



WALKING HAND IN HAND

“If I was educated, maybe even I could have got some small job somewhere and made at least a little contribution in shouldering my husband’s responsibilities,” says a 24 year old Shehnaaz who was married at a young age because her father had severe financial constraints. But marriage unfortunately did not break her relationship with poverty. Her husband Aijaz earns barely Rs.3000 per month. With this meagre income he is, not only taking care of his family but is also supporting his father and four unmarried sisters who live with him. Shehnaaz says, *“we struggle to provide medical care for my husband’s aged father. The young sisters are also a matter of great responsibility. When I used to see my husband’s daily predicament to provide just food for all of us, I used to feel like crying....”*

Shehnaaz’s sister helped her to fight her tears. She told her about the ‘*Beauty Culture and Health Care*’ course run by CEQUINs Gender Resource Centre. When Shehnaaz came to know that this course could help uneducated women like her to learn skills that could help her get a job; she immediately enrolled for this course. The hands-on training helped her to very quickly equip herself with the skills that were required in the market. Along with knowledge she got an opportunity to do an internship which made her confident in her work. So immediately after the course, she got an employment with the Apple Beauty Parlour. Shehnaaz is now contributing to the family income by Rs.2000 and her enthusiasm is evident in her words, *“I am so happy that my husband has to no longer work all alone and we can now, together, shoulder the household responsibilities.”*