

PROLOKA / DirektHilfe - HOPE'87

**Women Skills Training Centre,
Dhulli, Nar Sher Ali Khan, Bagh, AJK.**

Interim Report

August 2007 – October 2007

Total Project Duration: August 2007 – January 2008

“ Women Skills Training Centre in Azad Kashmir”



Supported By: proLoka / DirektHilfe

Implemented By: HOPE'87 (Hundreds of Original Projects for Employment)

proLoka / DirektHilfe - HOPE'87

Interim Technical Report

" Women Skills Training Centre in Azad Kashmir"

1. Name of the Organisation: HOPE '87 - Pakistan
26 & 27, Waqas Plaza
Fazal-ul-Haq Road, Blue Area, Islamabad
Tel.: +92 51 2877462-5
Mobile: +92 300 854 7271
Email: haider.shoaib@gmail.com
Contact person: Mr. Shoaib Haider

Contact in Dhulli, Bagh: HOPE '87 - Pakistan
Opposite QRC Hospital,
Dhulli, Nar Sher Ali Khan,
Bagh, AJK.
Tel.: 0992 512443
Mobile: +92 334 534 1801
Email: ahmed@hope87.org
Contact person: Mr. Ahmed Abbas

2. Title of Project: " Women Skills Training Centre in Azad Kashmir"

3. Country: Pakistan/AJK.

Executive Summary:

proLoka / DirektHilfe are providing financial and technical help to run a Women Skills Training Centre (WSTC) in Dhulli, Bagh, Azad Jammu Kashmir (Pakistan Controlled Kashmir) with effect from the 1st of August 2007 till January 2008, for 3rd batch. HOPE'87 Pakistan is the implementing partner. The centre provides a six month long skills training course to women including tailoring, embroidery and knitting and in addition students are also taught making of home decoration items. After the successful completion of 2nd batch (February 2007 – July 2007), proLoka / DirektHilfe completely satisfied with the performance of WSTC decided to fund the 3rd batch at WSTC (August 2007 – January 2008).

This interim report covers the period from 1st of August 2007 till the end of October 31st 2007. The total financial expenditure for the period is PKR 178,662.00 (€ 2,233, 28). Financial report is attached as Annex IV. Total pledged budget amount for this project is PKR 582,550.80 (€ 7,281.89).

Admissions for the 3rd batch at WSTC were announced in the union council Nar Sher Ali Khan and Swanj through banners, distribution of pamphlets and word of mouth. A walk in interview date was announced as 25th of July 2007 at WSTC, in Dhulli, Bagh. A three member panel of interviewers was formed for the selection of candidates, including the WSTC principal, Supervisor and special guest Ms. Saira Begum of Government Vocational Training Institute at Rera, Swanj. Against an opening for 20 candidates a total of 58 women from various villages walked in for the interview, leading to increase the number of seats to 23 keeping in view the high number of keen candidates.

A total of 23 students were selected from different areas for six months rigorous training of tailoring, embroidery, knitting and making of home decoration items. Details of selected students are attached in Annex I.

The trainees / participants are charged a nominal fee of PKR 200 (€ 2.5) per month per student. Whereas three students were given exemption due to their poor family background and are only being charged PKR 100 (€ 1.25)/month. For details refer to Annex II for collection of fees.

Meeting with selected candidate's parent was held on 6th of August 2007 to inform them about the rules & regulations of the Centre. Training classes were also started on the same

day. Two of the selected students didn't show up for the training because of the domestic reason; therefore on 20th of August 2007 two more students were enrolled from the waiting list.

During the three months August 2007 – October 2007 students were trained on drafting, how to take measurements, cutting, making of make home decoration items, basic embroidery and knitting skills etc. Various teaching methodologies were adopted to impart training including group assignments, homework, competitions among groups and practical work. For details of trainings done in last three months see attached Annex III.

Parents and guardians were kept informed through parent teacher meetings. A parent teacher meeting was conducted on 13th and 14th of September, 2007 with a view to share the experiences of the participants and their families.

The raw materials for the training purposes are being purchased from Bagh city with the aim to support the local entrepreneurs and small business enterprises.

The highlights of the quarter are two major events. One is an exhibition held at WSTC, where items made by students were put on display and were sold to the community. The visitors were impressed by the quality of work and variation in items displayed. Details of earnings out of this exhibition are attached as an Annex V.

Another event was a two day "Dupta Dying Course" arranged at WSTC which was attended by a total of 48 women. Students from 1st, 2nd and 3rd batch of WSTC attended this course along with 6 women who attended on behalf of Islamic Relief. This course was conducted in collaboration with another NGO Islamic Relief to follow proLoka / DirektHilfe and HOPE'87's policy to support and engage other local/international NGO working the area. For details of this "Dupta Dying Course" see attached Annex VI.

a. **The Idea / Objective:**

To encourage rehabilitation by providing a learning / skills training opportunity for the victims of the earthquake of 8th October 2005 and of aftermaths.

Need/Problem Analysis:

The earthquake disaster of 8th October 2005 has left many tragedies behind, adding to the miseries of the poor and has brought down middle income class to lower income levels. There were not many opportunities available even before the earthquake with the situation getting worse now.

There is no skill training centre for girls or boys in U.C Nar Sher Ali Khan, which has a population of about 12,000. Now, especially after the earth quake when every household is badly affected with loss of lives and property there is an even stronger need than ever that woman shall also take part in the development of society and shall take an active role in sharing the financial burdens of the household expenses.

Realising this need, HOPE'87 planned for the women of the area to get some vocational training so that they also start to shoulder the financial burden by contributing towards to the family income. Amongst the various options available and debated for the vocational training, a proper training for tailoring for women locally was considered to be a valuable training to be imparted that would not only be culturally acceptable as it would save women folk form travelling from long distances from their homes to far off market places but also will reduce the cost of clothing for them.

It was therefore decided to impart proper training of tailoring to women of the area along with a start micro credit grant in kind so that they can set up a tailoring facility in their homes upon completion of the training. Furthermore, it was decided to impart this training to village level women at a nominal/token money cost to them through locally skilled women trainers. The imparting of training through locally skilled women trainers, on one hand is culturally acceptable as well as on the other hand is a source of income for the skilled trainers.

Achievements so far;

Women Skills Training Centre has completed its first year in August 2007 and so far a total of 49 women have successfully completed the skills training course in two batches. The first batch of trainees consisting of 20 students supported by HOPE'87 Pakistan graduated in January 2007 upon completion of a 6 months skills training course.

Whereas for the 2nd batch proLoka-DirektHilfe joined hands with HOPE'87 Pakistan to support the Women Skills Training Centre from February 2007 till July 2007. During this period 23 women completed 6 months training course and 8 women completed short term advance training course of 6 weeks duration.

Being completely satisfied with the performance of WSTC in 2nd batch, proLoka-DirektHilfe further extended their support and funded for 3rd batch (August 2007 – January 2008) at WSTC as well.

b. Beneficiaries

The current initiative targets the women of the community in union council Nar Sher Ali Khan and Swanj.

All the women within the age bracket of 16-35, interested in getting some skills training and to use these skills to make their earning are the targeted beneficiaries.

A total of 23 female students were selected to keep a reasonable and manageable strength for teachers. This enabled teachers to concentrate on each and every student.

The student data may be referred to in an Annex I.

c. Location, facilities and conformity to local culture:

Location:

Dhulli is a small town about 16 kilometres from Bagh city in the north east, District Bagh, Azad Kashmir. Dhulli is a hub for commercial activities for union council Nar Sher Ali Khan.

The HOPE'87 camp office at Dhulli, district Bagh, Azad Kashmir was selected as the location for the Women Skills Training Centre (WSTC).

Facilities:

The centre is equipped with 10 sewing machines and 2 embroidery machines along with the necessary office furniture for staff and students. These include low height tables for sewing machines, cutting tables for fabrics etc.

The facility has been set up in a big hall of 17.5' x 32' which is spacious enough to accommodate 20 or more students at a time for learning and doing the practical work. The Hall has two big cutting tables and appropriate ventilation and lighting facilities.

All the related raw materials like fabric, thread, buttons, card boards, scissors etc are being provided to each individual student for learning purposes at no cost. The raw materials are sourced in Bagh city with the aim to support small local enterprises.

Conformity to Local Culture:

Before starting the classes a meeting was arranged with the parents of selected students on 6th of August, 2007 and they were updated on the objectives of centre. The suggestions of the parents were also accommodated. The Parents and the Guardians were informed about the rules and regulations of the centre which were agreed upon. Following points were discussed and decided,

1. The centre timing will be from 8.30 am till 1.30 pm, with 30 minutes break in between, with Sunday as off day.
2. Leave applications signed by parents must be submitted, within 3 days after the leave.
3. Students will sign attendance register and will write the check-in and check-out time.
4. Parents will submit the names of three family members and only those family members will be allowed to meet the students or to leave centre with, in emergency, if needed.
5. Periodic parents/teacher meeting will be arranged to update all stakeholders on centre's progress.

Staff:

Keeping in view the local customs and traditions, management of the centre and impartation of training is being done through a female Principal and 2 female teachers. In addition to that a male Camp Manager is responsible for overall WSTC administration and liaison with community and local authorities. In the third batch another teacher was hired for better student - teacher ratio and more individual attention towards student. This new hiring remains within budgetary allocation. WSTC support staff includes, 2 office staff and a security guard.



M
r. Jakob Steiner with WSTC staff.

d. Methodology:**Recruitment and selection of students:**

The opening of admissions for 3rd batch at WSTC was advertised by placing banners at various pivotal locations in U.C Nar Sher Ali Khan and Swanj, through word of mouth and by distributing the pamphlets in the area.

On 25th of July, 2007 a walk in interview was arranged at WSTC.

For the selection of candidates an interview panel of 3 was set upon, including the WSTC principal, Supervisor and special guest Ms. Saira Begum teacher at Government Vocational Training Institute at Rera, Swanj of UC Nar Sher Ali Khan & Swanj. Mrs. Saira Begum, with an experience of more than 12 years in this field was a great help to select the right candidate for 3rd batch.

Candidates were asked various questions by the interview panel to assess their family and educational backgrounds and to assess their basic knowledge of tailoring and learning

abilities. After a through interview final selection was made and short listed candidates list was displayed on WSTC gate.



Banner announcing admissions at WSTC for 3rd batch.

Against an opening for 20 candidates, about 58 women showed up for walk-in interview. This great demand made WSTC management to increase the number of seats form 20 to 23.

Women Skills Training Centre's 3rd batch formally started its classes from 6th of August, 2007.

e. Parents – Teacher Meeting:

During the 6 months at various times parent teacher meeting are called upon at WSTC. The idea is to keep parents and guardians updated and informed on the progress of the student. The first parent teacher meeting was conducted on 13th and 14th of September, 2007 with a view to share the experiences of the participants and their families. Individual meetings were conducted with each student's parent and they were updated on the progress of the centre and performance of their daughter.

All the parents showed their satisfaction over the centre's performance and assured their full support and cooperation.

f. Fee:

A very nominal fee of Pak Rupees 200 (€ 2.5) is being charged per student/month, with the aim to give a better sense of ownership and also to ensure attendance during the course.

Three students requested that due to their poor family background, monthly fee shall be reduced. To accommodate them they are being given a concession and are only being charged PKR 100 (€ 1.25) /month.

The detail of the fees collected to date may be perused at Annex II.

g. Courses and Teaching Methodology:

Women Skills Training Centre is offering a 6 months long course on tailoring, hand embroidery and knitting and in addition to that students are also taught making of home decoration items. This is an additional skill which was introduced in 2nd batch and is carried forward in 3rd batch as well.

Course material and design has been developed with the help from the Department of Social welfare and Women Development, Bagh. Mrs. Safida Naik head of Dar-ul Falah, Bagh, took keen interest and gave her input in the development of course material and design.

The course includes practice on drafting, how to take measurements, scheme, cutting, knitting, stitching, embroidery, crochet etc.



some home decoration items made by students

During the 06 months training different teaching methods-modules are being used, like learn and practice, group assignments, competition among groups and individual assignments. The details of training imparted so far can be perused in Annex III.

h. Special event at WSTC “ Exhibition”:

The Exhibition held at WSTC is one of the major highlights of the quarter. The objective was to give an opportunity to the students to learn and practice their entrepreneurial skills to establish and strengthen the small enterprise to reduce poverty, once they are graduated from WSTC.

Students were asked to make all the arrangements for the exhibition, including inviting people, managing stalls and display of items, presenting themselves at stalls and market the products they made. This event held under the guidance of senior management of WSTC, was very well managed and executed by the students in lead role.

The exhibition turned out to be a very successful event as about 150-170 women from the surrounding villages visited the exhibition and many items were sold. Details of earning out of this exhibition are attached as an Annex V.

The visitors were impressed by the quality of work and variation in items displayed. This exhibition worked as a marketing tool and now women of the area often visit WSTC to buy things. The details of item sold from WSTC inventory are also summarised in Annex V with exhibition earnings.

i. Synergy Effects:

Special course of „Dupta Dying Course“:

With the objective to enhance the skills of women at WSTC and to create synergy effects with other NGO's working in the area a special joint two day „Dupta Dying course“ was held at WSTC in collaboration with another NGO Islamic Relief. The master trainer was provided by Islamic Relief, whereas WSTC provided logistics, material and human resource support. A total of 48 women trainees participated, out of which 42 were either current or ex students of WSTC from 1st, 2nd and 3rd batches. Whereas 6 women were the beneficiary from Islamic Relief.

This special two day course added value to the training by imparting skills previously not available in the whole of union council. In future Dupta dying will be made part of the curriculum, our teachers trained in craft serving as master trainer.

Due to the tough terrain of Kashmir and village population scattered over the mountains, it is difficult for the women to go to main market every time they have to get a Dupta dyed.

Therefore students at the WSTC have been demanding that if a short course could be arranged for them at the centre, to complement the overall training of the tailoring.

Course:

In this context a 02 Day Tie & Dye training was held on September 5th and 6th, 2007 at Women's Skills Training Centre, Dhulli, Nar Sher Ali Khan, jointly organized by Islamic Relief and WSTC.

The course was attended by 48 female students, out of which 42 were either current or ex students of WSTC from 1st, 2nd and 3rd batches. Whereas balance 6 women attended the course on behalf of Islamic Relief Community organization from the surrounding villages.

An experienced dyer/trainer Mr. Abdul Jabbar was invited to impart the training. All the participants took keen interest in this course and gave the feedback of course being very informative and practical.

A detailed report on this special "Duapta Dying Course" can be perused in Annex VI.

j. Financial Report

The final financial report covering the period from 1st of August, 2007 till 31st of October, 2007 is attached as an Annex IV.