



# CSR Newsletter 2025

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# President & CEO's Message



As we reflect on the past year, it becomes increasingly evident that Pakistan stands at a pivotal juncture, confronting multifaceted challenges. With an economic growth rate hovering around 2%, persistent high inflation as of the last few years, and approximately a third of our population living below the poverty line, our nation faces both daunting obstacles and extraordinary opportunities. Amid these realities, the importance of fostering sustainable development, and of shared responsibility among public and private sectors to achieve common objectives cannot be overstated.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) serve as a global blueprint for progress, urging nations and organizations to tackle issues such as poverty alleviation, quality education, health, environmental conservation, and gender equality. At The Bank of Punjab (BOP), we recognize our critical role in fostering sustainable development. As a financial institution, we are uniquely positioned to leverage our resources, expertise, and networks to address societal challenges while creating long-term value for our stakeholders.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is at the heart of our strategy. We view CSR not as an obligation but as a commitment to empower communities, protect the environment, and promote equity and inclusion. In 2023 - 24, BOP launched several transformative programs. From providing scholarships to underprivileged students to supporting healthcare initiatives in underserved areas, we have touched the lives of thousands. We also invested in programs to promote environmental sustainability and arts and culture, recognizing their importance in fostering social cohesion and identity. As we look to the future, BOP is dedicated to increasing investments in initiatives with long-term impact.

In 2025 and beyond, we aim to expand our disability inclusion programs, strengthen partnerships with local and global organizations, and scale existing initiatives that align with SDGs. We aim to strengthen our efforts by increasing investments in initiatives with perpetual impact. We will continue to support inclusive education, provide critical health services, and champion sustainability through reforestation drives and clean energy projects. Our focus will remain on fostering financial inclusion & gender parity, empowering individuals with disabilities, and nurturing a culture of sports, arts, and heritage.

We firmly believe that true progress is achieved when collaboration and collective action unite us. We invite you—our valued partners, employees, and communities—to join us in this journey. Together, we can achieve a more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous Pakistan.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.

**Warm regards,**

**Zafar Masud  
President & CEO  
The Bank of Punjab**

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# 2024 Highlights

## Education

### Sponsoring IBA Karachi Students under National Talent Hunt Program (NTHP)

BOP sponsored 05 deserving students of IBA Karachi under National Talent Hunt Program. BOP provided scholarships to five full time undergraduate students from the batch of 2020-21 belonging from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Rural Sindh, Baluchistan and Southern Punjab under BOP-IBA National Talent Hunt Program (NTHP) for entire four (04) years of studies.

### Sponsoring NUST Students under National Talent Hunt Program (NTHP)

BOP signed an MOU with National University of Science & Technology (NUST) Islamabad under BOP-NUST National Talent Hunt Program (NTHP). The purpose of this collaboration was to provide education to those communities and individuals who have been admitted to NUST on merit and are not in position to afford the applicable NUST tuition fee, hostel fee and other expenses. BOP provided scholarships to five full time undergraduate students from the batch of 2020-21 under BOP-NUST National Talent Hunt Program (NTHP) for entire four (04) years of studies.

### Sponsoring Pakistan Spelling Bee Competition 2024

The Bank of Punjab collaborated with Storykit (Private) Limited by sponsoring Pakistan Spelling Bee Competition 2024. Spelling Bee Competitions are known worldwide to develop the love of language in children and improve their academic performance. Pakistan Spelling Bee is the country's biggest education event which entails the following main features:

- **Inclusivity as its central theme, showcasing children's educational journey, and challenges and triumphs as individuals and teams.**
- **An educational event where students from public and private schools share a common platform.**

Sponsoring the event provided opportunity to connect BOP brand with educational activities and increased brand awareness for the teen and early adolescent demographic.

## Environment

### Supporting WWF-Pakistan's Tree Plantation Campaigns

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is one of the world's largest and most recognized conservation organization. It has a mission to stop degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature. BOP collaborated with WWF Pakistan and arranged 1000 tree plantation at Divisional Public School, Township, Lahore.

### Sponsoring The Citizen Foundation (TCF) for the event Cycle for Change

The Citizen Foundation (TCF) is a professionally managed, non-profit organization. It is one of Pakistan's leading organization in the field of education for the less privileged. BOP collaborated with the Citizen Foundation (TCF) in Cycle for Change event by sponsoring one classroom giving a gift of education and hope to 33 students of garde-1 studying at Al-Sari Foundation Primary School Campus for one year.

### Bicycles to foster ecofriendly activities

The Bank of Punjab signed two separate MOUs with Beacon House National University (BNU) and Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) to foster ecofriendly activities. BOP provided bicycles and docking stands to both these prestigious seats of learning in the country for utilization by the students for intra-campus commuting, promoting ecofriendly activities.

## Diversity & Inclusion

### Sponsoring 1st T20 Chief Minister Open Deaf Cricket Championship 2024

To promote healthy sports activities amongst DAPs, BOP in collaboration with Deaf Cricket Academy in arranging 1st T20 Chief Minister Open Deaf Championship 2024. This event brought together 8 district deaf cricket teams who showcased their exceptional skills and talent.

### Sponsoring Lahore Garrison Institute for Special Education (LGISE)

Lahore Garrison Institute for Special Education (LGISE) is a non-profit welfare organization. The institute provides quality education & rehabilitation facilities to special children. BOP collaborated with Lahore Garrison Institute for Special Education (LGISE), a specialized educational institution for DAPs to provide necessary support for provision of requisite aids which are essentially required for the grooming and development of special children.

## Health

### Supporting Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospitals Vision

Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital is an institution dedicated to the prevention and control of blindness, providing standard and sustainable eye care services accessible to all. BOP collaborated with state of the art Al-Shifa Eye Trust Hospital for provision of health related support to needy segment.

## Public Service

### Sponsoring Awareness Activities regarding International Anti-Corruption Day 2024

BOP collaborated with National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in arranging awareness campaign on International Anti-Corruption day.

### Arranging BOP Branded Umbrellas

As a result of climate change, our country is increasingly experiencing severe heat waves, particularly during the summer season. As a part of Corporate Social Responsibility and to provide relief during the harsh weather BOP arranged distribution of Umbrellas amongst customers, employees and the general public.

# Agriculture Credit Division (ACD)

## BOP Green - Olive Plantation Drive by BOP ACD Rawalpindi

The Agriculture Credit Division of The Bank of Punjab, Rawalpindi, successfully launched an olive tree plantation campaign in the Hazara Division, KPK, and Rawalpindi, Punjab. As part of this initiative, 200 olive saplings were planted with the cooperation of local farmers.



<b>Plant Source:</b>	National Tea and High Value Crops Research Institute, Shinkhari, Mansehra
<b>Total Number of Plants:</b>	200
<b>Varieties:</b>	Bari Zaitoon – II, Arbequina, Gemlik, Arbosana, Ottobratica
<b>Site of Plantation:</b>	Hazara Division and Rawalpindi



The aim of this campaign was to fulfill the Bank’s corporate social responsibility, raise awareness among farmers about the commercial potential of olive cultivation, and offer support to both farmers and the local community in generating sustainable income through olive farming. It was hoped that this initiative would serve as a stepping stone toward building a thriving olive-growing community in the underserved regions of Hazara.

The Hazara and Potohar regions were considered highly suitable for olive cultivation due to their fertile land. In particular, the abundance of *Olea ferruginea* (wild olive) in the Hazara Division demonstrated the region’s potential for supporting olive growth.



# Government Initiative Division (GID)



## 1. Celebration of International Women's Day

On March 8th, in celebration of International Women's Day, the Government Initiative Division (GID) of the Bank of Punjab organized a special event at its office on the 7th Floor of Big City Plaza, Lahore. The event underscored the Bank's commitment to recognizing and celebrating the significant contributions of women in the workplace, in line with the global theme of International Women's Day.

The gathering included female staff members from various departments, including the Government Initiative Division, Complaint Management Unit, and Compliance and Control Unit, who were specially invited to participate in the celebration.

The event began with a symbolic cake-cutting ceremony, followed by heartfelt remarks from female employees, who shared their experiences, celebrated progress toward gender equality, and emphasized the continued need for empowering women in the financial sector.

## 2. Awareness session conducted with Deaf Welfare Awareness Foundation (DWAF)

In alignment with The Bank of Punjab's CSR vision and its commitment to promoting equality in banking, GID organized an awareness session on Government Subsidized Schemes in partnership with the Deaf Welfare Awareness Foundation (DWAF). The session aimed at empowering differently-abled individuals within the financial sector.

Mrs. Farhat Aslam, Executive Director of DWAF, attended the event along with skilled differently-abled participants, who expressed their appreciation to the BOP team for facilitating this informative session. Their gratitude was communicated through inclusive means, with Mrs. Farhat Aslam serving as the translator.



### 3. MoU Signing between BOP & Circle Women Association to empower women in the financial sector

The Bank of Punjab's Government Initiative Division has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Circle Women Association to empower thousands of women nationwide by providing financing solutions for launching and expanding their businesses.

In line with the Bank's commitment to promoting financial inclusion, gender equality, and CSR, the Government Initiative Division continues to support impactful.



### 4. BOP GID conducts awareness session at LUMS incubation center

The awareness session held at the LUMS Incubation Center showcased The Bank of Punjab's commitment to promoting financial inclusion. By educating students on Government Subsidized Schemes, the Bank empowered them to utilize these initiatives and contribute to the country's economic growth. The success of the session reinforced the Bank's dedication to making a positive social impact.

LUMS students actively participated in a comprehensive Q&A session, where both the Head of GID and the Head of RFD addressed their questions, providing in-depth explanations on the features and eligibility criteria of the schemes.

The session effectively achieved its goal of educating participants on Government Subsidized Schemes, leading to actionable outcomes. Its success was driven by the expertise of the speakers, the interactive format, and the high level of student engagement.



### 5. MOU Signing between BOP & Wecamp to empower Women in Financial sector. February, 2024

GID entered into a strategic partnership with Wecamp (Women Entrepreneur Camp) through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This partnership aimed to empower thousands of Wecamp's women members across the country by providing them with access to subsidized financing for business startups and the expansion of existing businesses.

The MoU was signed by Head GID at the Bank of Punjab, and Mrs. Laiba Ahmad, CEO of Wecamp.

This collaboration sought to establish a comprehensive business loan support program, enabling women entrepreneurs to unlock their full potential and contribute significantly to the nation's economic development.



This initiative showcased The Bank of Punjab's dedication to promoting financial inclusion and ensuring equal access to financial services for all, regardless of abilities.

# Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Division



## Tree Plantation Drive at BACHS, Bedian Road, Lahore

Tree plantation drive was conducted by ESG Division in collaboration with Learning and Development Centre (L&DC) at Banker Avenue Cooperative Housing Society, Lahore aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and combating climate change. During this initiative numerous saplings were planted to enhance green cover and improve air quality.



## Turning Waste into Wealth: Composting for A Greener Future

The Bank of Punjab, through its ESG Division, proudly introduces composting pits in collaboration with MM Traders (Waste Management Company) for our L&DC's Organic waste under the WWF-Green Office Certification Program. This initiative reflects our commitment to sustainable waste management by turning organic waste into nutrient-rich compost. As part of our ESG efforts, we aim to minimize waste and promote environmental stewardship within our operations.

## Trainings conducted on Green Banking, ESG, Green Financing, Own Impact Reduction and ESRM Framework

ESG Division conducted trainings on Green Banking, ESG, Green Financing, Own Impact Reduction and Environmental and Social Risk Management (ESRM) Framework for BOP staff, new induction staff and MTO Batch. These sessions aimed to enhance capacity for incorporating environmental and social considerations in banking operations and managing related risks effectively. These trainings reflect the ESG Division's dedication to promoting responsible and sustainable practices within the bank. By December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, a total of 12,002 staff members have been trained on different aspects of Green Banking and ESG.



# CSR

# Activities

## Digital Banking Group (DBG)

### 1. Sadqah Jariyah Contribution

BOP Sadqah Jariyah is a multi-faceted proposition through which our customers can donate their zakat/sadqah to causes and charitable organization of their choice using various BOP channels. BOP matches the donation with an equal amount up to Rs. 1 Million per month.



#### 1.1 Sadqah Jariyah Donation Matching

BOP made payments in August 2024 to our Sadqah Jariyah partners, The Citizen Foundation, The Indus Hospital & Pink Ribbon Pakistan.

Donation proceeds go towards sponsoring child education & female literacy programs (The Citizen Foundation), help Pakistan's first dedicated breast cancer hospital (Pink Ribbon) and sponsoring treatment of deserving patients (The Indus Hospital).

#### 1.2 Sadqah Jariyah Partners Onboarding

BOP onboarded two new partners in August 2024 under its Sadqah Jariyah initiative:

- Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute and Research Center (PKLI)
- Moawin Foundation

## 2. Partnership for Financial Inclusion & Empowerment of Women

BOP made partnerships with Circle Women Association in May 2024 & CARE International in July 2024 to empower thousands of women across the country by providing them with right

tools and opportunities for their inclusion in financial sectors and economic growth. These partnerships promote digital inclusion for women and enable an ecosystem for women

startups and women in Tech. BOP, in line with its vision to promote financial inclusion and Banking on Equality, is supporting such key initiatives.



## 3. International Women's Day Celebration

BOP celebrated International Women's Day in March 2024 to spread the message of gender equality to create a better society free of gender bias. The day celebrates women and addresses issues such as women's equal

rights, violence and abuse against women and reproductive rights. The Bank of Punjab has a separate and exclusive value proposition for women under the name "BOP Naaz". On the International Women's Day celebration,

BOP under its Naaz proposition has taken an initiative to distribute three Electric Scooters among Naaz customers and staff.



## 4. Women's Entrepreneurship Day Celebration

### 4.1 BOP DHA Branch, Lahore

Celebrating Women Entrepreneurship Day, The Bank of Punjab hosted an awareness and interactive session in November 2024, gathering inspiring women entrepreneurs

to familiarize them with the Bank's women-focused products and introduce an SME-oriented initiative. Mr. Asif Riaz, Group Chief of Consumer Banking at BOP, addressed the female audience, emphasizing strategies to

empower women entrepreneurs to expand their business opportunities. The event was concluded with a cake cutting ceremony led by inspiring women entrepreneurs.



#### 4.2 Gujranwala Branch Celebration and Awareness Sessions in collaboration with SBP

In November 2024, The BOP Trust Plaza Branch in Gujranwala hosted an awareness session, in collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan, in which the invited women entrepreneurs gained insights into the Bank's programs created specifically to support women-led businesses.



#### 4.3 Naaz Stories (Customer's success stories)

Three accomplished women entrepreneurs, who are also BOP customers, shared their motivational stories through recorded testimonials, which were published on BOP's official social media in November 2024 to inspire other women entrepreneurs and demonstrate how BOP is empowering women in their incredible entrepreneurial journey.



Ms. Qurat Ul Ain Gillani, CEO – Gravity Seeds, Pvt. Ltd. (Lahore)



Dr. Sanila Sial, CEO – Salvia Skin (Islamabad)

## 5. Awareness Session on Banking for females

Three awareness sessions on banking were conducted for women in general public and female students on November 2024.

Banking Session for IBA Karachi and Kinnaird College Lahore

The Banking on Equality session at IBA Karachi

and Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore was conducted in collaboration with State Bank of Pakistan. The women-centric product line, BOP Naaz and SME financing solutions were presented to an audience of female students, who actively engaged the presenters throughout the session. Prizes were awarded

to participants for demonstrating knowledge of the Banking on Equality pillars and BOP's initiatives. The event effectively communicated the State Bank of Pakistan's gender equality agenda while highlighting Bank of Punjab's achievements in meeting the prescribed targets.



IBA Karachi

Kinnaird College Lahore

## 6. Kissan Card

In a groundbreaking initiative, The Bank of Punjab (BOP), in collaboration with the Government of Punjab, has launched the Kissan Card, its flagship digital lending proposition for small sized farmers, with a strong focus on empowering women in agriculture. As the backbone of Pakistan's economy, agriculture contributes nearly 20% of the GDP; yet the important role of women in this vital sector often remains overlooked. Taking cognizance

of this gap, Kissan Card program offers women with seamless access to credit for essential farming inputs such as seeds, equipment, and other agricultural necessities.

Kissan Card is empowering small farmers in Punjab and up till now more than 525K cards have been approved. In terms of total impact, the 56.7% of the total borrowers are first time borrowers and 67.2% of the total borrowers possess a land holding of 5 acres and below.

From a financial inclusion perspective women constitute 3.7% of the total Kissan card portfolio and credit of 1.67 Billion PKR had been disbursed to female farmers only, which is directly benefitting women & their families. The Kissan Card not only supports women in adopting sustainable farming practices but also encourages their active participation in advancing rural economies and promoting agricultural development.



## 7. Livestock Card

Livestock is an emerging sector as its contribution to the national economy is growing continuously. This sector is an active employer of thousands of landless poor, subsistence and semi-subsistence small farmer families. Livestock plays an important role in the uplift of the rural economy. Its share in the national GDP is 14.36% and it contributes

62.68% to the Agriculture GDP. The livestock department has been providing animal health and extension services, research and training for livestock production and preservation of livestock genetic resources.

Livestock Card program has been successfully launched for small farmers of Punjab, with

the purpose of animal fattening leading to enhanced beef exports. Up till now more than 14K cards have been approved with total credit limit of PKR 2.70 Bln. The first-time borrowers constitute around 40% of the total portfolio. This includes small farmers possessing an average of up to 7 animals.



## 8. Branchless Banking Financial Services

DBG develops & manages an interoperable digital payments eco-system through public and private partnerships, to service both the banked and unbanked segments of economy. The feat includes digitization of existing products and services, as well as the addition

### Financial inclusion of 3.7 million women through branchless banking

Financial inclusion entails sustained provision of easy access to affordable financial products & services to meet transactional, payments, savings, credit and insurance related needs. Branchless banking under G2P and P2G Payments is extended primarily through retail business agent networks and electronic banking channels supported by a centralized Call Center Customer Service unit.

### Zewar-E-Taleem

Zewar-e-Taleem Program is GOPb's conditional cash transfer to girl students enrolled in public

of new & innovative features in line with the evolving industry standards, with the ultimate consolidation of these services into a BB-channel offering that seamlessly transitions from servicing tech savvy millennials to simple housewives in the midst of a rural setting. BOP

sector schools in 16 districts with low literacy rate.

The purpose of this initiative is to improve enrolment and retention in schools, besides addressing their nutritional requirements, essential for adolescent girls. Being disbursed through branchless banking system, 875K+ Wallet accounts have been opened for disbursement of Quarterly stipend of Rs. 3,000 to girls enrolled in public sector schools in Punjab, on 80% attendance to promote female education in Pakistan.

is actively engaged in developing synergies with the private sector to expand its portfolio outreach to a large number of financially excluded segments.



### Health & Nutrition (A World Bank Approved Project)

In collaboration with Punjab Human Capital Investment Project, 880K+ wallet accounts of underprivileged women utilizing health & nutrition services have been opened through BOP. This program aims to improve maternal and new-born health, among poor and vulnerable households. The first 1000 days are most important for the cognitive and physical development of a child. It enables a strong start



right from the inception till the child is 02 years old. Under this component, both demand and supply side interventions have been planned. On the demand side, poor pregnant and lactating women and mothers of children up to 02 years of age receive a conditional cash grant support upon meeting the criteria like antenatal and postnatal visits, safe deliveries at the nearest health facility, immunization, health and nutrition program awareness and counselling.

### Ba-Himmat Buzurg

BOP is providing support to GOPB's Social Welfare Department for wallet account opening and disbursements facility to elderly women of Pakistan. BOP has opened around 76K wallet accounts till now.

This Program aims to provide financial assistance to the elderly women by providing them Social Grant of 6,000Rs on quarterly basis; thereby leading to their financial empowerment.



## Benazir Income Support Program (BISP)

The Bank of Punjab (BOP) has also secured the tender for managing the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), gaining the honour of being the first public sector bank to do so. BOP aims to handle the disbursement of funds to 1.9 million wallets, all women beneficiaries

belonging to one of the lowest economic and social rungs (income strata falling below the poverty line). Quarterly in the year 2024, in 26 districts covering all four provinces nationwide, as the third largest player in the industry for BISP operations. This achievement

reflects the dedication and expertise of the BOP team, which is well-poised for ensuring a seamless implementation that upholds the high standards set by the BISP in 2024.



BISP Campsite Activities:

## Social Community Financial Inclusion Through Branchless Banking

### Humqadam Program

Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are often dependent on others for meeting their needs—economically as well as for physical support. The Bank of Punjab (BOP) and Punjab Social Protection Authority (PSPA) launched a cash transfer program for Persons with Disabilities

(PWD) under which the PWDs are paid a monthly cash assistance of Rs. 2,000 per month through branchless banking channel in order to improve their socio-economic well-being.

**15K+**  
Wallet Accounts Opened



### PWD Khidmat Cards

In collaboration with Punjab Social Protection Authority, BOP also launched specialized Khidmat Cards under PWD Program segment in order to facilitate person with disabilities,

ensuring a transparent process to provide smooth cash grant facility to its beneficiaries. Program Impact: Ensuring transparent access to cash grants for persons with disabilities.

### Masawaat Program

BOP is providing disbursement services to registered beneficiaries of Masawaat program with unconditional cash transfer for elderly Transgenders amounting to Rs. 3,000 per

month, and the benefit amount of Rs. 2,000 per month for disabled Transgenders, with the objective of their mainstreaming and financial empowerment.

### Sila e Fun Program

BOP has bridged the gap for social inclusion of the poor, elderly, and financially vulnerable artists of the Punjab by providing them services via opening wallet accounts for disbursements of Rs. 5,000 per month to artists above 50

years with monthly income below Rs. 15,000, having 25 years' experience in their respective fields. These include artists who have made a notable contribution in the realm of Film, T.V, Painting, promotion of Folklore, etc.

Wallet Accounts Opened  
Disbursed Around

### PESSI Mazdoor Card

Punjab Mazdoor Card - powered by BOP, in collaboration with Punjab Employees Social Security Institution (PESSI), has ushered in a new revolution in the country with a step forward towards financial inclusion of labor workforce - an exclusively designed ATM/Debit Card with direct disbursement of health and social financial benefits into the card which include sickness, maternity, injury, death grants, Disablement gratuity, pensions and much more offered by PESSI. BOP helped in digitizing labor wage payment to ensure minimum salary levels, and enhanced buying power through discounts on Mazdoor Cards through alliances.

### Brick Kiln Project

Government of Punjab initiated this project to eradicate the menace of child labor from brick kilns and to bring these children to the formal education stream. BOP as the primary service provider for GOPB, successfully registered 45k beneficiaries in this segment to provide them social grants through its Digital Branchless Banking channel.

### Social Welfare Himmat Card for PWDs:

GOPB's Social Welfare Department is aiming to launch a new initiative "Himmat Card" for People With Disabilities (PWDs) in which 65k PWDs will get registered. The Himmat Card is a package of different services offered by Government of Punjab to PWD's. At present,

the government has announced provision of quarterly stipend of amount Rs. 10,500 to needy PWD's. Later on, other services/benefits announced by the Government for PWDs will be bundled with this stipend and offered through the Himmat Card.



## Sponsorships of Educational Institutions

### Sponsorship for University of Swat

BOP had sponsored 2nd International Chemistry Conference on recent trends and innovative ideas (ICC-RT&ITC 2024) on October 08 & 09, 2024. This conference was

attended by about 1000 research personnel from different universities. The opportunity was availed to promote our banking services in front of large audience. Currently around

5,500 students are enrolled, and we have successfully implemented a cash management project with university.



### Sponsorship for Rawalpindi Women University

Rawalpindi Women University is a newly established Public Sector University. BOP sponsored the Gold Medal and Cash Prizes to the University students on their 1st convocation ceremony for the passing out batches on 29th September, 2024. The aim of sponsorship was to enhance BOP's image in the minds of fresh graduates of University who shall perform their duties in various sections of economy of our motherland in coming day.

Currently 4000 students are enrolled in University and we have successfully implemented cash management for collection of students fees.



## 9. Digital Disruption through Fintech & Innovation – Nurturing the Tech Startup Ecosystem

The Bank of Punjab launched its Innovation Center in 2022 at National Incubation Centre Lahore within LUMS with a mission to harness digital transformation within the organization and to support the entrepreneurial community

in Pakistan. Building on its newly founded Digital Banking portfolio, the vision represented a gradual and systematic transformation process for the Bank to reimagine the way BOP serves its customers, partners and the

entrepreneurial community at large. In a short span, this vision has expanded to a global scale given the caliber of partnerships forged, and the initiatives that have emerged from the BOP Innovation Center in the past 2 years.

### 1. Role in Empowering Startups and Entrepreneurs

2023: Sprint Pakistan, nationwide hackathon:

BOP hosted Sprint Pakistan, the country's largest bank-led hackathon, in collaboration with the High Commissioner of Singapore and NICL. The event attracted 274 participants

nationwide, with 40 startups advancing to the grand finale at LUMS University. Top 10 finalists received cash prizes of up to PKR 2 million and a fully sponsored trip to the Singapore Fintech

Festival 2023, a globally renowned fintech event.



#### BOP at Singapore Fintech Festival 2023

The 10 winning startups from Sprint Pakistan were awarded a fully sponsored trip to Singapore Fintech Festival (SFF), where they engaged with global tech giants Google,

Meta, and Stripe. At the SFF Apex Innovation Challenge Stage, the founders showcased their pitches, connecting with international investors, including venture capitalists, angel investors,

and entrepreneurs. These interactions fostered meaningful networking opportunities and paved the way for international collaborations with Pakistani startups.



#### Google Cloud Startup Competition 2024

The Bank of Punjab (BOP), in strategic partnership with Google Cloud and Tech Valley, successfully concluded the 'Google Cloud Startup Competition Pakistan 2024' in an auspicious Grand Finale held at Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi. This startup contest marked Google Cloud's first-ever initiative of its kind, in the Asia-Pacific region, attracting wide participation with 700

submissions from over 70 cities across the country. Each application underwent a rigorous screening process, resulting in the selection of 25 startups to compete across five distinct tracks. On the day of Grand Finale, five startups emerged as winners of the competition.

The competition invited entrepreneurs and tech startups from across Pakistan to showcase their innovative products and

services in 5 distinct tracks: AI & Generative AI, E-commerce & Connectivity, Fintech, Frontier Digital Technologies, and Sustainability & Environment.

BOP held various mentoring and networking sessions across the country ahead of the grand finale such as 'Master Your Pitch', CxO Connect, and Startups Meetup with Google Block Party.



## 2. Co-Hosting Initiatives with LUMS

BOP actively collaborates with NIC at LUMS to drive impactful initiatives through a series of co-hosted sessions, programs, and activities. These include engaging Entrepreneurs in

Conversation sessions, which provide a platform for insightful discussions, as well as specialized events such as an Amazon Web Services (AWS) session, aimed at empowering

the entrepreneurial ecosystem with cutting-edge knowledge and tools.



## 3. Building Partnerships for Growth & Improved Customer Experiences

The BOP Innovation Center at LUMS has been a launch-pad for creative ideas, dynamic partnerships, and research hub for disruptive technologies since its inception in 2022. Over 25 partnerships have emerged from the space

with leading tech players, including Google Cloud, Tech Valley, BookMe.pk and so on.

Through these partnerships, we bring forward exciting and unique use cases for our digital

banking customers enhancing overall DigiBOP mobile and internet banking experiences and also rendering BOP as a market-first digital banking brand.



## 4. Launch of Digital Learning Drive for upskilling of BOP Employees

August '24: The Bank of Punjab (BOP) launched 'BOP Digital Learning Drive 2024', an employee-centered initiative introduced for staff upskilling in advanced digital technologies through Google's specialization courses on Coursera. The launch event held at BOP's Innovation Center at LUMS, marked a significant step in the Bank's commitment towards fostering innovation within the organization.

In partnership with Tech Valley and Google Cloud, this transformative program provides scholarships for BOP employees across 10 specialized areas including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Information Technology (IT), Digital Marketing, Data Analytics, Project Management, and Power BI, making it a first-of-its-kind initiative taken by a Bank for its workforce upskilling in emerging fields such as AI, soft and digital skills.



# Word Search -

## Corporate Social Responsibility

Z	J	O	K	Y	Y	J	N	S	C	K	T	E	N	A	L	P
D	G	T	X	R	K	V	N	X	E	O	G	P	L	P	X	V
T	Y	O	H	Y	K	L	F	O	M	I	W	X	J	N	J	I
P	A	K	S	T	S	T	E	M	Y	G	R	D	T	P	X	E
F	D	G	U	R	B	K	E	P	A	G	V	A	Q	X	W	X
W	A	J	Y	E	N	L	Z	S	D	N	O	A	S	O	G	Q
D	L	A	W	V	P	D	T	Z	R	I	M	X	Q	R	E	V
H	E	L	F	O	B	A	N	R	O	L	L	O	O	I	U	V
F	D	B	E	P	R	I	Q	R	B	C	Q	U	A	K	Q	B
S	N	P	C	B	T	T	V	U	R	Y	L	P	H	I	N	R
T	A	O	U	R	T	C	I	N	A	C	T	J	L	E	C	Z
V	M	C	Q	H	D	Z	O	P	K	E	H	G	Z	J	H	Y
R	K	U	L	S	G	W	X	I	V	R	G	W	T	J	A	T
S	F	Z	A	E	O	R	A	J	P	I	T	E	J	O	R	D
X	J	S	S	O	L	A	R	P	A	N	E	L	S	R	I	C
G	O	R	C	B	E	B	P	R	O	F	I	T	H	O	T	W
L	N	V	A	C	G	O	L	H	E	I	Q	Q	W	N	Y	P

**Solar Panels**  
**Arbor Day**  
**Bursaries**  
**Charity**  
**Recycling**  
**Starbucks**

**Sasol**  
**Poverty**  
**Planet**  
**Profit**  
**People**  
**Mandela Day**

## Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)

Dr. Syed Asim Ali Bukhari

As our planet's environmental condition deteriorates, the global community is responding by fostering a new generation of environmentally conscious businesses grounded in the principles of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG). ESG serves as a framework for managing sustainability, promoting ethical practices, and encouraging responsible consumer behavior. The origins of this concept can be traced back to 2004 when the United Nations Global Compact and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs released a report titled "Who Cares Wins," which introduced the term ESG.

This framework is characterized as "a collection of environmental, social, and governance factors that companies consider in their operational management and that investors evaluate when making investment decisions, particularly concerning associated risks, impacts, and opportunities." The 'E' in ESG pertains to the Environment, emphasizing that organizations depend on natural resources and physical assets to conduct their business activities. The operations and products of a business may have direct or indirect negative effects on the environment. ESG advocates for heightened environmental responsibility and accountability as integral to everyday business practices. This aspect of ESG encompasses organizations' engagement with various issues, including climate change, carbon management, resource depletion, biodiversity loss, energy consumption, and water conservation. The 'S' in ESG reflects the influence of an organization on society. This component is based on the understanding that the products and services offered by a company, as well as the processes involved in their production, can either contribute positively to society or inflict harm. The 'G' for Governance involves decision-making processes and resource allocation. It is manifested in the organization's articulated purpose, core values, and cultural ethos, as well as in the diversity, composition, and oversight of senior management. Additionally, it encompasses the organization's risk management approach, ethical standards, compliance policies, the rights of shareholders, and practices related to disclosure and transparency.

ESG has emerged as a pivotal element in the success of businesses amid a significant global shift in priorities. The United Nations estimates that an annual investment of between US\$ 5 trillion and US\$ 7 trillion is necessary to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set for 2030. This situation compels financial institutions to integrate ESG considerations into their investment strategies. Another important driving force behind ESG adoption is stakeholder pressure, expectation, and satisfaction. Today, customers are becoming more aware when assessing a company's ESG credentials, and generally more sensitive as to how organizations are contributing towards the betterment of society. Particularly for international clients, there is an expectation for organizations to implement ESG reporting to ensure alignment with the ESG objectives of all partners within the value chain.

The rationale for implementing an ESG strategy can be identified across multiple dimensions, including financial performance, the promotion of a sustainable economic transition, beneficial environmental impacts, social credibility, and the satisfaction of stakeholders. The integration of ESG principles within organizations is increasingly recognized as a driver of value creation, contributing to growth, innovation, and cost efficiency. An important aspect of understanding this business ideology is that embracing ESG does not equate to a decline in the economic viability of the organization. ESG practices align with a company's strategic objectives and complement the business model. This philosophy advocates environmental and social sustainability, which ultimately supports economic sustainability. The core principle of ESG lies in fostering alignment, synergy, and balance among these three facets of corporate sustainability.

By integrating ESG into the core banking model, Pakistan's banking industry can lead the country's economy into a green future. For Pakistan, ESG is not just a business strategy rather it can serve as a gateway to numerous economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable opportunities. Countless reasons and compelling arguments exist for the adoption of this dynamic and holistic business model. The need is to understand how it can be effectively adopted and efficiently implemented in Pakistan.

### About the Author

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