members engaged with participants at a seminar titled 'Youth Entrepreneurship for Global Leadership' and apprised them of challenges and opportunities faced by students who choose to be enterprising and venture out to start new businesses versus those who opt to seek jobs.

Speaking engagements

Speaking Engagement at the National Defense University (NDU)

YEF members continuously interact with different forums through speaking engagements. Recently a YEF member was invited to speak to the students/participants of National Defense University to apprise them of various business and economic issues faced by the country.

Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services

At a workshop jointly designed by UNDP and SDPI, a member of YEF briefed Parliamentarians on Social Safety Nets and its implications to Pakistani society.

Membership JCI

Membership Junior Chamber International formally granted to YEF as JCI Islamabad in 2011.

Philanthropic Activities

Flood Relief Activities in year 2010

YEF members are socially responsible individuals who believe in putting their share in social welfare activities. During the devastating floods of 2010 the YEF contributed not only in kind but also dedicated significant time to carry out relief activities in flood-hit areas.

Tangi, Charsadda: *YEF members carried out extensive needs assessment for post flood medical attention, and volunteer work towards setting up a Basic Health Unit (BHU) in partnership with Naya Jeevan.*

Awards and Certificates

Jinnah Youth Award

Ministry of Youth Affairs has conferred Jinnah Youth Award and a cash prize of Rs. 50,000/- to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry on International Youth Day for promoting Entrepreneurship culture in Youth and taking over the initiative that lead towards youth development.

CIPE Leading Practices Contest

Got 2nd position in the CIPE Leading practices contest held in 2012 on the theme of “Policy for Youth Entrepreneurship”.

Detail of various youth activities is available in different parts of the Chamber’s website

www.icci.com.pk. YEC2012 webpage www.yec2012.com and Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/yeficci?ref=ts> contains information about youth initiatives.

Why our project should be considered?

The Islamabad Chamber is the first Chamber in the history of Pakistan that took initiative for youth development with particular focus on entrepreneurship. This initiative has created tremendous impact, because other chambers, universities, public and private organizations have started taking such initiatives in collaboration with YEF of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Even the universities have started imparting practical entrepreneurial education introducing entrepreneurship subjects as a part of post graduate studies. With short term (training and mentorship programs, conferences and roundtables etc.) and long term initiatives (Establishment of Entrepreneurship Development Center, planning of creating an Incubation Center in the Export Display Center by mid of 2013), YEC of ICCI is successfully moving ahead to change the mindset and inculcating entrepreneurship spirit among youth that has tremendous potential to put Pakistan on the trajectory of economic growth creating employment and reducing poverty. With these initiatives success stories are coming up. Due to 10-pages limitation no picture has been inserted in the synopsis and also some activities have been excluded. We can provide you further details as and when required. Please note Islamabad Chamber was the member of ICC but this year membership has not been renewed.