



## External Communications Department

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### **SBP Kicks-off Implementation of WE-Finance Code to Empower Women Entrepreneurs**

‘We are building pathways that ensure women entrepreneurs could fully participate in and contribute to Pakistan’s economic growth’, said Mr. Saleem Ullah Deputy Governor, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), while addressing at the inaugural event of the Women Entrepreneurship Finance (WE-FI) Code Consultative Workshop. He reaffirmed SBP’s commitment in driving forward the agenda of promoting women entrepreneurship and their access to finance for building an inclusive and sustainable financial system, as outlined in its Strategic Plan 2028.

Mr. Saleem Ullah also highlighted SBP's continued commitment to advance women's financial inclusion through Banking on Equality Policy and digital initiatives. He shared that, while access to financial services has improved, structural barriers continue to limit women entrepreneurs from getting formal credit. In this context, he emphasized that the WE-Finance Code represents a crucial and actionable framework.

The Code, adopted by SBP on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025, aims to dismantle the financial barriers faced by women-led businesses. As the lead implementing agency in Pakistan, SBP has mobilized a coalition of 23 financial institutions—including conventional, Islamic, and microfinance banks—alongside the Pakistan Banks Association (PBA), all united under the Code’s action-oriented framework.

To kick-off the implementation of WE Finance Code in Pakistan, a two-day workshop was held by SBP, in collaboration with Asian Development Bank (ADB), in Islamabad, bringing together signatory banks, regulators and development partners to formulate a concrete national action plan. The workshop concentrated on actionable strategies for gender-intelligent product innovation, improved data collection and reporting, and strengthened credit appraisal mechanisms tailored to women-led enterprises.

The Industry Consultative Workshop provided a structured platform for signatory banks and partner institutions to review the existing gaps in women’s access to finance and develop a forward-looking Action Plan under the WE-Finance Code. Discussions focused on strengthening market segmentation for women, developing women-focused portfolio strategies and enhancing lending products for women-led MSMEs, improving data and reporting frameworks, and reinforcing institutional commitment through the WE Finance Code Charter.

Before the workshop, a delegation consisting of senior officials from SBP and ADB convened a **Road Show on WE-FI Code** for the key ecosystem stakeholders beyond the financial sector. The delegation held strategic dialogues with Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), and Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA). These discussions concentrated on strengthening policy coordination, enhancing inter-agency collaboration, and expanding the national coalition supporting the WE-Finance Code to reinforce its industry-wide momentum.

Through these coordinated efforts, SBP continues to guide Pakistan’s financial sector toward meaningful inclusion, ensuring that the WE-Finance Code translates into increased access to finance, enhanced entrepreneurship, and sustainable economic progress for women across the nation.

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