

Editorial

## **Entrepreneurial women**

Social entrepreneurship has been on the rise across the world for some years. In Pakistan, it is being driven forward by women, according to a global poll organized by a British wire service, on the best countries for social entrepreneurs. Pakistan has moved forward 18 places to number 14 among the world's 45 biggest economies in terms of social entrepreneurship, making a big leap forward since 2016. Australia and the Netherlands have also made big improvements. The issues that Pakistani women are thinking up are significant to the social whole. These issues include turning organic waste into fertilizer, sharing farm equipment and a host of other issues.

This shows how significant women can be in improving entrepreneurship and the state of the economy. Pakistan badly needs more people to set up businesses and initiate economic growth. The increased access to the internet and computers for women is also driving the trend, with the versatility of online work helping women make huge gains. More and more online start-ups have cropped up in the country. This suggests that much more could be achieved if the rate of literacy for women could be raised beyond the 50 percent mark where it currently stands. Quite obviously, women have commitment, drive and good ideas. Many are motivated by the desire to help the family or improve the future of their children. This of course has been seen in the micro-credit finance sphere as well and now seems to be moving into other areas.

Entrepreneurship also helps empower women and give them a bigger role in decision making within their own homes and beyond it. This is important, since there is plenty of evidence that only through economic empowerment can women gain the improvement in status that they badly need to gain their right to equal citizenship in Pakistan. The government needs to encourage the trend by offering incentives to more women to begin start-ups of various kinds. There is no reason why their work should be limited mainly to the social sector. Women in Pakistan have led the way in education, health, engineering and science. These can all become the basis for business ventures even if the women are not actively working in their areas of specialty. The problem of women dropping out of medicine and other fields after years of study has been widely discussed in the country. Online entrepreneurship and flexible business could help resolve this problem.