

## Fostering Entrepreneurship Amongst People with Disabilities in Pakistan

Pakistan



Jeremy Higgs

**Organization type:**

nonprofit/ngo/citizen sector

**Budget:**

< \$1,000

Website:

<http://www.nowpdp.org>



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- [Disability](#)
- [Disability rights](#)
- [Employment](#)
- [Income generation](#)
- [Poverty alleviation](#)
- [Social enterprise](#)

### Project Summary

#### Elevator Pitch

**Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.**

We seek to create opportunities for people with disabilities to earn an income with dignity and equal opportunities as their peers.

NOWPDP will increase the access of people with disabilities to opportunities for employment. This will be done through:

- establish partnerships to provide relevant vocational and business training for people with disabilities
- incubate small businesses founded by people with disabilities

In turn, they will create employment opportunities for people with and without disabilities.

#### About Project

**Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?**

People with disabilities make up an estimated 15% of the world's population (according the WHO report published on 9th June 2011) - a number expected to increase as the population ages. In Pakistan, where 63% of the population is under 25 (UNDP), the presence of high unemployment and high levels of disability creates a situation where people with disabilities lack access to education, employment, and hence enter a downwards spiral into poverty. Through NOWPDP's job placement programme, we interact with vocational training centres and special education schools across Karachi to place their graduates in jobs. Graduates, based on their educational qualifications, have different expectations for their job placements, yet aspire to work in jobs giving them dignity and an income for their family. Building on these links, NOWPDP will partner with schools and training institutes to provide an additional level of targeted training to their graduates, preparing them for running a business.

**Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!**

Two factors are important to consider: - Despite the existence of a 2% quota, the employment of people with disabilities in Pakistan is difficult. A lack of skills, education and available jobs has resulted in the vast majority of people with disabilities remaining unemployed. NOWPDP has been running its job placement programme since January 2009, through which over 150 people with disabilities have been placed in jobs. - In Pakistan, many special education schools and non-profit organisations run vocational training programmes aimed at providing skills to people with disabilities. Typically, students do not proceed on to employment or businesses, due to the structure of the training programmes, and a lack of employers looking for such skills. Building on this, NOWPDP is innovating by developing not only marketable skills amongst students enrolling in the training institute, but working with students to incubate small businesses. The result will be skilled people with disabilities who are running businesses and employing other people with disabilities and able-bodied candidates.

### Impact: How does it Work

**Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.**

NOWPDP will implement the following activities to achieve the aim: - Engage families of people with disabilities through support groups, in order to ensure their support. - Establish an entrepreneurship and vocational training programme for people with disabilities - Provide seed capital to establish small businesses - Create networks and support to selected graduates of the vocational training programme The result of these activities would be a group of skilled people with disabilities running small businesses that serve a market need. This would result in: - Greater appreciation by

families of the ability of a person with a disability to contribute to their family earnings - Greater awareness of the abilities of people with disabilities, through interaction in a business environment - Businesses serving market need - Financial independence for people with disabilities - Increased employment of people with disabilities in these businesses

#### About You

**Organization:**

Network of Organizations Working for People with Disabilities, Pakistan (NOWPDP)

#### About You

**First Name**

Jeremy

**Last Name**

Higgs

**Twitter**

<http://twitter.com/jeremyhiggs>

**Facebook Profile**

<http://www.facebook.com/jeremy.higgs>

#### About Your Organization

**Organization Name**

Network of Organizations Working for People with Disabilities, Pakistan (NOWPDP)

**Organization Country**

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**Country where this project is creating social impact**

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**How long has your organization been operating?**

1 5 years

**Is the project that you are entering related to this organization?**

Yes

The information you provide here will be used to fill in any parts of your profile that have been left blank, such as interests, organization information, and website. No contact information will be made public. Please uncheck here if you do not want this to happen..

#### Innovation

**What stage is your project in?**

Idea phase

**Share the story of the founder and what inspired the founder to start this project**

This project emerged over time as a result of our interactions with schools, employers and people with disabilities - we had noticed the difficulty in providing employment opportunities for people with disabilities with lesser education or vocational training, and knew there was some way to empower them to provide for their own livelihoods.

In placing over 150 people with disabilities into different organisations and struggling to find organisations willing to hire, we have discovered that while we can find employment opportunities for this community, a method that can scale much further is the creation of employment opportunities through small business.

An initial idea has grown into a series of planning sessions and market research activities involving the full NOWPDP team (8 staff) and volunteers, drawing on their diverse experience across the country.

#### Social Impact

**Please describe how your project has been successful and how that success is measured**

NOWPDP utilised the Logical Framework Approach to project planning, and has defined the following measures of success at different levels

Goal: PWDs able to make financial contribution to families

- PWDs report an increase in appreciation as a contributor to family finances
- Families have an increased appreciation of the PWDs' ability to contribute financially
- Change in % of family income contributed by PWD

Purpose: PWDs are able to generate income through self-employment

- PWDs have measurable increase in earned income 6 months after the completion of training
- Number of businesses profitable after the completion of training
- % of businesses profitable after the completion of training

Results:

Families actively support PWDs in pursuing business and employment opportunities

- Number of trainees that drop out of the programme
- % of trainees that drop out of the programme

PWDs have the skills to operate a business

- % of trainees meeting criteria for capital
- Average of results in business skills courses

PWDs have the vocational skills to address market needs

- Number of units produced per trainee
- Quality level of units produced per trainee
- % of units produced sold
- Number of units produced sold

**How many people have been impacted by your project?**

**How many people could be impacted by your project in the next three years?**

101- 1,000

**How will your project evolve over the next three years?**

After the initial setup, NOWPDP plans the following in the coming three years:

- Initially: training of batches of 20 every 6 months, with 5 businesses being established from each group.
- Expansion of the programme to accommodate more trainees
- Expansion into more diverse vocations/trades, based on the market need

Sustainability

**What barriers might hinder the success of your project and how do you plan to overcome them?**

Lack of family support for sons/daughters participating in the programme. Overcome through:

- family support groups providing updates to the community on the progress of the participants
- stipend to the participants while in the training programme, to ease the financial burden on families

Quality of produce from participants does not meet market expectations. Overcome through:

- Sourcing graduates from established institutions, already familiar with vocations/trades, and used to working.
- Partner with existing vocational training institutes to provide robust and effective curricula to participants, ensuring the quality of teaching and produce

Failure of incubated businesses. Overcome through:

- Establishing networks and stakeholders along the value chain, sensitised to disability and working with the incubated businesses
- Continued monitoring and support in the initial stages of the business formation
- Rigorous training of participants in business and vocational skills

**Tell us about your partnerships**

As a network, partnerships are crucial to the success of any project of NOWPDP. Partnerships will be established with the following stakeholders:

- Communities/Families of people with disabilities: through support groups, the families of people with disabilities will be engaged for their support of the project
- Value chain stakeholders: material suppliers, distributors and retailers will be engaged to provide a network of supportive stakeholders that aid in the success of the incubated businesses
- Special education schools/vocational training institutes: institutes (both government- and privately-owned) will be engaged to provide a pathway for their graduates towards employment and independence through the training and entrepreneurship programme

**Explain your selections**

No funding currently.

**How do you plan to strengthen your project in the next three years?**

From the initial phase, the project will secure the following sources of funding to allow for organic growth and expansion, gradually increasing its impact:

- Sale of produce from the vocational training sessions
- Profit-sharing with incubated businesses

Challenges

**Which barriers to employment does your innovation address?**

**Please select up to three in order of relevancy to your project.**

**PRIMARY**

Underemployment

**SECONDARY**

Lack of skills/training

**TERTIARY**

Lack of visibility and investment

**Please describe how your innovation specifically tackles the barriers listed above.**

This project addresses the lack of employment opportunities and relevant skills amongst people with disabilities in the following manner:

- gain skills relevant to the market
- gain business training, a support network and capital to establish their own businesses

The result of this will be increased skills and employment of people with disabilities. Indirectly, these incubated businesses will hire other people (with and without disabilities), creating more job opportunities.

**Are you trying to scale your organization or initiative?**

**If yes, please check up to three potential pathways in order of relevancy to you.**

**PRIMARY**

Enhanced existing impact through addition of complementary services

**SECONDARY**

Influenced other organizations and institutions through the spread of best practices

**TERTIARY**

**Please describe which of your growth activities are current or planned for the immediate future.**

The initial pilot will complement existing services provided by NOWPDP to the disability community. Beyond this, the project will be scaled across the country through partnerships and the spread of BCPs.

**Do you collaborate with any of the following: (Check all that apply)**

Government, NGOs/Nonprofits.

**If yes, how have these collaborations helped your innovation to succeed?**

Partnerships are a key to the success of this project, by avoiding the replication of efforts. Institutes run by both non-profits and the government will be leveraged for their graduates, who will enter the training and incubation programme. Without the basic skills and education provided by these institutes, the project would not be able to achieve its aims.

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