



EMPOWERING YOUTH ON E-COMMERCE



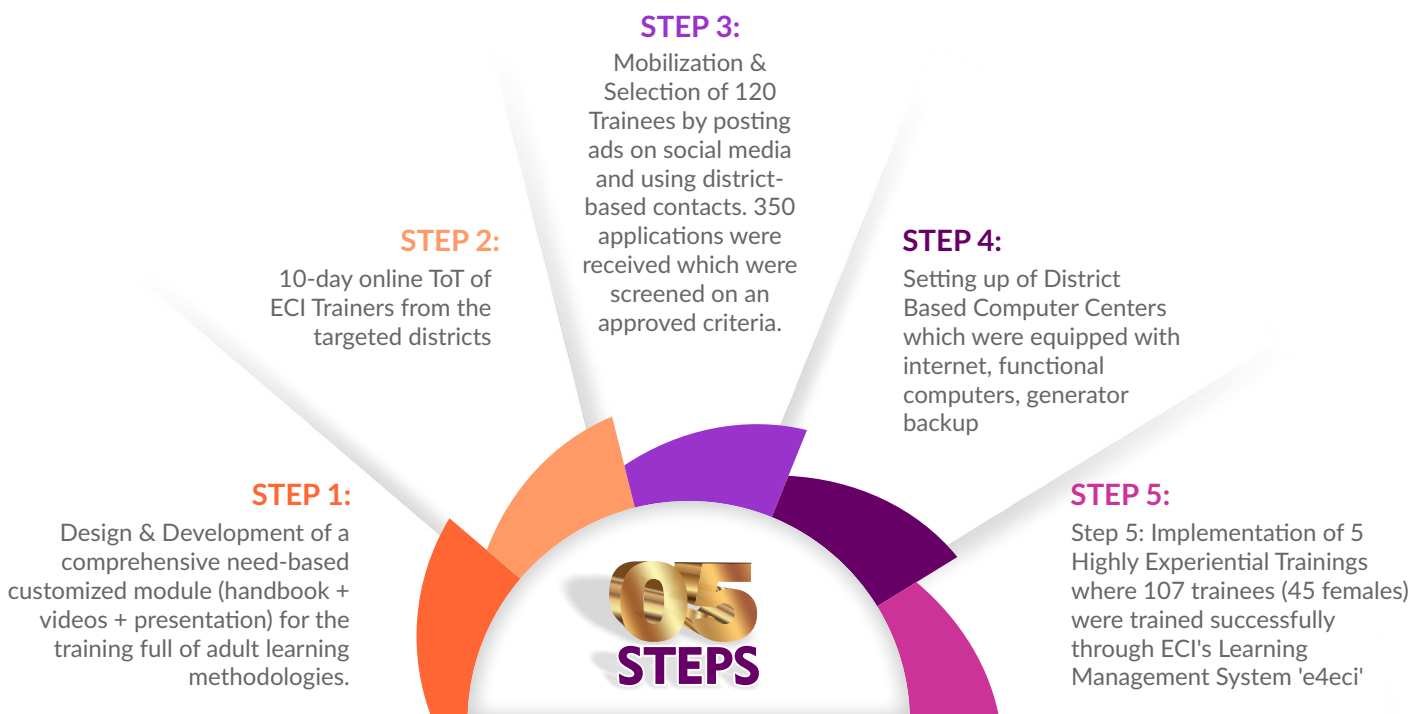
E-commerce (electronic commerce) is the activity of electronically buying or selling products on online services or over the Internet. This is one of the most rapidly emerging and thriving forms of business, not only in Pakistan but around the world. This form of business has expanded instantly over the past years and has almost taken over all the industries including the service industry across the globe. E-commerce websites have enabled businesses to grow quicker, more suitable, and inexpensively.

Similar to other developed and developing countries, Pakistan has evolved and emerged as one of the biggest users of e-commerce in a short span of time. E-commerce has also benefitted people living in rural and far-flung areas of the country to sell their skills anywhere in the country and outside of its boundaries and earn a handsome income. To further maximize the benefits of e-commerce, the need to build the capacities of its users, especially the ones having saleable skills and potential has gained importance over time. Pakistan is one of the countries where the population of youth is large and unemployment is high.

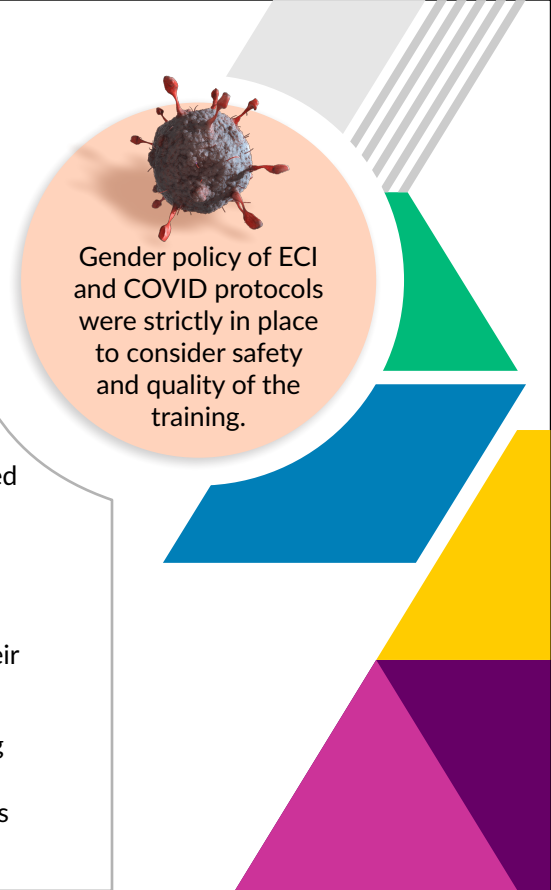
To meet the gap, the larger BSDGs (Balochistan Sustainable Development Goals) initiative by UNDP in Balochistan has been mandated to capacitate the delivery system of the government departments to provide better and efficient service to the population of the province and also stress on capacitating the youth in technical and vocational skills. Apart from workshops-based technical trainings in different trades, the project focused on soft skills like entrepreneurship and getting access to financial resources under the "Kamyab Jawan" Programme of Pakistan. UNDP, in this context, hired the services of ECI to build the capacities of youth in three districts of Balochistan: Khuzdar, Lasbela and Quetta. ECI holds previous experience of working with youth in many culturally hard-to-reach areas of Balochistan and KP. The objectives of the assignment were as follows:

- 1 To conceptualize and design a training course on E-Commerce concepts and skills for youth.
- 2 To conduct an interactive 10-days training course based on online and classroom methodologies.
- 3 To assist youth in the identification of viable electronic-based business ideas.

To achieve these objectives, ECI carried out 5 on-site rollout trainings on an in-house designed module on e-commerce which was developed as per local realities, using its comprehensive and expert training-conduct approach. Following steps were undertaken for this purpose:



During the training, participants were taken through a thorough process of how the e-commerce actual business model works which included the identification and introduction to purchase of suitable material and/or product to its marketing and selling to the final consumers- all these steps were practically taught and instructed to the trainees.



Gender policy of ECI and COVID protocols were strictly in place to consider safety and quality of the training.



AS A TRAINING SUCCESS

- **06** existing businesses of trainees recorded increase in sales and online customer reach using different social media platforms
- **107** business plans were made
- **05** Facebook pages by participants for their business expansions were created,
- **09** online social media platforms including WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Daraz, etc. were utilized by the training participants for their business upscaling.



- Participants shifted their focus on constructive use of social media platforms such as: WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Daraz, etc.
- Participants, especially females, started working from home with their available resources
- Overall intervention especially the tangible outcomes in shape of increase in trainees' business income and customers-base supported and encouraged families of the trainees.

OUTCOMES

The participants expressed their views as:

"I am entering my medical entry test and education is expensive. There is poverty in Balochistan with no employment opportunities. In such conditions getting an opportunity to be a part of this course is a blessing. However, ten days are not enough to be capable enough to start our own business. Ongoing support and mentoring are a must."

Muhammad Arif
Male Trainee

The project was much appreciated by UNDP:

"Let me thank you and the entire team of ECI for conducting the E-Commerce Training for the youth of Balochistan. It was indeed commendable to see ECI completing the training within the scheduled time and budget and ensuring the women's participation. I appreciate the cooperation that everyone displayed under the challenging circumstances we came across during the project to make the workflow simple and easy. I am further glad to share that the targets for the project were met as per our expectations and do hope that ECI will do follow up with the trainees for supervision and mentoring".

Muhammad Riaz
Project Management Specialist
Crisis Prevention & Recovery Unit UNDP Pakistan

