

# Celebrating International Women's Day: Education Paves Way for Young Pakistani Women in Non-Traditional Careers

*Breaking gender stereotypes through education and encouragement in underprivileged communities*

HOUSTON, TX, USA, March 8, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Girls are being empowered to pursue non-traditional careers once they have graduated from schools run by [The Citizens Foundation \(TCF\)](#), Pakistan's largest education nonprofit that operates more than 1,800 schools including a few hundred government schools.



Showing the way...Highway Patrol Officer Iram Jabeen

Through education, girls are overcoming objections from neighbors and sometimes their own families to find enriching jobs in male-dominated professions such as the police force, the military, and tax collection services. On [International Women's Day](#), TCF is celebrating the success of alumna who have defied the odds by breaking gender stereotypes and becoming role models for their communities.

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To the parents that aren't sending their girls to study or work, I want to say trust your daughters. If you trust your daughters, they will go far in life”

*Iram Jabeen, Highway Patrol Officer and former TCF student*

Iram Jabeen, who comes from the village of Kalabagh in Punjab and graduated from TCF's Khawaja A. Rehman Campus in Mianwali, faced a stream of objections – including her father's – when she applied to become a patrol officer with the National Highways and Motorway Police. They would tell her it's not a respectable job for girls or criticize her mother for sending her daughter to school and out to work. “Why should girls be educated when they eventually have to get married?” they would ask.

But Iram's mother was determined that her daughter would get the education and the

opportunities that she had missed herself.

The day the determined young woman passed her police training with flying colors and was appointed a junior patrol officer was the first time her father ever said he was proud of her.

Iram couldn't write and didn't even know how to hold a pencil when she started at her TCF school. As the first female police officer in her village, she has now broken social barriers in her community. "The people in Kalabagh who considered working in the police force a taboo for girls, now when they see me, they express their wish to send their own daughters to school, educate them and encourage them to work. Their mindset has changed a lot," she said.

"TCF empowers you to believe that you can achieve anything you dream of," she continued. "To the parents that aren't sending their girls to study or to work, I want to say: trust your daughters. If you trust your daughters, they will go far in life."

Samina Noreen's father, a daily wage worker from Moza Kot Sharif, a small village in the Chiniot district of Punjab, was regularly hectorated by neighbors for insisting that his four daughters continued their education at a TCF school.

But after matriculation, Samina passed her intermediate (11th-12th grade) exams and became her village's first-ever female police constable after her brother encouraged her to apply.

"Women are more comfortable sharing their grievances with women," she says. "I lodge their complaints and take appropriate action after consulting with my seniors. This field has never had many women, but our society has slowly begun to accept the change. Girls are breaking the



Iram's mother was determined her daughter would get the education she missed



Samina Noreen became the first police constable in her village

mold.”

Maria Javed, from Minhala, is another TCF alumna who was determined to break new ground for women in a male-dominated profession. She was recently promoted to Assistant Commissioner after first being appointed as an Excise and Taxation Inspector in 2019.

These are just a few success stories of young women who have graduated through TCF's 1,833 schools in Pakistan's poorest urban slums and rural districts to thrive in unconventional jobs for women in Pakistan. More than 280,000 girls and boys are currently enrolled in TCF schools with an all-female teaching faculty and a firm policy of student gender equality.

Since 1995, TCF has championed the rights of girls in Pakistan for equal opportunity in education with the strong belief that girls have the potential to bring about societal change. The need is to effectively support girls during the growth years, giving them the opportunity to confidently grow into emerging roles as tomorrow's workers, mothers, entrepreneurs, mentors, thinkers, policymakers, legislators, political leaders, and equal partners in households. Girls from the poorest backgrounds are going on to university, becoming teachers, engineers, physicians, lawyers, – and joining the civil service, police force, and defense services as officers.

Quality education programs leading to professional careers - especially for girls - have helped families make the right choice and also preclude early marriages. Furthermore, by challenging the stereotypes often associated with poor education in the region, TCF works to advance the educational aspirations of young girls and boys and equip them with skills to join the modern workforce.

TCF is the largest private employer of women in Pakistan. In addition to the 13,000 teachers and principals, many more women work in TCF departments to do with strategic planning, academics, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation of teachers, curriculum development, and marketing.

To give families a sense of ownership, TCF schools are not free or 'charity' schools, but the tuition and [operating costs are heavily subsidized by donors](#) and foundation grants. The tuition fee is based on a liberal sliding scale and revenues from the fees collected are less than 8% of the cost of delivering quality education, the hallmark of TCF.

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