



From innovation to impact and beyond

National Incubation Center (NIC) Quetta: Introduction & Impact



1 Executive Summary

National Incubation Center (NIC) Quetta is the first and only business incubation center in Balochistan. Housed in one of the leading universities of the region, Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS), NIC Quetta is committed to supporting the young men and women of Balochistan to develop sustainable and impactful startup ventures to create jobs, revitalize community, commercialize new technology and strengthen local and national economy.

NIC Quetta, established in 2018, has already started leaving marks in defining the ecosystem in the largest and most under-developed province of the country – Balochistan. NIC Quetta's impact is already manifesting in so many ways. The Center has been successful in creating and developing an entrepreneurial culture in the province. Moreover, the Center has been instrumental in convincing the youth of Balochistan to increasingly opt entrepreneurship as a viable career option. The Center has been a hub of innovation contributing to the socio-economic uplift of the province by creating jobs and diversifying local economy.

In regions like Balochistan where literacy rate is lowest and where access to higher education is a privilege of selected few, it is fundamentally essential to carryout robust awareness campaigns to raise awareness regarding the kind of work NIC Quetta is doing. In many ways, NIC Quetta has been creating awareness regarding innovation and entrepreneurship through its rigorous outreach activities. The NIC Quetta team has been travelling to nooks and corners of Balochistan and delivering workshops and seminars to raise awareness regarding entrepreneurship and startup culture. On average, the team travels 4340 kilometers twice a year to cover the massive landmass of Balochistan and convey the message of entrepreneurship and attract applicants from all over the province. The footfall of NIC Quetta outreach campaign has been fabulous given the sparsely populated districts of Balochistan. The in-person outreach seminars and workshops conducted across Balochistan attracted an audience of more than 6111. Consequently, the number of applications at the have been more than 1724, which is phenomenal in the context of Balochistan.

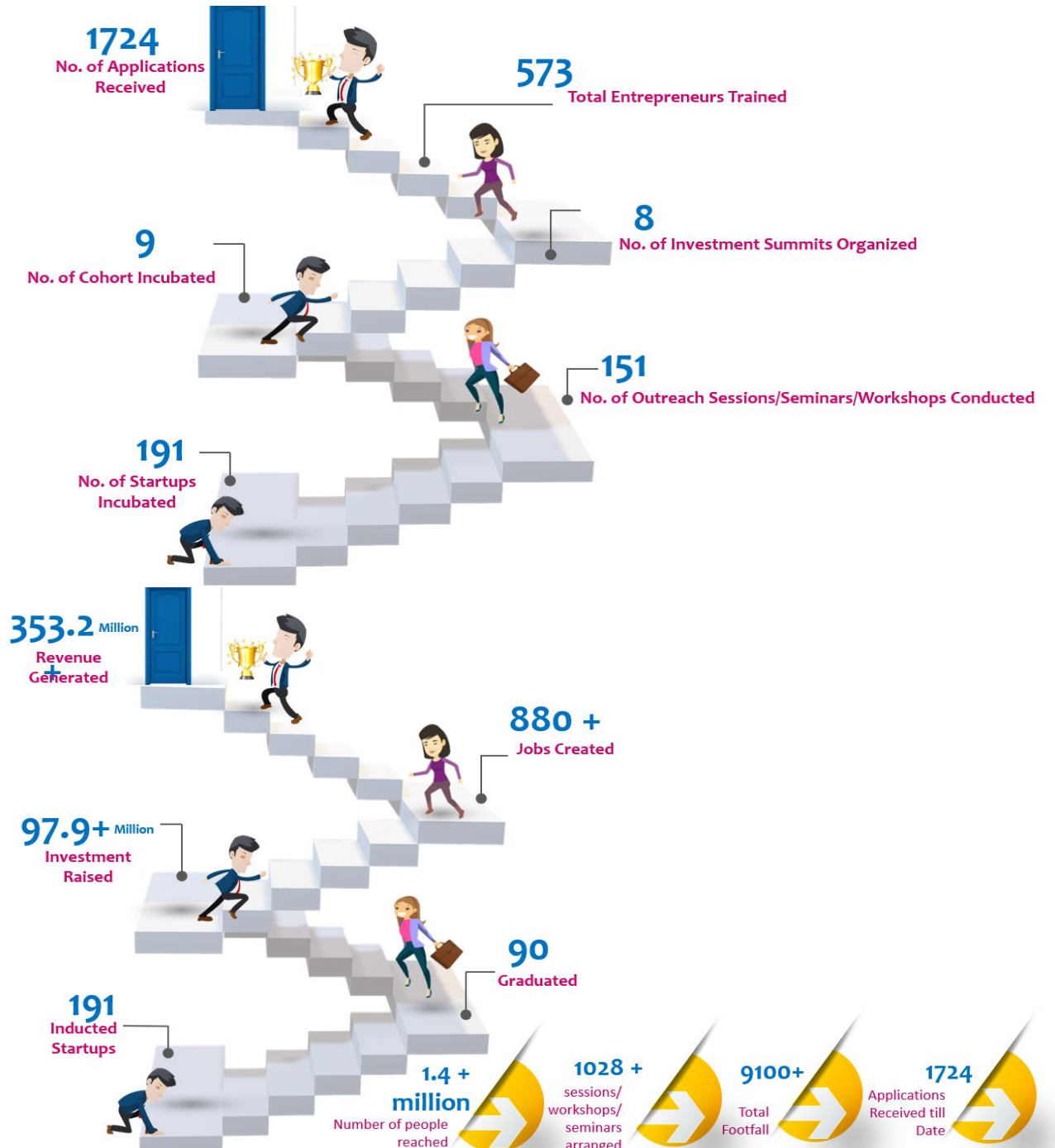
At this point in time, NIC Quetta has incubated 191 startups representing 26 out of 35 districts of Balochistan. Amazingly yet, around 71 startups (44% were founded or co-founded by women entrepreneurs. Those who know the cultural and social dynamics of Balochistan could sense how great an achievement this is. This extraordinary inclusiveness was possible only because of the sustained effort put into the awareness campaigns run by NIC Quetta team biannually.

So far, NIC Quetta has graduated 90 startups that went on to create more than 880 jobs and have generated cumulative sales of around Rs. 353.2 million and have raised cumulative investment of Rs. 97.9 million. Again, given the context of Balochistan, these stats are immensely promising. Another hallmark which is unique to NIC Quetta is its Microenterprise Program. The Center has trained 80 microenterprises, 66% of whom are women. After completion of their training at NIC Quetta, these microenterprises have increased their sales and raised more than 18.2 million in investment.

Another outstanding achievement of NIC Quetta is its contribution to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thanks to the economic activity that NIC Quetta has been generating across Balochistan, the UN Academic Impact has declared BUIITEMS as the

global hub for SDG-8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth. NIC Quetta has been featured several times in the UN website for its contribution to SDGs.

The following infographic highlights the impact made by NIC Quetta so far:



The journey of NIC Quetta has been challenging but fruitful. Balochistan is emerging as a hub of innovation in the region creating jobs, revitalizing community, and strengthening local and national economy.

2 About NIC Quetta

Mission

At National Incubation Center (NIC) Quetta, we are committed to supporting the youth of Balochistan to develop sustainable and impactful startup ventures in order to create jobs, revitalize community, commercialize new technology and strengthen local and national economy

Vision

To be the hub of innovation in the region proposing innovative approaches to impact lives and raise living standards

Goals

- To promote Entrepreneurial Culture among the youth of Balochistan
- To promote disruptive innovation to impact lives and enhance living standards
- To commercialize innovative technology
- To create jobs and diversify local and national economy
- To accelerate growth of local industry clusters

Core Values

- ***Passion for Winning*** (We are continuously moving forward, innovating, and improving)
- ***Teamwork*** (We believe in leveraging the collective genius)
- ***Integrity*** (We are honest, open, ethical, and fair)
- ***Respect and Humility*** (We treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves)
- ***Customer Focus*** (We put startups first)

3 Partners

National Incubation Center Quetta believes in mutually beneficial partnerships with all players of entrepreneurial ecosystem. To maximize the outreach and hunt the right candidates for its incubation and acceleration programs, NIC Quetta partners with organizations that already have access to its target demographics.

National Incubation Center Quetta is proud to partner with a fine selection of service providers to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Balochistan and offer help and support to its incubated and accelerated startups. Some of the prominent partners include the following:



4.2

Acceleration Program

In acceleration program, those startups are selected that are growth stage and need to scale. In addition to continued mentoring and technical support, startups are provided with the opportunities to pitch their business ideas to investors in various national and international investment summits. NIC Quetta arranges investment summit for each cohort at the end of each incubation/ acceleration cycle.

4.3 Microentrepreneurship Program

Another unique feature of NIC Quetta is its micro-entrepreneurship program. NIC Quetta offers support to the microentrepreneurs of Balochistan through a flagship curriculum and training program based on experiential learning in Urdu and other local languages like Pashto and Balochi. The training adopts an innovative approach to provide Micro and Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with access to business skills and capacity building support. Most of the participants in this program are women microentrepreneurs. This program elevates and train such women entrepreneurs so that they can scale their home-based micro businesses.

One of the larger aims of this program is to develop the entrepreneurial ecosystem in remote areas of Balochistan. To this end, it is essential to take partners on board to help build their capacity but also aid us in delivering more value. To maximize our outreach and recruit the right candidates for training, NIC Quetta has partnered with organizations like UNHCR and Karandaaz Pakistan, to equip marginalized men and women with technical and soft skills essential for establishing and running their micro enterprises.

4.4 Program Activities

4.4.1 Outreach Sessions/ Seminars/ Workshops

In regions like Balochistan where literacy rate is lowest and where access to higher education is a privilege of selected few, it is fundamentally essential to carryout robust awareness

campaigns to raise awareness regarding the kind of work NIC Quetta is doing. In many ways, NIC Quetta has been creating awareness regarding innovation and entrepreneurship through its rigorous outreach activities. The NIC Quetta team has been travelling to nooks and corners of Balochistan and delivering workshops and seminars to raise awareness regarding entrepreneurship and startup culture. On average, the team travels 4340.6 kilometers twice a year to cover the massive landmass of Balochistan and convey the message of entrepreneurship and attract applicants from all over the province. The footfall of NIC Quetta outreach campaign has been fabulous given the sparsely populated districts of Balochistan. The in-person outreach seminars and workshops conducted across Balochistan attracted an audience of more than 6111. Consequently, the number of applications has been more than 1724, which is phenomenal in the context of Balochistan.

4.4.2 Seminars/ Workshops/ Training Sessions

NIC Quetta's training curriculum is designed in a manner that helps the business development process for startups and provides them with the required pool of expertise and knowledge. The startups incubated at NIC Quetta are trained on various business and ICT related topics including design thinking, customer journey mapping, innovation ecosystem, strategy and business modelling, branding, accounting and finance, law, equity, business model canvas, market research and market segmentation, sales, and traction etc.

4.4.3 Mentoring/ Coaching Sessions

Another essential ingredient of NIC Quetta's incubation and acceleration program is ongoing mentoring and coaching of startups. The startups incubated at NIC Quetta get one-on-one as well as group mentoring and coaching sessions.

4.4.4 Pitch Sessions

Pitch session is another activity organized by NIC Quetta for its startups. NIC Quetta management closely work with the selected startups in preparing their pitch decks.

4.4.5 Exposure Visits

Exposure visits provides invaluable opportunity for startups to link with and make contacts with potential stakeholders. NIC Quetta encourages its startups to take part in different entrepreneurial events. The management shares the relevant information about any opportunity that can benefit the startups. Through such exposure visits, the startups can make contacts and future collaborations with other startups and stakeholders in the ecosystem.

On the other hand, NIC Quetta also receives visitors from different walks of life including CEOs, heads of organizations, businesses, social workers, parliamentarians, policymakers, ambassadors, and delegates from inland and abroad.

5 NIC Quetta Facilities

NIC Quetta offers the following facilities to its incubated startups:

- Up to 6 months of access to co-working office facility
- 24x7 utilities including power, internet, and phone connection
- Shared access to IT and administrative infrastructure & resources
- State-of-the-art video conferencing system
- BUIITEMS 10000+ alumni working in 450+ national and international organizations and strong linkages with local community organizations to ensure maximum coverage
- Access to faculty members and labs of BUIITEMS and LUMS
- Access to investors
- Access to mentors and coaches

Following are some glimpses of the physical facilities of NIC Quetta:



Meeting Rooms:

NIC Quetta has 2 meeting rooms with 8 seats each. The rooms are equipped with the state-of-the-art smart equipment.

Board Room:

This board room has seating capacity of 20 people, it is equipped with multimedia, motorized screen, LED, and sound system.



Incubation/ Co-working Space:

The incubation and acceleration area is equipped with state-of-the-art smart devices, and movable glass boards. This co-working space has a seating capacity of 65 people at a time.

Plug N Play Area:

The Plug N Play area is equipped with state-of-the-art smart devices, and movable glass boards. This co-working space has a capacity of 85 people at a time.





The Zen Gardens:

The two Zen Gardens at the facility are used for discussions and chitchat by the startups and management.



Smart Classroom:

The Smart Classroom has a seating capacity of 35 people. The room is used for seminars, workshops, and other similar events.

Design Thinking/ Usability Lab:

NIC Quetta's design thinking/ usability lab is equipped with all IT provisions such as LED, Multimedia and moveable chairs and power/ net socket.





Main Entrance:

The main entrance of NIC Quetta facility has enough waiting space for guests who can sit, wait, and carry out discussions.

Gaming Room:

NIC Quetta has a gaming room to stimulate creative thinking during the play.



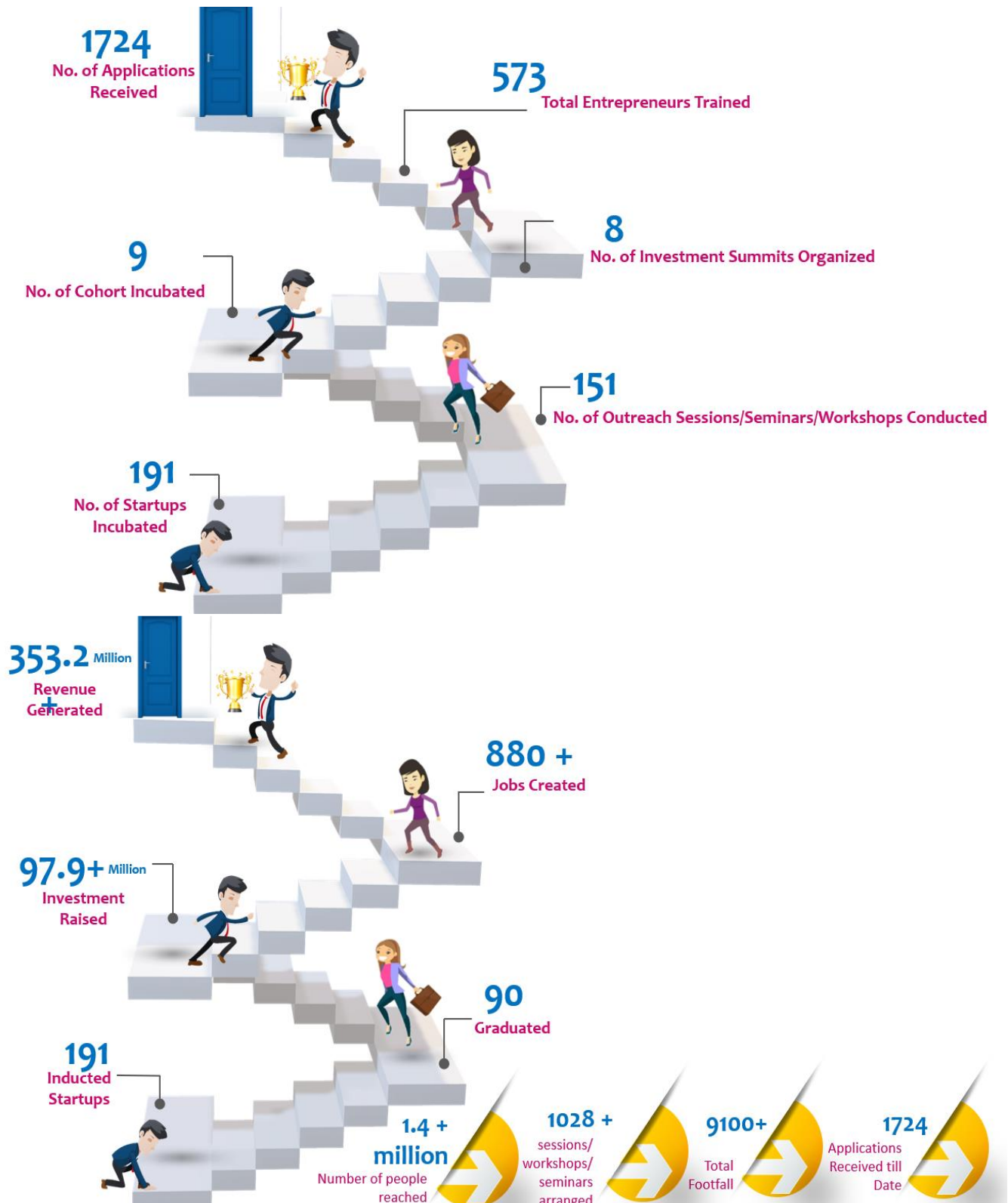
Maker Space:

NIC Quetta will have a Maker's Space for prototype development. It will have the following labs:

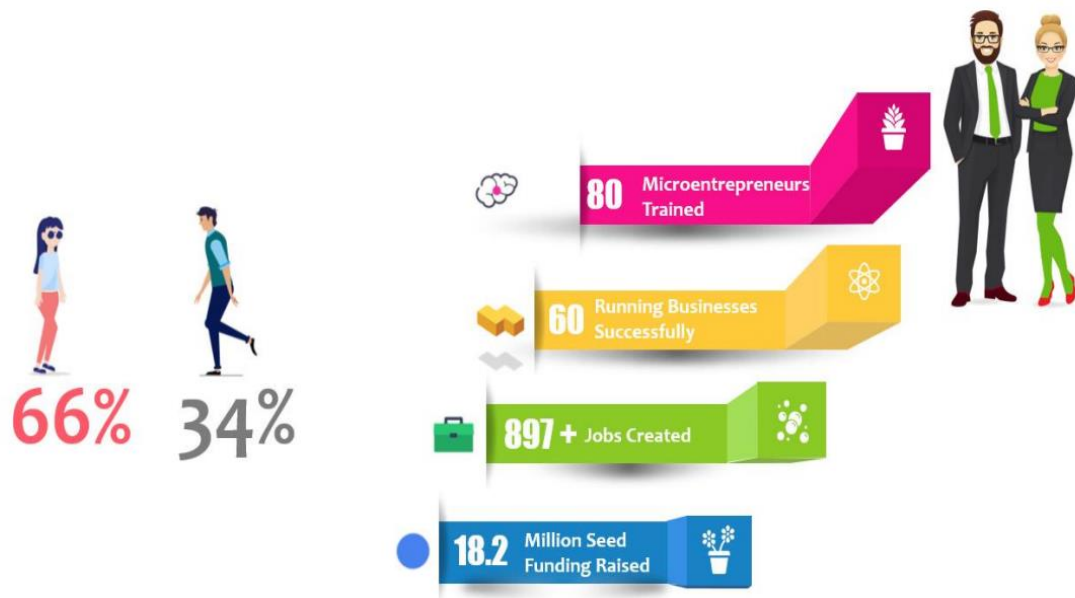
- PCB Prototyping Lab
- Mechanical Prototyping Lab
- Metal Lab
- Wood Lab
- 3D and Inkjet Printing Lounge




6 Summarized Overall Performance of NIC Quetta Startups



7 Summarized Overall Performance of NIC Quetta Micro-Enterprises



A black and white photograph of a young child peering through a hole in a textured surface, possibly a piece of fabric or paper. The child's face is partially visible, looking directly at the camera. In the foreground, there is a white sign with red text that reads "Socioeconomic Impact of NIC Quetta in Balochistan".

Socioeconomic Impact of NIC Quetta in Balochistan

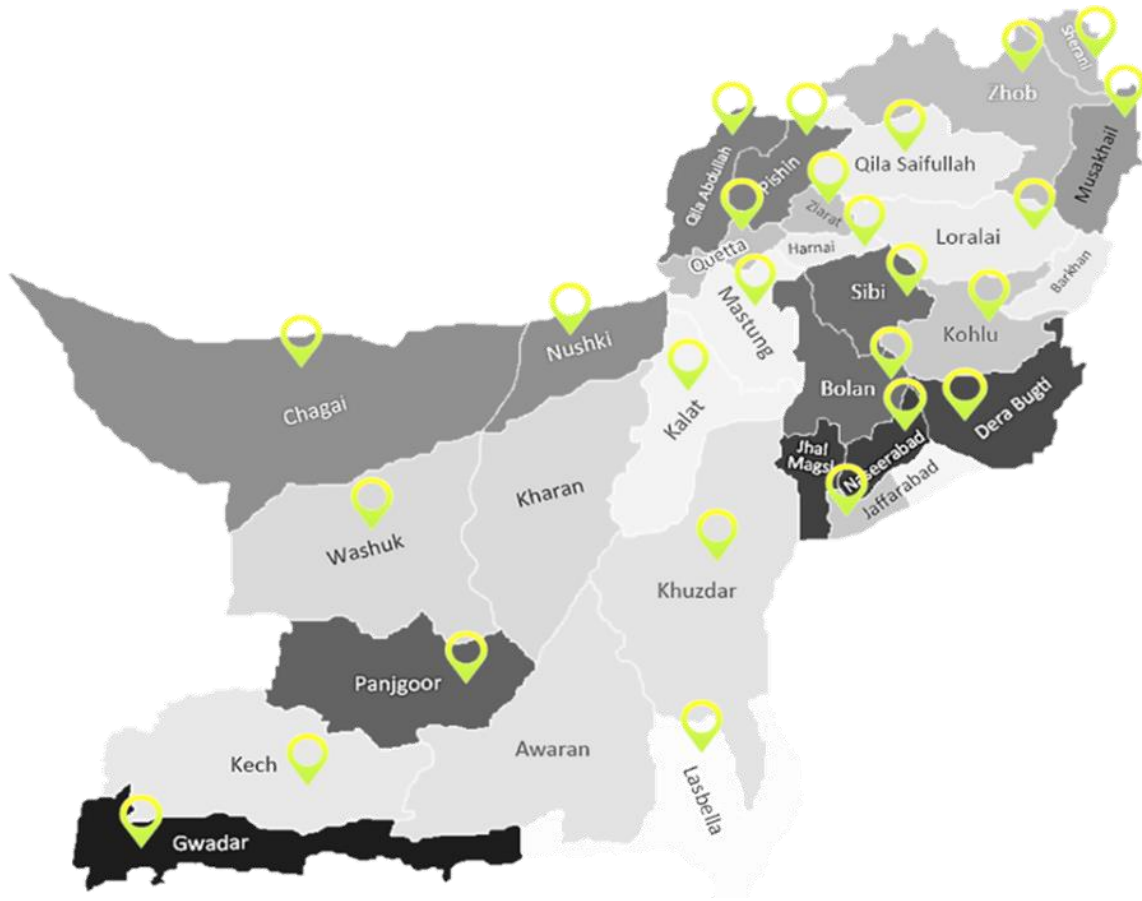
NIC Quetta has been instrumental in generating economic activity in Balochistan. Since NIC Quetta has been the first and only incubator in Balochistan, the Center has already started leaving marks in defining the ecosystem in the largest and most under-developed province of the country. NIC Quetta's impact is already manifesting in so many ways. The Center has been successful in creating and developing an entrepreneurial culture in the province of Balochistan. Moreover, the Center has been instrumental in convincing the youth of Balochistan to increasingly opt entrepreneurship as a viable career option. The Center has been a hub of innovation contributing to the socio-economic uplift of the Province by creating jobs and diversifying local economy.



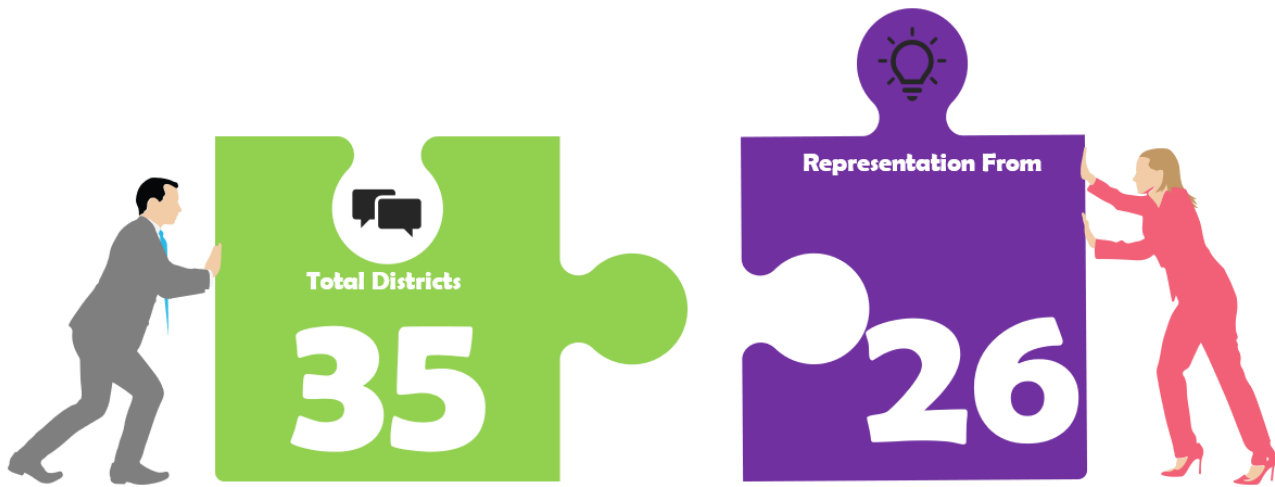
Developing an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Balochistan

The NIC Quetta's business incubation program exclusively designed for new market entrants and businesses from commercialization point of view, has played a key role in facilitating the transition from a socialist mindset to market economy by enabling commercialization of technological developments and promoting a culture of innovation across Balochistan. NIC Quetta not only has been successful in creating jobs but sees itself as provider of psychological support for budding entrepreneurs right after their graduation when they are expected to earn the next day. At the incubator they share a wide range of overhead costs and resources which lessen their burden big time. The NIC Quetta team continuously engages with startups in place and provides them insightful advice and information. NIC Quetta conducts individual, as well as group meetings and welcomes all other incubated startups to interact with each other, offer help, advise, and collaborate which is why many startups and micro businesses that have been launched successfully through NIC Quetta, cite the presence of fellow entrepreneurs as a key element in their success.

NIC Quetta's extensive outreach is increasing with each graduating cohort, having increased applications submitted from far flung areas of Balochistan. The graduated companies of NIC Quetta have expanded in different markets with a positive impact on the economic development.



Districts' Representation in 05 Years



7.1 Impact in Terms of Employment Creation

Cumulatively, the NIC Quetta startups have created 880 direct and indirect jobs during the past 05 years.

7.2 Impact in Terms of Women Inclusiveness

Balochistan is considered as society with strict protocols when it comes to the representation of women in economic, social, and political spheres. This perception has been shattered by the outcomes and results that NIC Quetta has produced. An overwhelming number of women applied and were incubated in NIC Quetta during the past 05 years. Around 48% of the startups that were incubated in NIC Quetta had founder or co-founders as women. Moreover, 66% of the microentrepreneurs that were trained by NIC Quetta during the past 05 years were women.

7.3 Impact in terms of Investment Raised

NIC Quetta's startups have cumulatively raised an investment of PKR 97.9+ million during the past 05 years.

7.4 Impact in Terms of Revenue Generation

NIC Quetta startups have generated a cumulative revenue of PKR 353.2 million during the past 05 years.

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Transformations to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE AND JUSTICE STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

NIC Quetta has been instrumental in its contribution to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thanks to the economic activity that NIC Quetta has been generating across Balochistan, the UN Academic Impact has declared BUISTEMS as the global hub for SDG-8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth. NIC Quetta has been featured several times in the UN website for its contribution to SDGs.



United Nations Academic Impact Hub for SDG 8



UNITED NATIONS
**academic
impact**

Sharing
a Culture
of Intellectual
Social
Responsibility

In recognition of the research, innovation and scholarship undertaken in support of this SDG, United Nations Academic Impact welcomes

Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, and Management Sciences, Pakistan

as its hub for Sustainable Development Goal 8 for 2021-2024.

Ramu Damodaran
Chief, United Nations Academic Impact
Department of Global Communications
United Nations





A training session for start-ups hosted by NIC Quetta - BUTEMS (Photo: NIC Quetta)

Developing Youth Skills for the Future: A Vision from Pakistan

World Youth Skills Day, celebrated every year on 15 July, is an opportunity to reflect on the strategic importance of equipping young people with skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship. The Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences - BUTEMS (Pakistan), United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) SDG Hub for Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, is a core center of innovation to foster the targets of this Goal, in particular target 8.6: Substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training. In this article, experts from BUTEMS explore this issue from various angles and perspectives:

From Innovation to Impact and Beyond – Producing the Job-Creators of Tomorrow

By Muhammad Shah Khan, Director of the National Incubation Center (NIC) Quetta, BUTEMS

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the global unemployment figure will cross 200 million people next year, with women and youth workers worst-hit. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is considered to further contribute to this crisis. The traditional way of job creation may not be sufficient to cater this problem. This is a systematic problem and therefore, it needs a systematic solution.

Institutions of higher education, worldwide, may train their students to become entrepreneurs so that they graduate as job-creators rather than as job-seekers. Pakistan is one of the largest young countries in the world with around 63% of the population aged between 15-30. But the unemployment rate among this age group is at 8.5%, one of the highest in the region. Moreover, more than a million jobs must be generated each year to improve labour force participation rates.

The only way through which this large number of jobs can be created is to intensify innovation and entrepreneurial activity. It is well-established that a rise in innovation and entrepreneurial activity in an economy results in a considerable growth of industry clusters, investment and job creation. In order to boost entrepreneurship and innovation as a mindset, the establishment of the National Incubation Center (NIC) Quetta at BUTEMS was envisaged.

NIC Quetta - BUTEMS is mandated to support young men and women to develop sustainable and impactful start-up ventures in order to create jobs, revitalize community, commercialize new technology and strengthen the local as well as the national economy. NIC Quetta is already making an impact. The Center has graduated 42 start-ups that have cumulatively created 662 jobs while generating a cumulated revenue of around USD 650,000.

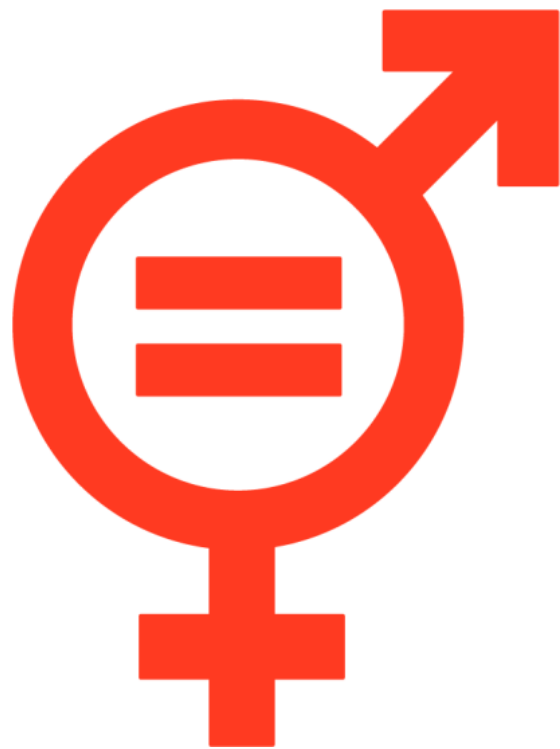
Besides its start-up program, NIC Quetta has trained 58 microentrepreneurs, 76% of whom are women, through its microenterprise program. The Center has been committed to proposing innovative approaches to impact lives and raise living standards. More collaborative platforms, need to be developed to foster entrepreneurial mindsets and promote entrepreneurial culture if we are to tackle the alarming global youth unemployment rates. This is the only way forward.

1 NO POVERTY



With its Micro-entrepreneurship Program, NIC Quetta is working to build the capacity of the marginalized women microbusinesses of Balochistan in creating, sustaining, and scaling up their businesses. This unique Program focuses on providing quality capacity building, mentoring, and leadership training to help microenterprises in areas of marketing, management, operations, finance, and human capital development. The program also links these microenterprises with investors and financial institutions. In a region where more than 80% of the women don't have their own bank account, such program of financial inclusion is revolutionary.

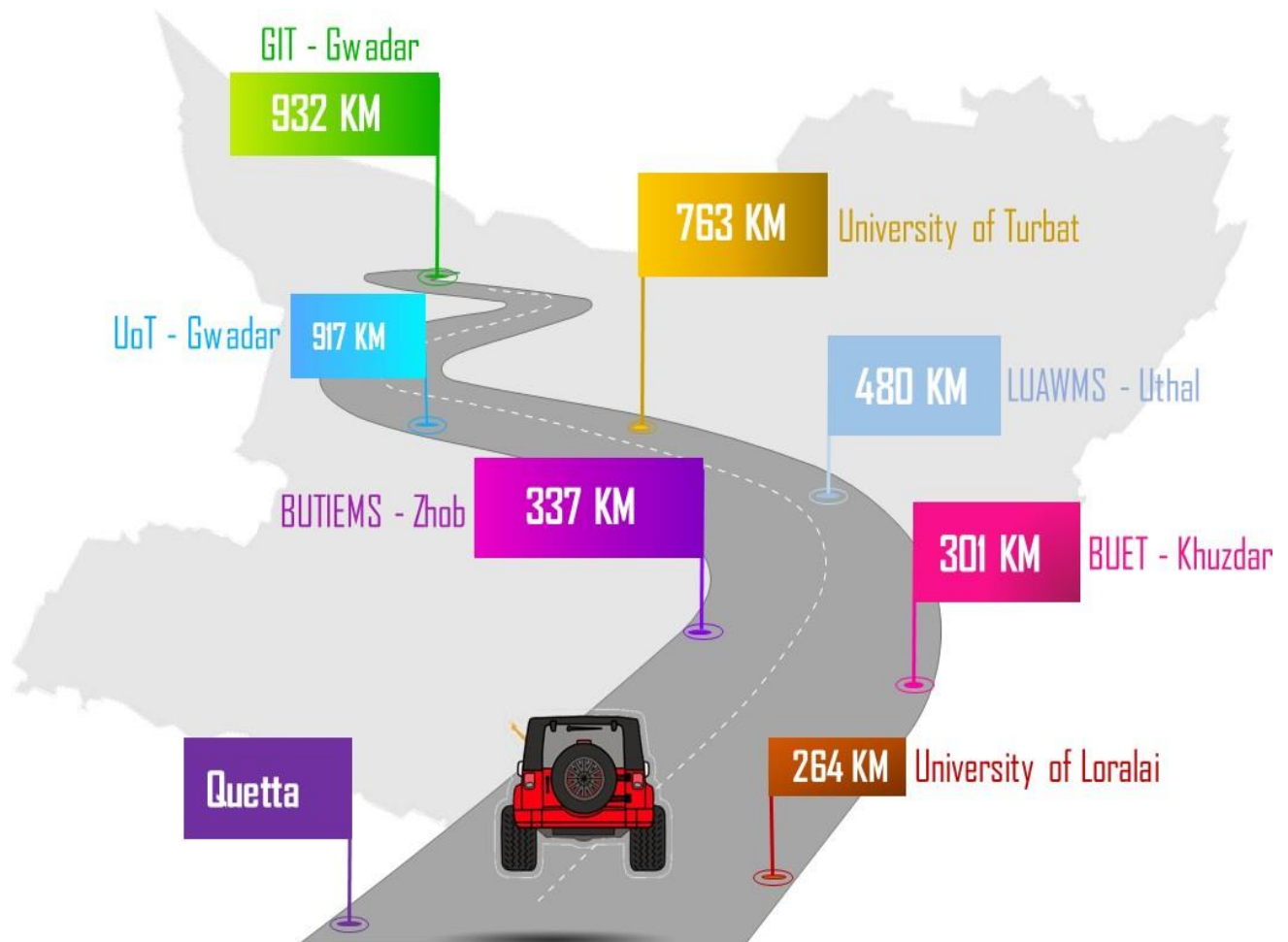
5 GENDER EQUALITY



NIC Quetta encourages women participation in all the activities it carries out. Around 48% of the startups that were incubated in NIC Quetta had founder or co-founders as women. Moreover, 66% of the microentrepreneurs that were trained by NIC Quetta during the past 05 years were women. These are phenomenal results in context of Balochistan.

8 NIC Quetta Developing a Vibrant Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Balochistan

NIC Quetta has continued to create awareness regarding innovation and entrepreneurship through its rigorous outreach activities. NIC Quetta team has been travelling to nooks and corners of Balochistan and delivering workshops and seminars to raise awareness regarding entrepreneurship and startup culture. On average, the team travels 4340+ kilometers twice a year to cover the massive landmass of Balochistan and convey the message of entrepreneurship and attract applicants from all over the province. The footfall of NIC Quetta outreach campaign has been fabulous given the sparsely populated districts of Balochistan. The in-person outreach seminars and workshops conducted across Balochistan attracted an audience of more than 6111. The following figure highlights the number of kilometers travelled by NIC Quetta team to carry out outreach activities:



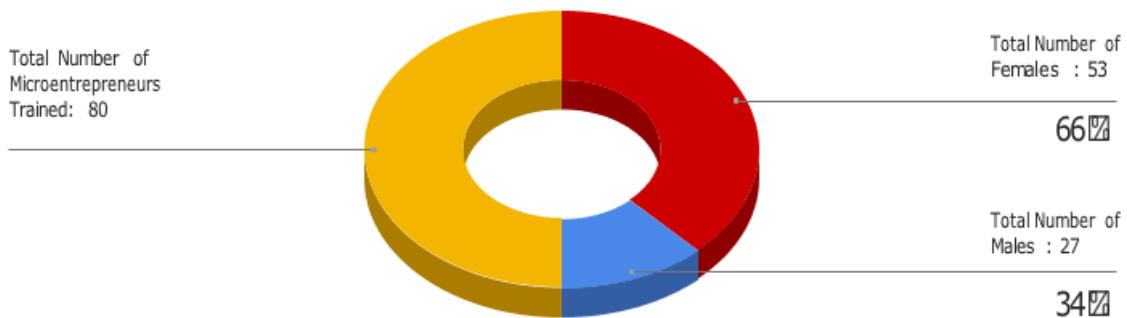
Empowering Women of Balochistan through Microenterprise Development



NIC Quetta offers support to micro entrepreneurs through a flagship curriculum and training program based on experiential learning in Urdu and other local languages. The training adopts an innovative approach to provide Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with access to business skills and capacity building support. The aim is to champion and support female entrepreneurs specifically, and to suggest changes in the current regulatory climate to reduce gender inequalities. NIC Quetta has engaged industry experts, faculty, and staff in exchanges of information, experiences, and expertise relevant to female entrepreneurs.

TOTAL NO. OF MICROENTREPRENEURS TRAINED

66% Female MICROENTREPRENEURS



TOTAL
GRANTS (PKR)

18.2 Million

Under Karandaaz Micro-Entrepreneurship Program for Women, with funding from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). Under the program, capacity of women micro entrepreneurs from different areas of Balochistan was built, followed by access to investors. The program aimed to provide innovative solution to address each problem area and offer a robust monitoring mechanism to assess the performance of the incubated startups. Selected micro entrepreneurs were trained with world-class entrepreneurship curriculum (tested by Harvard University) and Entrepreneurship Development Advisory Services (EDAS). NIC Quetta provided a formal offering of mentorship drawing from a pool of high-level business executives.

9 Coordination with National and International Organizations

One of the larger aims of the program is to develop the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Balochistan. To this end, it is essential to take partners on board to help build their capacity but also aid us in delivering more value. To maximize our outreach and recruit the right candidates for training, NIC Quetta partners with organizations nationally and internationally who already have access to our target demographic to equip youth with technical and soft skills essential for establishing and running enterprises.



NIC Quetta has worked with UNDP, UNHCR, Karandaaz, Shaoor Foundation for Education & Awareness, NICs in different cities, PPAF, UBI Global, Singularity University, British Council,

School Of Leadership (Sol), TIE Islamabad, Code for Pakistan, Invest to Innovate, Uber, Stimulus Pakistan, She Loves Tech, Circle, The Nest i/o, Impact Dynamics, Institute for Development Studies and Practices (IDSP - Pakistan), and Silk Road High Tech Park Association. NIC Quetta remains the regional partner for entrepreneurial activities and maintains healthy communication work relations with all its partners.



Conclusion

Since NIC Quetta has been the first and only incubator in Balochistan, the Center has already started leaving marks in defining the ecosystem in the largest and most under-developed province of the country. NIC Quetta's impact is already manifesting in so many ways. The Center has been successful in creating and developing an entrepreneurial culture in the province of Balochistan. Moreover, the Center has been instrumental in convincing the youth of Balochistan to increasingly opt entrepreneurship as a viable career option. The Center has been a hub of innovation contributing to the socio-economic uplift of the Province by creating jobs and diversifying local economy.

