



# International Women Day

UNHCR Sub-office, Quetta

08 March 2017

UNHCR Sub-office, Quetta celebrated the “International Women Day” at the office premises with an aim to promote the right to safe and dignified work environment and underscore the importance of increasing gender equity in our own workforce, and ensuring an inclusive work environment for UNHCR staff, free from all biases and stereotypes.

The colleagues committed to support women’s rights to decent work by placing colorful signatures followed by presentation of flower bouquets to the female staff members by Staff council.



UNHCR Sub-Office Quetta together with its partners organised commemoration events for women trainees of “Safe from the Start Project” and Women Cycle Race at Girls College Quetta.

## Safe from the Start Project

The Safe from Start project was initiated by UNHCR Sub-Office Quetta to primarily provide a safe working environment for Afghan refugee women, with a view to reduce the risk of sexual exploitation. While implementing as a livelihood project, the fundamental objective of the project is the prevention of SGBV risks. Project is implemented in partnership with Taraqee Foundation and it targets 100 women in Ghousabad region of Quetta to train women in Kilim making, machine and hand embroidery, stitching and tailoring.

## Tribute to the International Women's Day

The event was celebrated by UNHCR staff and trainees of the project to enhance better working environment - a more gender inclusive world to support the theme of [#BeBoldForChange](#).

The event was started with Holy Quran’s recitation which was followed by the brief overview of project by Ms. Faryal from Taraqee Foundation. The beneficiaries of the project also shared their experiences along with their hardships in attaining sustainable livelihood.

*“It was very difficult for me to spend a life as a refugee particularly when you have no means of income even as head of house. However when I came to know about the offered skill trainings I approached training centre and showed my interest with an aim to improve my livelihoods. With the determination and dedication I successfully completed the training in tailoring trade”.*

Gul Jan Bibi (Trainee)

Ms. Masooma Ishaq from Taraqee Foundation elaborated SGBV as a cross-cutting thematic area of the project and awareness component.

Mr. Jelvas, Snr. Protection Officer from UNHCR appreciated the commemoration of international women day by committed yet marginalized refugee women. He emphasized the need on educating boys and men from home to contribute towards safe working environment for women.



## Women Cycle Race

The event was held at Government Girls College Quetta to connect young women to mark the IWD. The event was attended by UNHCR Head of Office, UNHCR staff, government counter-part, partners and young refugee girls. Speeches by all stakeholders reflected on the progress made, to call for change and to celebrate the act of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extra ordinary role in shaping their communities against all odds.

Cycle race started among girls of different locations including Hazara town and Ghousabad. 52 Participants took part in this race. The winner of each

round reached in the semifinal of the race, followed by a race between winners of 2 semi-finals in the final round. The first, second and third positions were held by Ms. Zohre, Ms. Mahnoor and Ms. Rabia respectively.

The female Martial arts competition was also organized where Martial Artists of Hyderyan Sports Complex participated. Ms. Rabia, Ms. Zakia and Ms. Saima won the three fighting rounds against the opponents.

The Eshaal art club also participated in the event and displayed their paintings focusing the theme of IWD. The paintings made by them highlighted different cultural issues and social problems prevailing in the society particularly for women.

In the end prizes and certificates were distributed among the participants of different activities including cycle race, painting exhibition, martial arts and other volunteers.

