

PRESS RELEASE



Inspirational stories told at Nestlé, Aurat Foundation joint event

LAHORE, Mar 5, 2015: Nestlé Pakistan, in collaboration with Aurat Foundation, organised an event to commemorate International Women's Day by providing a platform where inspiring, successful women shared their stories with others.

The theme for the event was "Making it happen: inspirational stories of Pakistani women turning the tide". Speakers included Fiza Farhan (2015 Forbes '30 under 30' social entrepreneurs list); Muniba Mazari (Artist, Activist, Motivational speaker), Justice (retd) Nasira Iqbal, Nasreen Zehra (Director, Aurat Foundation) and Mira Phailbus (Educator). It was moderated by Nadia Jamil. Each speaker told their personal story that was followed by a Q&A session with the audience.

"There is a business case for gender balance but we believe that gender balance needs to envelop all segments of the society. Women are an integral part of the society and should be an essential part of the workforce, whether it's formal or informal economy," said Waqar Ahmad – Head of Corporate Affairs for Nestlé Pakistan.

Nadia Jamil called the panelists "powerhouses" in themselves who had made the lives of other women better. She said she had been influenced by each of the panelists.

Fiza Farhan said she had not wanted to be defined as somebody's daughter or wife and ad wanted to carve out an identity for herself. "Your gender becomes a strength" when women decide to go out and work. "We have one life so live the life that you want to live. Create opportunities for yourself and other women. Believe in yourself and in your passion," she said.

Artist Muniba Mazari said she looked at her accident as an "opportunity". She said she had "seen the worst but that brought out the best in me... I wanted a hero in my life but I couldn't find one. So I decided to become one." She said to her Pakistan was the perfect place for women to make their mark.

Mira Phailbus said when she was made principal, fathers used to come and tell her to offer "easy subjects" so that they could pass and then get married. She told them if they just wanted a college stamp they should take their daughters elsewhere because her vision was to help the girls "become independent and decision makers".

Nasreen Zehra went back to work after a break of 15 years and started her career at Aurat Foundation in Quetta. The job, she said, had made her stronger and empowered her. When her husband passed away, her work was what gave her strength, she said adding that she was proud that she had empowered her daughters too.

Justice (retd) Nasira Iqbal described herself as being part of the generation "that broke the barriers." Hers, she said, was the time of "conformism and today is the time for change." It was only when her children were in high school that she decided to pursue her own interest. She passed her law exams but started her practice only when her husband retired as a judge. She said she had to face a lot of sexism and attributed her success to good luck as well as hard

work. “Only by leading the life you live can you create opportunities for other women,” she advised.

Globally, Nestlé is a signatory to UN’s Women Empowerment Principles and UN’s Every Woman, Every Child initiative. Nestlé Pakistan is helping women realize their potential through initiatives such as Dairy Hub (training rural women), Healthy Women (imparting nutrition education to young women) and Kero Aitemaad (encouraging and helping career aspiring young women to break barriers). The three projects are part of Nestlé’s philosophy of Creating Shared Value.

About Nestlé Pakistan

Nestlé Pakistan is the leading Nutrition, Health and Wellness company in Pakistan; meeting and exceeding all the international standards in manufacturing of their products. Nestlé Pakistan believes in creating shared value for the communities in which it operates with the focus being on Nutrition, Water and Rural Development. Nestlé Pakistan works with more than 190,000 farmers for collecting milk and engages in a number of rural development programs for community development.

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