



# IMPACT ASSESSMENT



**Kaarvan Crafts Foundation**  
*Crafting Livelihoods*



## **WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECT**

**CFP No. UNW-AP-PAK-CFP-2022-001**

**District Multan**

**June 2022 — May 2023**

**Supported by UN Women**

Educate in Life Skills, Enable to Earn, Empower to Decide

# CONTENTS



- 1 Background
- 3 WEE Impact Assessment
- 5 Human Centered Design Approach
- 7 Research Approach and Methodology
- 9 Design Consideration

## **THE RECKONING | OUTPUT 2.1**

- 11 Awakening of Critical Consciousness
- 12 Trust In Your Voice And The Voice Of Others
- 16 Mapping Narratives

## **THE RUMBLE | OUTPUT 1.1 & 1.2**

- 19 Practicing of Skills
- 21 Accessing Finance
- 23 Collective Community Action
- 26 Crossing the Threshold of Shocks to Crystalizing Change

## **THE REVOLUTION | OUTPUT 1.3**

- 28 Transformation of Thoughts and Beliefs
- 30 Our Choices Define Our Lives – And the Lives of Others
- 33 Way Forward



**675**

**Women Workers (WWs)**

**75**

**Women Owned Businesses (WOBs)**

**Women with Disabilities (WWDs)**

**Women from Religious Minorities (WFMs)**

**Transgender Persons (LGBTQI)**





PAKISTAN RANKS

145

— OUT OF —

146

## BACKGROUND

The economic and social outcomes for women in Pakistan are poor, with the country ranking 145 out of 146 on the World Economic Forum’s 2021 Gender Index. On Economic Participation and Opportunity for Women Pakistan scored particularly poorly, coming just above Yemen, Syria and Iraq. Key indicators of the scale of the problem include:

**A women’s labour force participation rate of just 22%**, well below the global average of 46.9% and as compared to 82% of men.

**Significant wage disparity between men and women** with 37% of working women earning below PKR 5,000 (\$33) per month compared to less than 5% of men.

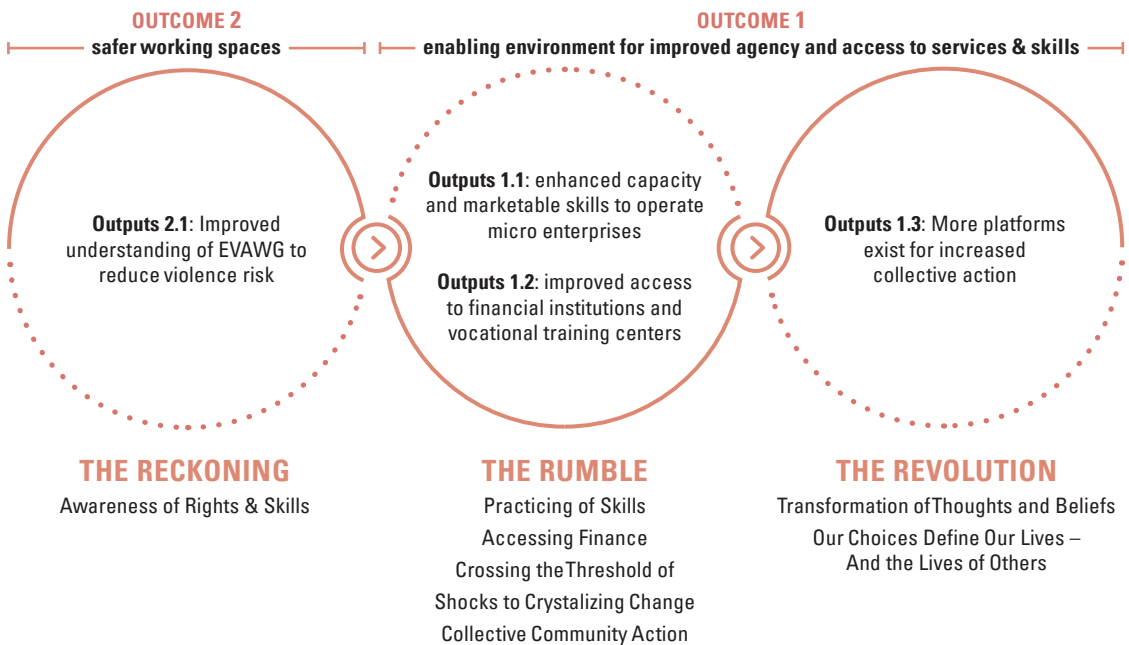
**Of the women in work, 75% are classified as in “vulnerable employment”** in the informal sector with low pay, lack of job security and poor working conditions.

Global evidence has shown that entrepreneurship can prove to be an effective tool for narrowing the gender gap in economic participation and opportunities. Yet, despite the small and medium enterprise sector in Pakistan employing 12 million home-based workers, over 80% of whom are women, **only 1%** of women are engaged in some sort of enterprise themselves – the lowest percentage in the world. Moreover, early evidence has shown that the women-led enterprises there are in Pakistan, were more likely than their male-led counterparts to have lost 100% of their income as a result of the pandemic.



# WEE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

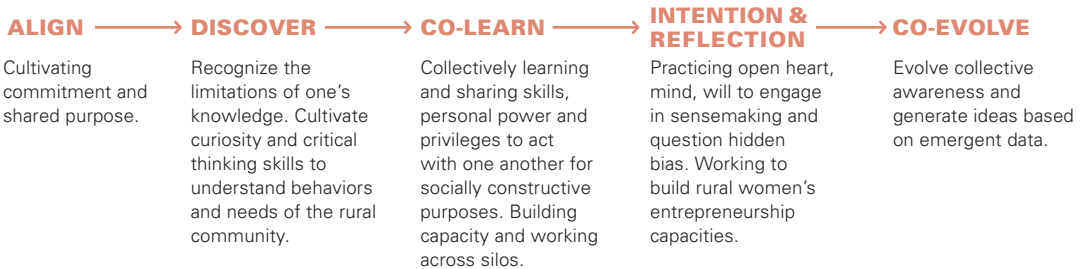
For this WEE Impact Assessment, we shall be localizing American Researcher Brené Brown’s Rising Strong Framework to highlight how rural women courageous face and overcome challenges. Due to cultural patriarchy still largely dictating the narrative of gender, women often lead protected and sheltered lives. It is not until a familial need and responsibility arises that women’s doors to the outside world opens. This is the moment of reckoning for most rural women when they step outside their comfort zones and get curious about the workings of the world. They begin to rumble with their struggles as they dig into topics of voice, building socio-economic capacities, market linkages, finance, and cultivating community connections. Rumbling with these topics and moving from superficial to a deeper understanding of how individual actions have systemic affects. This is where revolutionary change happens when women rumble with their own reality and craft an alternate pathway of how to engage with world.



## TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMS APPROACH



# HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN APPROACH



Our praxis is human-centred design where women are the heart of development. We investigate the thinking of an individual in relation to reality through creative activities that attend to the aesthetic aspect of their life. Design is a mode of inquiry that prompts individuals to reflect upon their lives and creates with them a life-project. With our ground-up to building a theory of change: 1) Educate in Life Skills, 2) Enable to Earn, 3) Empower to Decide. We're able to create sustainable change at all levels: first is the individual-level where human capacities are cultivated with the individual's critical consciousness to make change themselves; second is the community-level, create a space for reflection and exchange of possibilities, experiences, and insights among the women. The belief that change begins with self — understanding the cause of one's condition and recognizing the ability to adjust to the situation is an active practice of reflection and action that endeavors to unleash the critical consciousness.

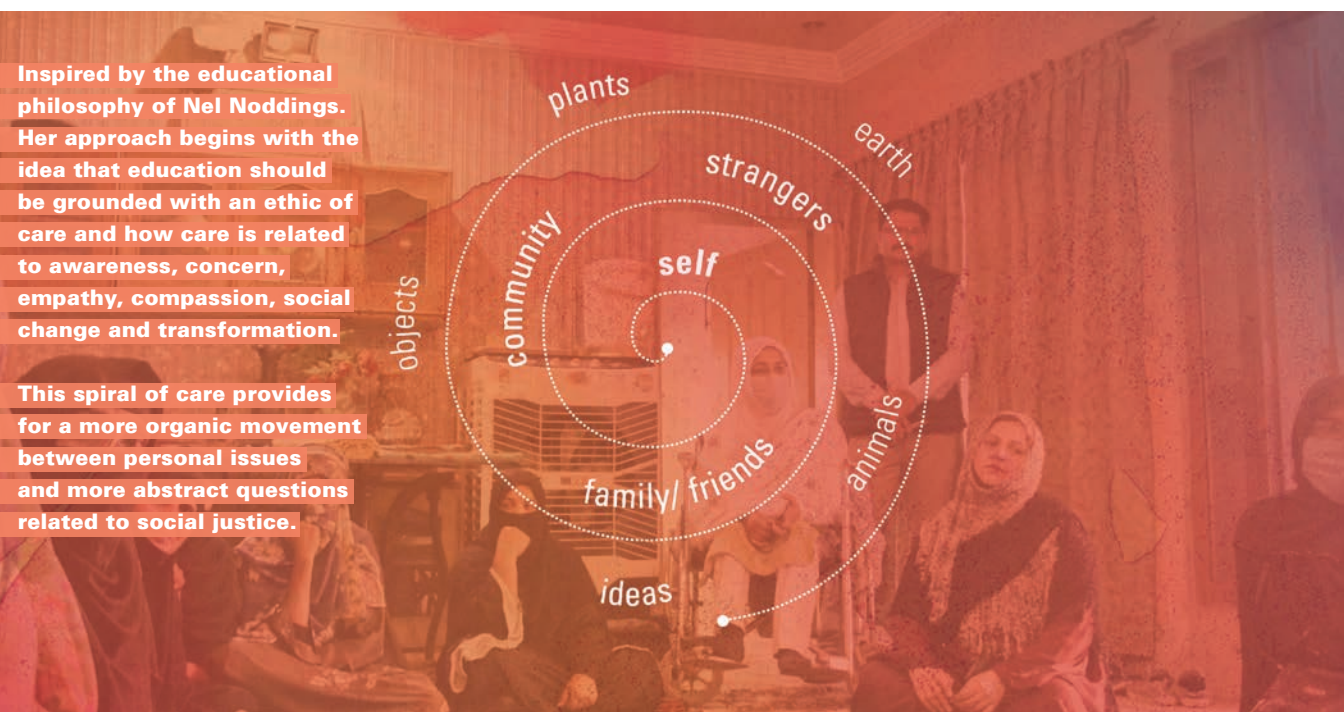
This individual-level of social change scales up to community-level change as rural women become role-models and micro-entrepreneurs who further mentor and disseminate the learnings to their women members. As rural women entrepreneurs develop market linkages connecting with key-people and organizations they slowly begin to effect change at a structural level.



Kaarvan sees design as an exploration for communication and interaction that seeks to develop capacities to intervene, and potentially prevent, systemic violence. Unequal access to social benefits and resources is one example of structural violence. Violence lurks in our everyday life manifesting in various forms such as discrimination, racism, physical abuse, drug abuse, and mental stress. How to then identify self-understanding/ awareness of our role in the situation? Kaarvan approaches the marginalized communities with humility, respect and an open-mind in order to better understand the joys, the risks, and the possibilities of attending to their needs.

Poverty is a complex problem; in discussing one need, other needs are simultaneously discussed or at least brought to attention. Through fieldwork: a site of reflective listening, exchange and interaction — the potential of creativity and design in demythicizing reality is utilized in order to bring about social change.

Kaarvan has created an adaptable theoretical framework by conjoining the theories of Paulo Freire's Critical Pedagogy, Nel Noddings' Circles of Care, Betty Reardon's Education For A Culture Of Peace In A Gender Perspective, Brené Brown's Rising Strong and Otto Scharmer Theory U — to guide fieldwork grounded in participatory process of co-learning. Using the participatory process of collaboration and dialogue to empower, motivate and increase self-esteem of rural women. Design as a reflective practice is enshrouded in developing caring occasions with the participants. The path is not a straightforward one as it is constantly evolving and changing as we continue to learn and engage with the rural community. to guide fieldwork grounded in participatory process of co-learning. Using the participatory process of collaboration and dialogue to empower, motivate and increase self-esteem of rural women.



**Inspired by the educational philosophy of Nel Noddings. Her approach begins with the idea that education should be grounded with an ethic of care and how care is related to awareness, concern, empathy, compassion, social change and transformation.**

**This spiral of care provides for a more organic movement between personal issues and more abstract questions related to social justice.**

# RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

To uncover the underlying social structure is to immerse oneself in a multimodal participatory research approach. In order to reveal a nuanced partial truth of rural life, a triangulating method of audio-visual recording, cultural probes and participatory design was used. Focus Group Discussions were held in 3 villages in Multan. Each focus group consisted of Women Owned Business (WOBs) with their Women Members (WMs).

## AUDIO-VISUAL RECORDING

Ethnographic research practice where images, metaphors and ways of seeing, sensing and imagining are intertwined. Conducting immersive ethnographic research where participants share stories of pain and vulnerability usually shatters some assumption, we have made about the person telling the story. WOBs and WMs sharing their stories illustrates their life journeys and open places for others to connect, find common ground and demonstrates their understanding of self-growth.

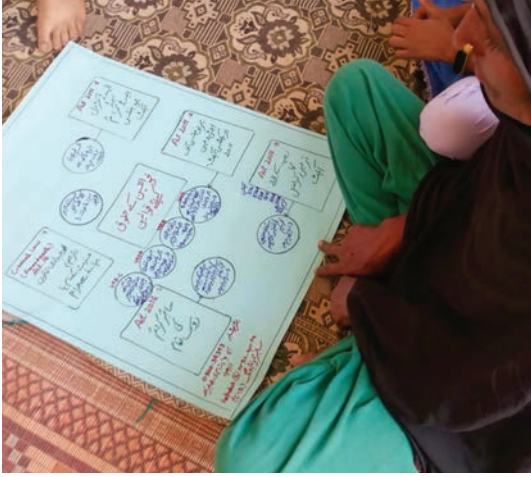
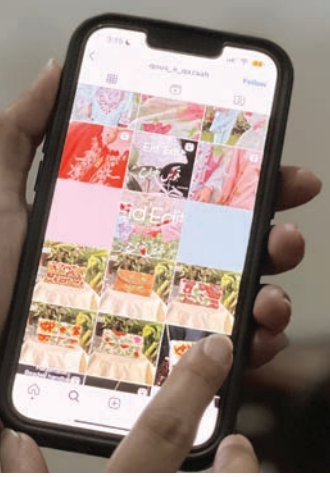


## CULTURAL PROBES

Cultural probes are tangible materials that allow for natural exchange of experiences and self-understanding of participant about their lives, environments, thoughts and interaction. For this Impact Assessment the cultural probes of images and imitation money were utilized to uncover the application of Outcome 1 [creation of enabling environment] and Outcome 2 [understanding of social protection to reduce violence risks] in the WOBs and WMs daily lives. The materials, much like the method itself, are intentionally flexible and open-ended. Cultural probes help identify key patterns and themes from participant group or culture.

## PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

Participatory Design is human-centered approach where participants are actively engaged throughout all phases of the research and design process. Participatory Design respects the creative insight of the participants. The multimodal methods [cultural probes, photo studies, democratic expression] help probing participants towards self-discovery and reporting, priming participants for further participatory engagements, understanding current experience and generation of future scenarios and concepts.





## DESIGN CONSIDERATION

Through this work, we acknowledge that design is not neutral. As designer/visual ethnographer & researcher, the need to understand that the effects of our design decisions are political statements that include and exclude certain people, perspectives, and voices. For these reasons, we gave careful consideration to our learning activities, including their purpose, context, and potential for future applications.

Here it is important to return to the theoretical framework in order to conceptualize a reflective evaluation that is grounded in the participatory ethos of critical practice. How has this Impact Assessment been inclusive of both WOBs and WMs in regards to ethics of care, critical pedagogy, and human rights grounded in reflective process and linked to direct action? Utilizing the participatory research as the “process of knowing.” By engaging with the WOBs and WMs we were able to fuse local community knowledge with academic theory. Design became a medium of reflection and action where the WOBs and WMs shared their experiences and demonstrated their learnings.

## Phase I: Awareness Raising

Exposure  
to Diversity

Critical  
Incident

Aha  
Moment

Self-Reflection

Sustained  
Involvement

Social  
Justice  
Action

Critical  
Consciousness

Community  
Connection

## Phase II: Moving to Critical Consciousness

Peace Educator Paulo Freire theories of critical pedagogy seek to desocialize people from authority-dependence and empower them to pose questions, lead discussions, and to initiate their own research. The goal of his pedagogy is “critical consciousness.” Transformative education for Freire has several qualities such as power awareness, critical literacy, desocialization, self-education, and the ability to self-organize.

# THE RECKONING

## AWAKENING OF CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

In order to fully understand the reality of rural of the community, we (the urban society) need to step back and look at things from a perspective of scarcity. From childhood, girls in villages lead a protected life where all the cultural norms are inculcated and seldom do these girls question their way of being. Stepping out of this passivity and beginning to get curious about how things are done and why they are done in a certain manner is when these rural girls and women begin to reckon with reality. This questioning of existing knowledge and curiosity of the contradictions of society is the awakening of critical consciousness of the rural women. This reckoning begins with awareness of their rights and learning skills that build confidence to make contributions and take risks.



Micro-Entrepreneur Haseena Begum relayed how skills attainment led to her awakening: “When I first started my business. I preferred working home and would seldomly get out and about. Through market exposures and meeting people my confidence has grown. I feel like a part of me has unlocked. Now, I participate more wholeheartedly in my work. Alhamdulillah, through the exposure of design and color trainings I am receiving more and more market orders.”

Through Awareness Sessions on Human and Legal Rights and Access to Resources both WOBs and WMs attain a repertoire of conflict processing skill of various types to build and maintain mutually enhancing relationships. Conflict skills are integral to all positive relationships from interpersonal to international. Conflict is part of all our lives; yet few of us have the skills to transform conflict from a painful destructive process to one of significant learning and constructive change. As pain indicates a malfunction in the body, conflict is a symptom of a serious problem in a relationship. If left untreated these problems can become damaging cycles of violence. Awareness of ones rights and ability to take constructive action when critical incident occurs gives agency to women respond and change the situation.



# TRUST IN YOUR VOICE AND THE VOICE OF OTHERS

To understand how comfortable WOBs and WWs feel speaking up in an incident of harassment or violence, Kaarvan localized Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's "Spiral of Silence" framework to uncover the social barriers which prevents women from taking action. We added a local tier of "Log Kya Kahenge" – Fear of Judgment in between 'Fear of Rejection' and 'Protecting Other Aspects of Their Lives by Not Voicing Their Views or Opinions.'

Predominantly, both WOBs and WWs highlighted "Log Kya Kahenge" – Fear of Judgment as the core hinderance when it comes speaking up in a world of power. This fear of comparison and judgement by family members, neighbors or even strangers often falls outside our awareness – we don't even know we're doing it. In the mapping of human experiences Brené Brown states that "this lack of awareness can lead to us showing up in ways that are hurtful to ourselves and others." In the context of rural community this manifests as an impediment to individual growth. With capacities and skills of peace-building more and more women are strengthening themselves internally against this social comparison and fear of "Log Kya Kahenge" by acknowledging it and choosing healthy striving, empathy and self-compassion.



## WOBs OVERCOME SOCIAL COMPARISON

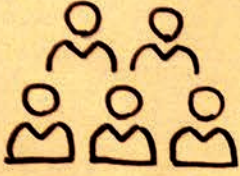
 <p><b>Aware of it</b></p>	<p>“We shouldn’t worry about what other people say. But we can’t help but worry because that is the way our society has been constructed. We can’t help but question what others will think when making any decision. For example, we discourage the young girls in our family from going out alone as they will be called proud, and their purity/ family’s respect will be questioned. The main issue is we lack confidence. If we have confidence, then we would be able to be independent; we would be able to not only do household work but the outside work too.” – Aretha Hassan, Women Member</p>
 <p><b>Name it</b></p>	<p>“I started having too many responsibilities which would be impossible to fulfill while staying at home. I was only allowed out of the house after getting married. I think the biggest issue within our society is preventing women from leaving the house to go to college. Parents are always scared of what the rest of society will think if we let our girls out of the house. But even letting girls sit at home doing nothing is also wrong because their many talents and skills are not being fulfilled.” – Rabia Bibi, Women Member</p>
 <p><b>Choose how to constructively deal with social comparison</b></p>	<p>“Ever since I started working became part of the WEE Program, my confidence has grown. When I lived with my in-laws, I did not have self-confidence but now that I live alone, have started my own business and support my family, I have gained a lot of confidence. Going out the house more has given me confidence as I have learnt more about the world. Now, I’m not afraid of such society talk.” – Bushra Jabeen, WOB</p>

It is the choice of how to engage with “Log Kya Kahenge” – Fear of Judgment that is where the power lies. WOBs relayed that they are very much conscious of their actions and work to add joy and prosperity in their family and neighborhood.

Protecting Other Aspects of Their Lives by Not Voicing Their Views or Opinions is the tier that has the highest perceived risk because speaking up might hurt their family. Although, Fear of Judgement appears to outweigh Protecting Other Aspects of Their Lives – there might be some critical overlap between the two tiers. As both tiers have undertones of family being affected if they decide to speak up for justice.







کوئی مدد  
کو نہیں  
آئے گا۔

(Feeling unsupported)  
Koi madad ko nahi aega.

ایکلا رہ  
جانے کا  
ڈر۔

(Fear of isolation)  
Akeles reh janne ka dar.

معاشرے  
سے لٹ  
جانے کا  
ڈر۔

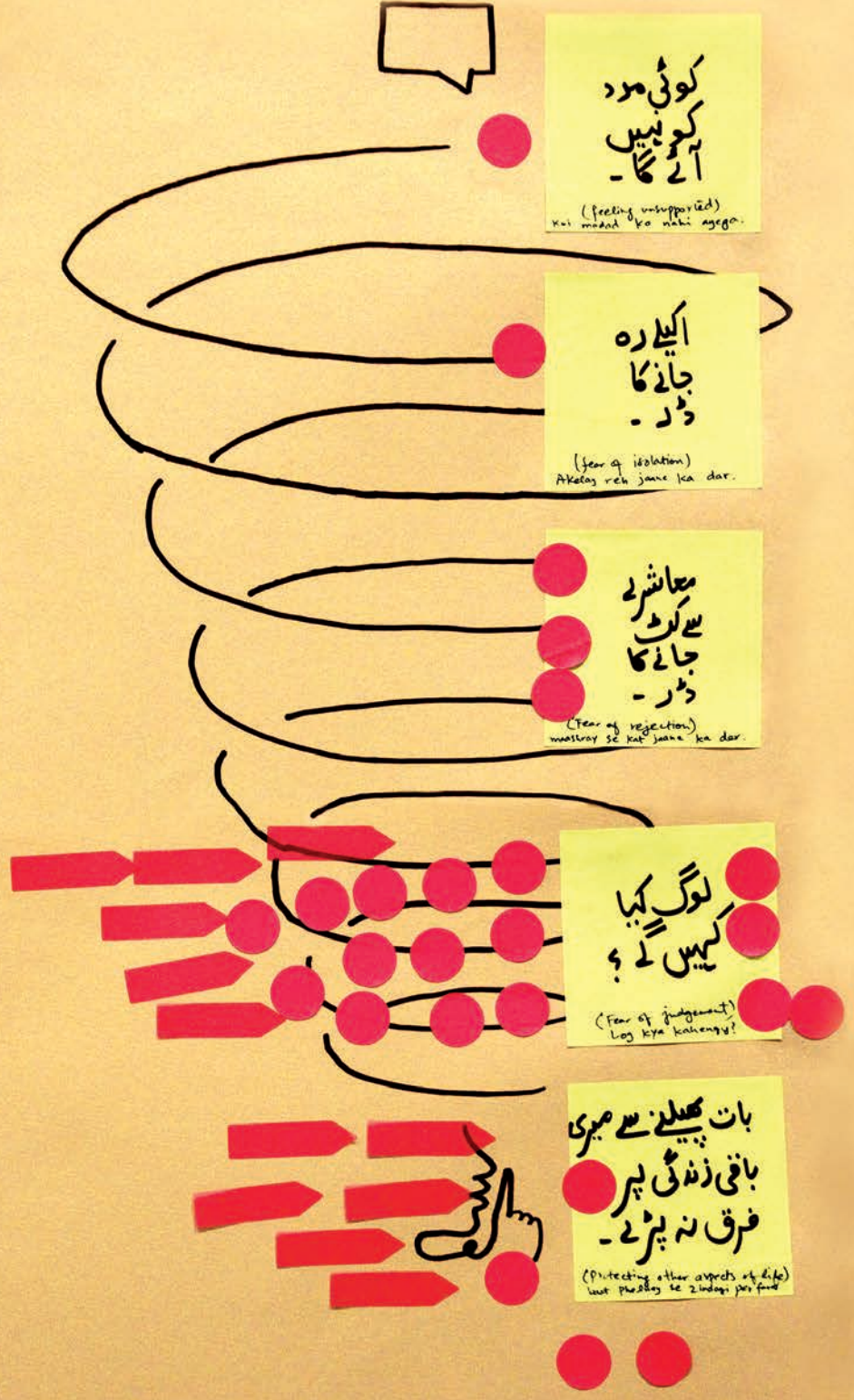
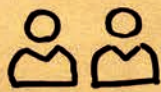
(Fear of rejection)  
Mushroy se kat jana ka dar.

لوگ کیا  
کہیں گے؟

(Fear of judgement)  
Log kya kahenge?

بات پھیلنے سے میری  
باقی زندگی پر  
فرق نہ پڑے۔

(Protecting other aspects of life)  
Bat phailne se zindagi per farq



## PROTECTING OTHER ASPECTS OF THEIR LIVES BY NOT VOICING THEIR VIEWS OR OPINIONS

“I am not of afraid of ‘Fear of Rejection’ and being left alone as I know I am capable of taking of myself and I know where to go to access resources. But ‘Protecting Other Aspects of Their Lives’ – like the lives of my children now this is something that is uncompromisable. This is a fear that may make me question whether to pick a fight or not – knowing that my actions will affect the lives of my children.” – Humaira Yasmeen, WOB

“Our lives – mine and my families – are closely weaved together. Suppose if, I am harassed by person with substantial power. Obliviously, I will be concerned that if I speak up against him that will have negative ramifications for my family. You know what, I would first try to find a way to protect my family and then file a complaint.” – Iqra Rafique Khan, WOB

“A few days ago, my friend approached me seeking support. She wished to escape the domestic violence at home where her 14-year-old son was hitting her and using foul language. She asked if I could help her enter into an old home where she could live her life peacefully. I was weary of her decision to move out and into the old home. Because being a mother and wife I know difficult it is to cut ties. What if after a few months she decides to reconcile with her family. That would leave be in a very awkward situation. I was thinking not just of myself but of my family and how this may effect my integrity and business. So, I advised her that she should move in with her parents and think things through before taking any rash decision. She appreciated my guidance and candor. In such circumstances being self-sufficient and confidence to advocate for oneself is essential. With self-confidence fear of judgment, isolation or rejection do not hinder me from speaking up.” – Noreen Kousar, WOB

“I have taken Sabhia Baji’s husband many times to the police station. Each time, they reconcile, and the cycle of violence repeats itself.” – Shahnaz Hanif, WOB




# MAPPING NARRATIVES

Utilizing peacebuilding practitioner Dr. David Anderson Hooker, definitions of power to map narratives of how WOBs and WMs actions are acting indirectly on the actions of others.

Power Dynamics	WOBs & WMs Actions and Experiences
<p><b>POWER OVER</b> is a decision-making through hierarchy, force, or repression, often with violence or threat of violence. An economic or emotional sanction might also be the source of how power is wielded.</p>	<p>“These days there are so many cases of children being abducted. So, the girls are afraid and they wanted to dropped and picked up from school. I tell my children don’t be afraid I have no problem dropping you and picking you up from school. I tell them to be vigilant but live life undauntedly.” – Shahnaz Hanif, WOB</p>
 <p>“Adda work is my specialty. I can create any design, any motif on the adda. I hope to develop market linkages to become more independent.” – Sabiha Khanum, Woman Member</p>	<p>“I receive relentless beatings and threats like ‘I will through acid on you; I will ruin your reputation and disgrace you in front of my family.’ He bites me in places no one can see. Look here (shows bruise mark on upper arm which hidden by clothing otherwise). I have these marks all over my body. My husband is easily aggravated by me. No matter what I do, he gets anger with me. It’s probably because he is a drug addict. Right now, I no longer have the energy or strength left in me to receive his beatings any longer. I wish to separate from him. I am worried about my daughters. He hits them too saying, ‘why are you sitting next to your mother.’ I can’t just abandon them. I have married two of my daughters off. One younger daughter is still with me. For her I hope to work and take good care of her. I have two sons as well. The sons are still with their father back home. I brought my daughters with me.” – Sabiha Khanum, Woman Member</p>
<p><i>Sabiha is using Adda work as her healing offering from to society as she sews back familial wounds with gold thread.</i></p>	<p>“It’s sad when we women are seen as personal possessions rather than a person. That husbands have the liberty to treat us however they like. This isn’t right. Sabhia Baji only wish is to lead a peaceful life where no is fighting with one another.” – Safia Bibi, Woman Member</p>
	<p>[Self Protective Measures] “I wear this dupatta or cover myself when I step outside home by choice. I feel much more at ease when I am properly clad – be it dupatta or burka. The chader (cloth) is like a protective covering. We feel much more safe and secure wearing it whenever we go outside to the market.” – Shahla Ramza, Women Member</p>

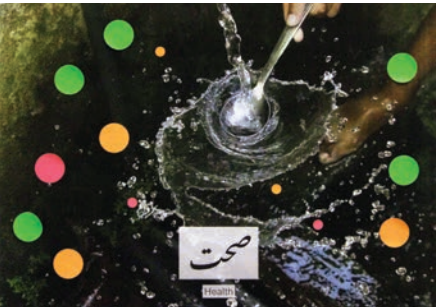


Power Dynamics	WOBs & WMs Actions and Experiences
<p><b>POWER WITH</b> is a decision-making through collaborative action. It acknowledges the roles and capacities of alliances. Alliances can be liberating, oppressive, or simply instrumental.</p> 	<p>“If I witness any harassment or violence against women in my community, I first talk the relevant family and inform/ guide them how this behavior isn’t right. In case, the situation is not peaceful reconciled within the family then I reach out to the police or helpline. Often the neighborhood resolves such incidents among themselves. There is always a risk of speaking up as this might affect my family or business in some way.” – Shahnaz Hanif, WOB</p> <p>“Sabhia Baji’s husband has been abusive to her since she has gotten married. She is not just a woman member but also family. So, she staying with me for the time being. I set up an adda frame for her so that she can stitch her emotions, make it her healing offering and earn a livelihood as well.”– Shahnaz Hanif, WOB</p>
<p><b>POWER TO</b> is a decision-making resulting from individual and group knowledge, resources, and skills.</p> 	<p>“In our household we cultivate a culture of courage. I am a micro-entrepreneur I frequently have to travel outside of Multan in order to participate in exhibition and build industry networks. I also encourage my daughters-in-laws and women members to step outside of their home and make market linkages for business. We do not teach fear but model healthy striving and navigating through the unwritten rules of power.” – Rehana Nadeem, WOB</p>
<p><b>POWER WITHIN</b> affirms internal fortitude and resilience as source of the capacities to achieve.</p> 	<p>“I am newly married and when I noticed an unwanted attention and constant leering by a man. I called him out saying ‘why are you staring? Haven’t you seen a newly wed woman before?’ The idea is to be brave because if you become afraid then you begin to stay home and not venture out anymore. If you standup for yourself and set strong boundaries, then the other person realizes that they can’t cross this line.” – Safia Bibi, Woman Member</p> <p>“We need to take courage and speak up against wrongdoing. If there is an injustice happening against someone, we should stand in solidarity with them.” – Rozina Jamil, WOB</p> <p>“A woman just needs to stand strong when such an incident occurs and be able to speak the truth in a world of power.” (Many WOBS and WMs echoed this sentiment with vigorous ‘here, here’ and nodding)</p> <p>“One time when I was purchasing raw materials from the market, I felt an unwanted touch. Right then and there I smacked the man’s hand away. Fellow bystanders gathered around me in support and started to raise questions on his indecent actions.” – Shahnaz Hanif, WOB</p>

Power Dynamics	WOBs & WMs Actions and Experiences
<p><b>POWER WITHIN</b> affirms internal fortitude and resilience as source of the capacities to achieve.</p> 	<p>“It is frustrating this incessant community chatter and gossiping of when we go to each other’s home for a visit. Like, we women always need a purpose for meeting otherwise it is frowned upon by neighbors. All these aspects are part of the social circle, and we just need to strengthen ourselves against shame and work from a place of self-worth. I instill these values of belonging, connection and self-confidence with all whom I work and interact with.” – Shabana Falk, WOB</p> <p>“When we stand up for ourselves. It represents our boundaries and the lines that strangers are not allowed to cross. If we don’t raise our voice, then people will get away with being disrespectful and their audacity will grow. Therefore, we should not be afraid of taking affirmative action.” – Sadia Saeed, Women Member</p>

# THE RUMBLE

The rumble is WOBs and WMs taking ownership of their struggles and making a conscious brave choice to tap into their creativity and ability to better their lives.



# PRACTICING OF SKILLS

## 3 SKILLS MOST USED ARE



**Business & Entrepreneurship**



**Product Enhancement & Design Aesthetics**



**Relational, Cultural & Conflict Processing Skills**

“Education, whether it takes place in the family, places of worship, community organizations, the workplace or the school, is a primary medium through which culture is systematically transmitted and social goals are clarified” asserts Peace Education Leader Betty A. Reardon. By building human capacities and skill – women learn to know, to do, to be and to live together – cultivating commitment and shared purpose.

There is strong correlation between co-operation skills and confidence. The more women interact with people and market; the more they gain confidence to managing economic and worldly affairs – as the essential social skills of communication skills, intercultural interaction and conflict processing skills are being cultivated.

One member relayed how she felt like her confidence level hasn't grown that much as she is still shy and hesitant to openly share her thoughts. She spoke about the challenge of balancing work with children. Here, Micro-entrepreneur Bushra Jabeen stepped in and verbalized the member's thoughts saying that due to lack of outside exposure and limited experience of co-operative forms of learning and social skills. These Women Members still do not feel comfortable exchanging ideas due to the reduced social interactions with other people.





### Participatory and Co-Operative Forms of Pedagogy Builds Confidence

“Engagement with institutions like LUMS and NCA where you get to sit and engage with students with expertise in business, design and textiles. To feel seen, heard and valued of the contributions we rural micro-entrepreneurs are making builds our confidence. Also, being able to be our true authentic selves with team Kaarvan where power is shared equally no matter the ‘titles’ – space of inclusivity and collective strength is built. This mutual support, solidarity, collaboration and recognition and respect for difference, power with multiplies individual talents, knowledge and resources – all this also helped my confidence.” – Iqra Rafique Khan, WOB



### Being A Life-Long Learner

“To be able to learn and attain education in my age is a blessing. Children often put on a playful banter of ‘is this the age to study.’ I reply saying that to live entails life-long learning. When we meet people our communication skills get better as we cultivate industry networks to grow our business.” – Mubeena Naz, WOB



### Development of Learning Communities

“I wish to empower my fellow women workers. Mobility is still a challenge for them. They mostly work from home and are requesting me to start a stitching center at my home. Creation of stitching center requires investment and setup of numerous stitching machine. At the moment, I do not have sufficient funds for this but eventually with growth of business I can setup such a center here in Shujabad.” – Mubeena Naz, WOB

“I have learnt a lot from our group leader Shahnaz Baji. Especially, the attention to detail and techniques of how to sow various embroideries and color combination has greatly improved.” – Safia Bibi, Woman Member



### Promoting Craft Heritage Stories

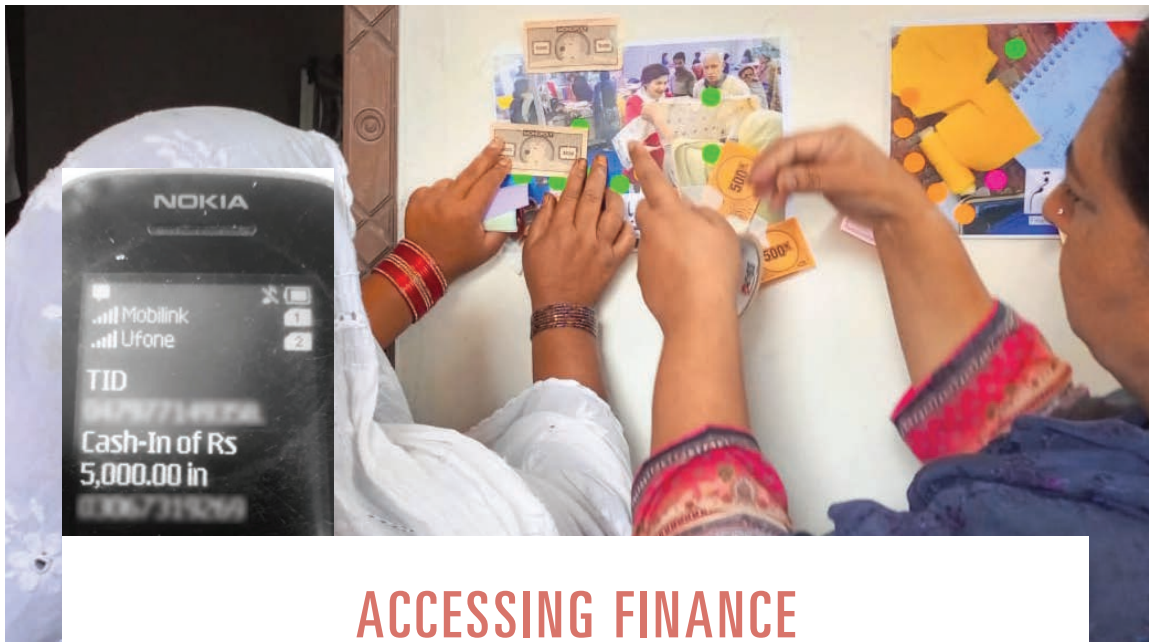
“Thanks to Bushra Baji I am able to make ends meet. I would like to learn more about to reach a target audience and promote our craft. I want to learn how to create awareness with my business. This includes learning how to better market my products and communicate with shop keepers and wholesalers.” – Nosheen Javed, Women Member



### Overcoming Fear and Making Contributions

“Before, I was fearful of how I would work and leave the house. I was so scared that I couldn’t travel alone in cars or buses. Now, I have attended many exhibitions and learnt a lot from the WEE Program. I have learnt the importance of collaborative skills and how to get past creative tension of group. Pricing costing and how to how to keep budget margins is also a skill I am constantly utilizing and applying in my business.” – Shabana Falk, WOB

## SOCIAL AND PERSONAL DIMENSIONS



## ACCESSING FINANCE

From the participatory activity of what three skills are used daily, maintaining record of finances and costs is not as frequently utilized as other skills. WOBs and WMs relayed that they do it, but it is a time-consuming task. When managing day-to-day tasks, the logbook record is difficult to upkeep and sometimes it gets skipped when prioritizing things.

### UTILIZING ECONOMIC CAPACITIES IN A GLOBALIZED ECONOMY



#### Contributions To Family Through Investment In Business

“If we invest in our small business, then only can separate money towards saving for children and the household.” – Shahjahan Begum, WOB

“First, I invest the money back into my business to create more products. Then I use some money for household expenses and lastly, I give the rest of the money to my mother. I create coasters and placemats. I just created the business recently and have not started online work yet. My mother helps me with my business. It has been 4-5 months. It is because of the business that we are able to support the household and our general expenses.” – Shahnaz Hanif, WOB



## UTILIZING ECONOMIC CAPACITIES IN A GLOBALIZED ECONOMY

 <p><b>High Inflation Rates Leads To No Savings</b></p>	<p>“Most of income is utilized on home. Everything has gotten so expensive. The ration, the household necessities, it is much harder to save or invest. More money is spent paying the gas bills, electricity bills and more. Before, I would spend more freely, even take part in committees. However, now I have to think twice before spending on such luxuries. Feeding my kids is always on my mind. Even though business has increased, the increase in prices of household necessities is much more. Therefore, the state of our household is in dire condition. No money is leftover after expenses are paid. Even our house itself would have been gone by now.” – Women Members and Micro-Entrepreneur Haseena Begum joint discussion</p>
 <p><b>Set Savings Goals</b></p>	<p>“These collective community sessions are very useful. They help us in every aspect of our life. From work to family relations to business. The mentors in these collective sessions have taught us how to save money on the side. For example, I come home after work and split the money I earned into 4 sections. One for me, one for business, one for family and one for household expenses. Those with kids need to make sections for their kids.” – Haseena Begum, WOB</p>
 <p><b>Investment In Home</b></p>	<p>“I did have a home of my own. A significant amount of my earning were spent on home investment. When a person doesn’t have a home of their own, they are constantly moving from familial residence to another. To have a place of your own no matter how simple – is to live a life of dignity and self-respect without being dependent on others good graces.” – Mubeena Naz, WOB</p>
 <p><b>Live Within Our Means – No Need For Unnecessary Loan Debt</b></p>	<p>“Never felt the need to take a loan to expand business. I am firm believer of living within our means. Don’t like the idea of debt and the weight of repayment looming on my head.” – Sobia Amir, Farhana Jabeen, Razia Bagum; WOBs with same perspective</p>
 <p><b>Obtained Loan For Investment In A New Product Line</b></p>	<p>“I took a 50,000 PKR loan from Akhuwat to extend my business from beadwork to hand embroidery products.” – Shahjahan Begum, WOB</p>
 <p><b>Took A Loan For Family</b></p>	<p>“I took a loan for my son. He wanted to start undergarments shop for men.” – Rehana Kousar, WOB</p> <p>“I first helped my brother-in-law obtain a loan from Akhuwat for his woodwork business a few years ago. This year I received to take a loan for my own business. Unfortunately, since I live in the outskirts of Shujaabad, Akhuwat denied my request due to the locality of my residence.” – Samreen Gul, WOB</p>



## COLLECTIVE COMMUNITY ACTION

The three separate fields: business, institutions and civil society are embedded in a web of relationships. In this case, that web deals with the supply chain, with education or different types of knowledge, and with innovation ecosystem – how they interact with each other to bring forth new ideas, products and services that would not have been possible without that specific collaboration. Each operates out of a different kind of economics: scale, scope and presencing. WOBs small enterprises help and empower WMs in the field. Institutions like UN Women and Kaarvan provide the education/ skills/ tools of social mobility. So that WOBs and WMs can effectively navigate through the whole supply chain and innovate in a rapidly changing world.



## WOBS & WMS LEARNINGS FROM COLLECTIVE OPPORTUNITIES WORKSHOPS WITH INSTITUTIONS\*

Business	Design
"Create industry linkages and business opportunities."	"Collective work gives rise to new ideas and design."
"We learn best business practices from one another."	"Collaborations bring forth new opportunities."
"Working collectively not only do we learn from each other but also support and grow one another small businesses."	"Through inter/ intra district collaborations our designs sense as improved as we learn from each other and get exposed new ideas and craft fusions."
"Collective work brings forth various business opportunities, collaborative craft fusions and build market linkages."	

\*These quotations are transcriptions of collective focus group session where WOBS and WMS were sitting side-by-side and they voiced similar thoughts and key takeaways.

From the Collective Opportunities Workshops we can discern WOBS and WMS ever-increasing pressure to innovate – that is, pressure to create more value with same or more mindful consumption of the resources.



"From Customer Centric Innovation & Business Development Remote Session with Omar Mansoor I learnt the importance of not comprising on quality of our hand embroidery products. Because one faulty product can leave bad impression for our local brands." – Shamim Akhtar, WOB





“There is so much knowledge in my head. Recalling a specific learning is difficult until we actively use it in our everyday life. From the LUMS collective opportunity session I do remember they telling us to be more conscientious with our color selection. To avoid overdose of colors and prints. For example, if the fabric itself is light, the color of the thread in the design should be darker to give it a ‘pop’. And vice versa. This is to create a contrast. I have used these techniques in the creation of many of my suits. LUMS faculty guided us how to use digital platforms to learn new techniques and market our brands online.”

– Robina Javaid, WOB

“I learn a lot of from collective community sessions as you get exposed to diverse people and perspective; new ideas are generated as well as new craft partnerships. Exchange of learnings and techniques is so helpful. Like I learnt that I was doing the same work but in a much more complicated manner and a fellow WOB showed me a simpler method. Learning sharing platform with fellow WOBs also helped me improve my pricing costing as I realized initially, I was selling my products without any labor margins.” – Iqra Rafique Khan, WOB



“The session with UK Fashion Designer Omar Mansoor, we learnt about communication, designing, marketing and more. He mentioned that our main focus should be on our business. Specifically on the design aspect of the business. Omar Sahib told us many useful tips, for example using the internet and online design softwares. That we need to focus on our brand image. Even the smallest details like packaging and presentation of the products helps brand image as well derive a higher price. He cautioned us against displaying faulty products. Products with untidy sewing or stain marks should be kept aside. We should ensure that our hand embroidery products are of quality, and this is how trust is developed for our brand and with customers. We use these skills till this day.” – Nusrat Sultana, WOB

“Omar Mansoor guidance of utilizing color combinations that cater to the urban market was shared to us by Haseena Baji. We learnt that we need to let go of overly vibrant color palette of the villages. Create design according to season color trends. That we need keep ourselves informed and up-to-date with evolving fashion trends.” – Sakina Bibi, Women Member

# CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF SHOCKS TO CRYSTALIZING CHANGE

Extreme uncertainty becomes a site where human agency reasserts itself. Rural women actively embrace and skillfully manage uncertainty. Although WOBs and WWs have hard time expressing how they deal with uncertainty. By utilizing Theory U's Field Structure of Attention we can extrapolate how WOBs and WWs are adapting to social and ecological changes by letting go of old ways of doing that are no longer working and letting come new learnings and ways of being. Majority of the rural women micro-entrepreneurs identified three pivot points that help them overcome unexpected situations:

## 3 PIVOT POINTS TO RESILIENCE TO SHOCKS



### Self-confidence

"I have gained lot of confidence through collective opportunity workshops. Not only do I see how fellow WOBs are conducting their business and brands; but the exposure to industry and institutions like LUMS, NCA, PIFD, Women Chambers and many more opened my mind to so many more social opportunities that I didn't were possible sitting at home. With this self-confidence I can courageously face any hardship or social pressure." – Noreen Kousar, WOB



### Education

"I am a single mother of five children. You can't expect community to step up and support you. You – yourself have to gather the grit, the will and do the work to support yourself and your children. At first, I use work within the chaar-diwari of home – stitching mattresses, blankets and pillow works for the neighborhood. Then I started boutique work by taking my products to Quetta, Hyderabad and Multan. This enabled me to give my children quality education. One of my elder daughters pursued a master's degree. Other two completed their matric degree and learnt the art of stitching from me before I got them married. My fourth daughter has completed her Bachelor of Science degree. As for my only son, after he completed his matric, he got a diploma and now I wish to send him abroad." – Mubeena Naz, WOB






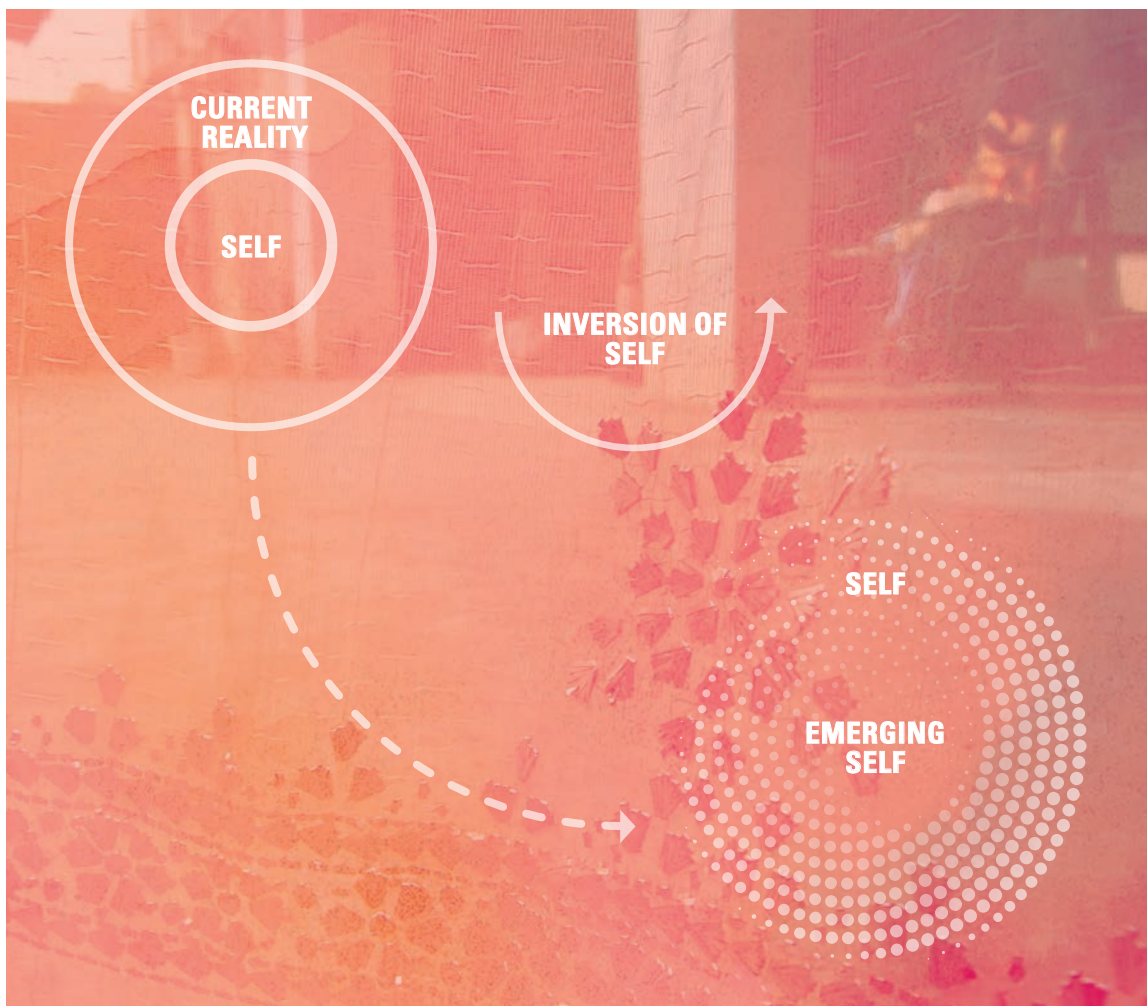
### Savings

"One should be ever-ready to face 'shocks.' You never know when bad day will come. When that difficult time is here you can't rely on anyone other than yourself. So, I separate a little of my income towards savings for such unprecedented or unknown happenings." – Iqra Rafique Khan, WOB

## THEORY U'S GENERATIVE SOCIAL FIELDS

### BY OTTO SCHARMER (CREATING AWARENESS OF ATTENTION & INTENTION)

Field Structure Of Attention	MICRO SPHERE Individual Attention	MESO SPHERE Conversation & Language	MARCO SPHERE Institutional Structure	MUNDO SPHERE Governance Mechanism	Rural Women Levels Of Change
	Re-acting	Old Habits of Thought	Centralized	Hierarchy	Stepping Out of The House
<b>OPENING &amp; SUSPENSION (OPEN MIND)</b>					
	Seeing	Debate	Decentralized	Market	Seeing & Learning New Skills
<b>DEEP DIVE &amp; REDIRECTION (OPEN HEART)</b>					
	Sensing	Dialogue	Networked	Dialogue	Sensing New Confidence
<b>LETTING GO &amp; LETTING COME (OPEN WILL)</b>					
	Presencing	Collective Presence	Innovation Ecosystem	System Sensing & Seeing Itself	Embodying the New Explore the Future by Doing



# THE REVOLUTION

Revolution is a concept not to be taken lightly. In the context of rural community, we are not talking about upheaval or disruptive change. But rather about the process of a series of incremental changes and when the process becomes a practice – a way of engaging with the world – that’s when transformational and revolutionary change happens.



## TRANSFORMATION OF THOUGHTS AND BELIEFS

Change takes place over time. WOBs and WMs model the change they want to see in their community. By modeling clarity, kindness and hope – the WOBs and WMs are able to grapple with the complexity of the presenting situation – working to readdress the challenge – by creating new ways of interacting, to building relationships (network of market linkages) and structures (Industry, Women Chambers, SMEDA, Etc.) that look toward the future.

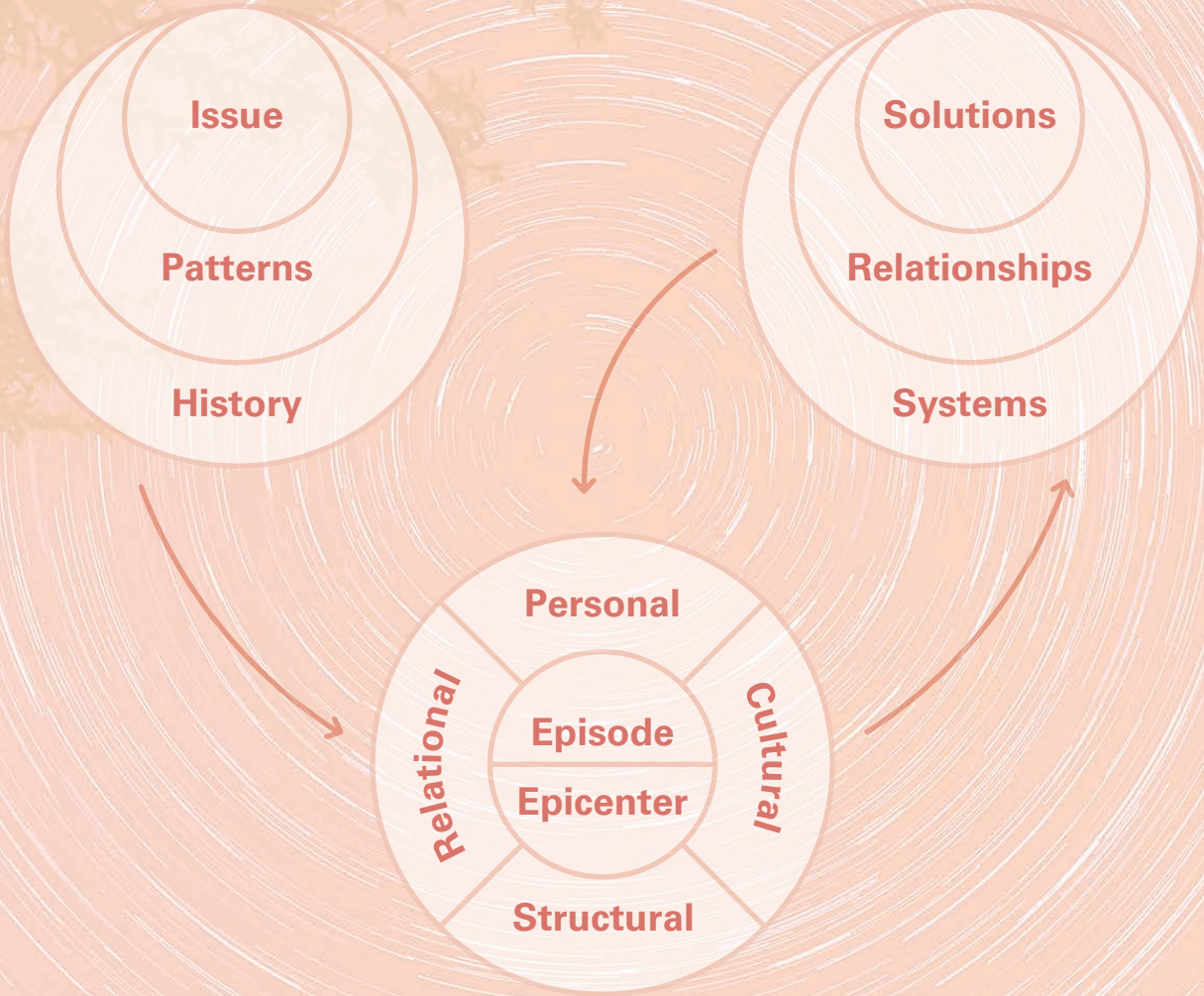
Transformation requires WOBs and WMs to actively reflect on the multiple levels and types of change and attend to the web of interconnected needs, relationships and patterns on all four levels: personal, relational, cultural and structural.



“There is an area where the women members I work with; their families upbringing is quite traditional. Therefore, they do not like women stepping outside their homes. I encourage these women and their family member to give these talented women an opportunity to contribute to the household more by stepping out with dupatta and abaya. I give my own example about how I started my small business and go about market & industry. If I can do this, so can these talented women members. I have noticed that when there more WOBs. Community members observe how these women are making positive contributions to the household. This awakens a willingness to do the same. Education is key. Having WOB role models helps sensitize society to notion of women working and stepping outside of their homes.” – Sobia Amir, WOB

**INQUIRY 1:**  
The Presenting  
Situation

**INQUIRY 2:**  
Horizon of  
the Future



**INQUIRY 3:**  
The Development  
of Change Processes

**CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION PROCESS INSPIRED  
SCHOLAR JOHN PAUL LEDERACH**





## OUR CHOICES DEFINE OUR LIVES – AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS

When WOBs speak up and stand up for others under threat, when they offer ideas and do not rest until they have done what they said they will do – this creates a sensation of being alive and liberated – community begins to see these WOBs as role models.

Micro-Entrepreneur Haseena Begum, modeled such daring and conflict transformation when she rescued a little boy from the spiteful hands of step-father.

“One time, I was walking, and I saw a man hitting a young boy. However, no one stood up for the boy. There were so many boys playing cricket, and everyone saw but no one said anything. The man treated the young boy like an animal. In this presenting situation, there was me, my son and my grandson. The little boy lay on the ground injured. I moved to help the little helpless boy. But my son cautioned me against it, my son was afraid something would happen to me. I was like I can’t leave things as they are. Thanks to my first step towards aid, other bystanders also gathered and lent support. We all helped him and saved his life. The man’s justification was that he was the boy’s father. He said ‘Who are you to tell me how I can treat my son.’ I said, ‘he cannot be your son because no father would treat their son like that.’ My clothes were soaked in blood. After many threats, I said, ‘I will start screaming if you so much as touch me.’ With help of my son and bystanders I extracted the boy from the situation. Took the boy home and called his mother, informing her that they little boy was in grave danger of death by the hands of your second husband.”

When WOBs and WMs create a circle of care with their community by giving respect, helping one another grow, listen deeply to each other's challenges, show they can relate and are affected by what they heard. This creates a culture of mutual exchange where people seek to hear and be heard, be moved by what they say and what others say to them. This is a world of learning. It can be seen first-hand as WOBs and WMs converse with each other and debate on best practices of caring for family and rearing.



"I have no children of my own but I have observed how many women spend all their income on their children. I would caution my fellow women members here because we do not want that children become dependent on their mothers. Mothers find it difficult to see their children struggle and give them all that they have. This is not good because as kids become older, they become dependent on their mothers. [Shahjahan Begum] This can be difficult for the mothers as they must continue with their business to support their family even though their kids are of age to earn. [following example by WM] For example, I had a family member who received a pension after retirement. The entire family would live on that one pension and become lazy and not work as income was coming every month. When the family member passes, the entire family will suffer not only over her death but over the lack of independence. I know children who have taken advantage of the resources their working mothers give them. This allows them to flourish and start successful businesses of their own. So much so, that they in return can take care of their mothers." – Shahjahan Begum and A Few Women Members shared similar experience.



From this transcribed conversation between WOBs and WMs it can be observed how women are wishing to break the cycle of dependence not just for themselves but also for the children and encourage a culture of self-sufficiency.



The WEE Impact Assessment shows how Outcome 1 [creation of enabling environment for improved agency and access to services and skills] and Outcome 2 [operating in safer and harassment free work spaces with increased understanding of EVAWG to reduce violence risks] have been achieved as WOBs and WMs are more confident to navigate complexity of their households and emergent business opportunities unique to them.

# WAY FORWARD

There is much work yet to done. Pakistan can rank up on World Economic Forum Gender Index by cultivating more gender sensitivity in the society; addressing social stigma associated with women shelter homes; empowering rural women toward stewardship of climate change action; and need to set a new precedent for the economic scarcity model that accommodates the rural community.

## **Community Representatives of EVAWG – Create Safe Spaces of Commune & Bridge for Access to Resources**

Moving forward let's build upon current Outcome 2 [operating in safer and harassment free work spaces with increased understanding of EVAWG to reduce violence risks] by taking the awareness sessions of legal & human right and access to resources trainings one step further by having Community Representatives of EVAWG. From the insights of this WEE Impact Assessment there is a need of safe space to commune and share stories of vulnerability. Having a woman representative from the community who can hold a monthly gatherings where women can come share their sensitive experiences without judgement and know that they are not alone. That there are other women with similar struggles. Community Representative can become a bridge connecting these women with legal aids or provide them guidance on how to resolve the conflict. Also, being from the same community herself the Community Representative will be aware of social context and able to mindful address the situation keeping religious aspect in view. Having a Community Representatives of EVAWG gives rural women local point of contact, will create more community buy-in, will create a feedback loop of learning and easier access to support networks.



## Need Collective Change – Cultivate More Gender Sensitivity

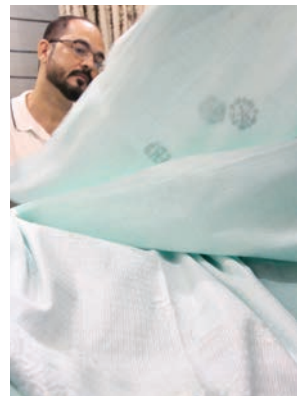
From the Spiral of Silence Framework, it can be seen that social pressure and concern for family makes women conscious of their actions. This is a slippery slope. Societal pressures are invisible and unwritten rules inculcated into culture since birth. To address the stigma associated with victims of violence seeking aid there needs to be collective change. UN Women can help setup gender sensitivity course in secondary government school of Pakistan where both girls and boys receive education that human difference does not carry with it unequal human value. As Peace Education Leader Betty A. Reardon states, “gender discrimination can also be used as a metaphor for other separations and divisions between people and world regions... Therefore, gender awareness and gender sensitivity are capacities essential to positive, mutually enhancing relationships and serve to develop deeper understanding of global issues.” Cultivating sensitivity in children early in the youth would help alleviate social tensions and negative image around women advocating for themselves and seeking solace in women shelter homes – education in a culture of peace is an investment in future of new values, behaviors and attitudes.



## Crafting Sustainable Futures

The rural community are unconscious conservers. They utilize every inch of resources in their possession – be it food, cloth or land. Very little goes to waste. As adversity brings forth new modes of living and repurposing of scraps into utensils. Imagine seeding the idea of how they can use their current resourcefulness into a business model. Provide WOBs and WMs with education of how to reduce, recycle and repurpose craft materials. Impart awareness of that zero-waste material has a different target audience. That upcycled products need to be packaged with messaging of sustainable fashion. This needs to become part of the commercial tailoring curriculum. Instill values of collective change, climate change and habits of consumerism.





## Investing in Value Creation for Higher Quality Output

Being part of craft industry, we need to invest in more sustainable practices. As writer Aja Barber asserts, “our disposable treatment of clothing is a recent development and has fed into why this has become a crisis of such huge proportions... not giving much thought to the lifespan of our cloths, or other people on our planet, or our planet itself.” Basically, notion of endless consumerism is causing harm to the environment as most of the cheap quality clothes end up in landfill. How this relates to rural women WOBs and WMs is that due to high economic inflation Pakistan is currently experiencing these women experience a challenge investing in good quality cloth. This is an untapped area where UN Women can provide good quality clothing on which the WOBs and WMs can stitch their various hand embroidery techniques. To make this high-end cloth investment part of the training, where to source this good quality clothing from at reasonable price. Presently, some of the WOBs have bought brand plain cloth from Khadi or Generation – the problem is price of the finished hand embroidery product – consumers find it too pricy saying, ‘why is unbranded work so expensive?’ WOBs attempt to explain themselves that the hand embroidery is done on branded cloth hence the final price is looks more costly. We believe that moving forward if we address this challenge of quality cloth both the WOBs & WMs as well as the planet will benefit.





**Kaarvan Crafts Foundation**  
*Crafting Livelihoods*





## LET'S COLLABORATE AND BRING ABOUT POSITIVE CHANGE TOGETHER

---

 +92 423 585 7485

 [info@kaarvan.com.pk](mailto:info@kaarvan.com.pk)


 [www.kaarvan.com.pk](http://www.kaarvan.com.pk)

 137-C-1 Model Town Lahore

 [www.facebook.com/KaarvanCraftsFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/KaarvanCraftsFoundation)

 [www.twitter.com/kaarvancrafts](https://www.twitter.com/kaarvancrafts)

 [www.instagram.com/kaarvancrafts/](https://www.instagram.com/kaarvancrafts/)

 [www.linkedin.com/company/kaarvancraftsfoundation/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/kaarvancraftsfoundation/)