

# **Impact Assessment Report**

## ***SMEDA-WBIC Women Business Fair***

**June 23 – 24, 2009 – Lahore**

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## **1. Introduction**

Women Business Incubation Centre (WBIC), Lahore is one of the projects of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA). WBIC offers a range of business development services to women entrepreneurs for promotion of their businesses. SMEDA organized 'Women Business Fair' on June 23-24, 2009 at Pearl Continental Hotel, Lahore to mark the second anniversary of WBIC, Lahore. This event was arranged as a part of SMEDA endeavors for economic empowerment of the women through business development. New women entrepreneurs were invited in this business fair to display their products for promotion and sale. The stalls were offered to them on subsidized rates to encourage and promote the new women entrepreneurs and to provide them with an opportunity for marketing their products.

The marketing campaign for the business fair comprised of advertisement through newspaper, website, mobile vehicle, flyers and banners. Copy of advertisement is attached at Annexure-I. A range of recreational items such as Magic Show, Puppet Show, Float, Face Painting and Lucky Draw were also organized in the business fair for attracting the attention of families visiting the business fair. Giveaways for visitors through lucky draw, was another source of attraction. Certificates of participation were distributed among the exhibitors and those women entrepreneurs who graduated from WBIC, Lahore. Another source of motivation for the exhibitors was the competition of stalls for which there were cash prizes for top three stalls. A committee of experts evaluated the stalls and finalized the rating. Top three exhibitors were given the cash prizes. Good gesture aspect as a good gesture was that SMEDA decided that total amount collected on account of stall fee would be deposited in Prime Minister's Relief Fund for IDPs.

## **2. Purpose of Impact Assessment**

In order to gauge the usefulness and effectiveness of the initiative of Women Business Fair, an impact assessment was carried out and this report has been developed to measure and record the potential of this intervention by SMEDA-WBIC. Such assessment is indispensable for prioritizing the resources and services according to the stockholder's feedback.

## **3. Methodology**

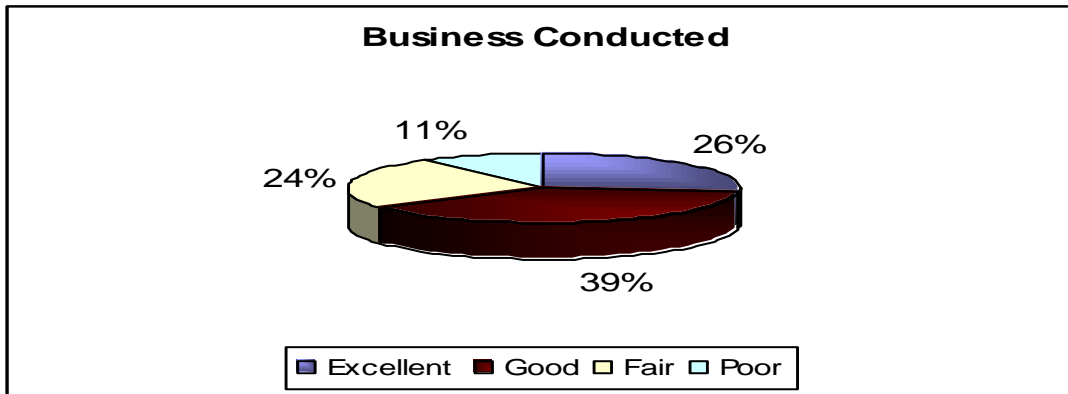
A questionnaire as given at Annexure-III was developed to solicit feedback and views of exhibitors. The questionnaire, consisted of questions regarding number of visitors, number of customers, business conducted, arrangements by organizers and suggestions. An open ended question regarding administrative arrangements was also put forth in the

questionnaire. Primary data regarding feedback and views collected from 38 exhibitors through face to face interviews and the questionnaires were filled in by the exhibitors through SMEDA officials.

#### 4. Feedback

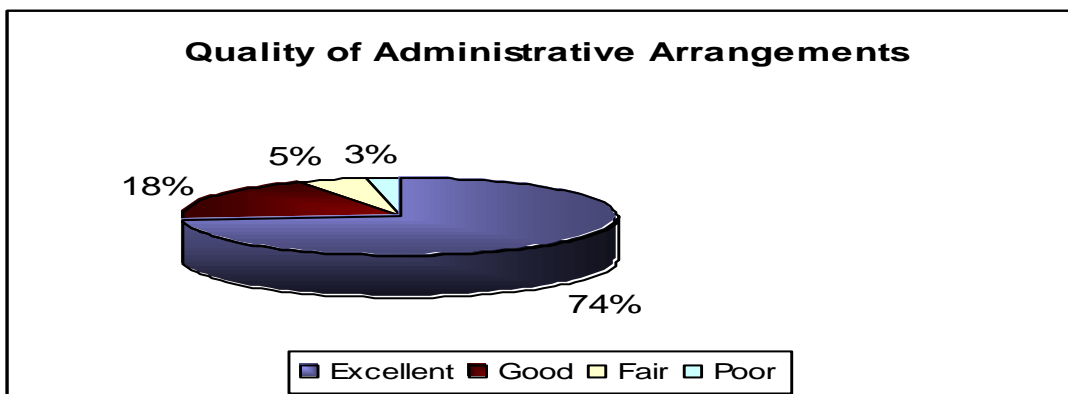
The feedback of exhibitors on close-ended questions is presented in Chart -I. The total number of people who visited the fair was around 6,900 while the total number of customers was around 1,150. The statistics shows that average number of customers per stall was 23.

**Chart -I**



Feedback of exhibitors about business conducted was quite positive. It is evident from Chart -I above that 26% of respondents did excellent business, 39 % conducted good business. 24 % did fair business and only 11 % of the respondents did poor business.

**Chart -II**



Likewise the feedback of exhibitors about quality of administrative arrangements by organizers was also quite encouraging. Chart -II demonstrates the feedback of exhibitors regarding the quality of administrative arrangements by the organizers. Majority of exhibitors i.e. 74% of them informed that the administrative arrangements were excellent, 18 % of them said that the arrangements were good, 5 % opined the arrangements were fair and only 3 % of them responded that the arrangements were and poor.

## **5. Analysis of Strong/Weak Areas of Arrangements**

The analysis of open ended question regarding strong/weak areas of arrangements shows some interesting aspects. On the positive note, the exhibitors found the fair a decent opportunity of networking and marketing at affordable price. Moreover, professional outlook of stalls along with tremendous support of SMEDA's staff was greatly appreciated. On the negative note, the respondents expressed their views about poor marketing and targeting of customers.

## **6. Suggestions by the Exhibitors**

Suggestions related to business and marketing were received from the respondents. These suggestions provide a good basis for improving the arrangements for organizing such events in future. Based on the findings of the information gathered through survey, important suggestions put forth by the women entrepreneurs are as follow:

- ***Marketing***

The respondents suggested stepping up efforts by SMEDA to market the event in a more effective manner by targeting the right customers according to the product potential. Some of the respondents suggested that members of Royal Palm and Defense Club should also have been exclusively targeted to increase their sales.

- ***Product Mix***

The respondents further suggested bringing in more variety of stalls and products. The predominated presence of stalls related with garments in the business fair reduced the bargaining potential of the exhibitors.

- ***Frequency and Organization***

The respondents suggested increasing the frequency of business fairs. They also suggested for organizing such business fairs in future on the weekends to attract more customers.

## **5 Conclusion**

The impact assessment survey was conducted to gauge the effectiveness of organizing the Women Business Fair. The feedback of survey and suggestions made by the women entrepreneurs/exhibitors shows that a fairly vast majority of exhibitors appreciated the initiative as a whole and regarding the efforts made for organizing this event. However a very small fraction of exhibitors expressed their dissatisfaction and identified a few areas for improvement as mentioned earlier.

A post event review meeting of SMEDA Officials involved in organizing this event, was also held to review and analyze the strengths and weaknesses in the process. Generally there was a feeling of satisfaction. However it was felt that this business fair was arranged on a very short notice of 20 days only. In this short period for planning and making the arrangements, the first challenge for marketing campaign of the business fair was to ensure the full occupancy of designed available capacity of 49 stalls which was achieved. Annexure-II shows Layout of Stalls in the business fair. The meeting had a consensus that in future, such events may be planned at least 2 months prior to the date of organizing the event. This would give ample time for planning the activities and making proper arrangements. It would also help in ensuring better coordination and result

It is hoped that the ‘impact assessment report of women business fair’ as a document will be helpful to guide for new initiatives and design interventions for improving the service delivery to women entrepreneurs across Pakistan.





