

Project Title: Skill Development for women empowerment

Progress report for the period January to June, 2021



Target region:	District Quetta Baluchistan
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Implementing partner:	JOBS Trust
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Table to Contents

1.	Summary and Background of the project	3
1.1	Context.....	3
1.2.	Project Description:	3
1.3.	Social Cohesion.....	4
2.	Key Achievements during reporting Period	4
2.1.	Trainings:	4
2.2.	Exhibitions:	4
2.3.	End line survey:	5
2.4.	Marketing Activities:.....	5
2.5.	Awareness sessions:.....	5
2.6.	Production Activities:	5
3	Work plan status for the period under review	6
3.1.	Brief description of the activities	6
4.	Additional activities carried out during reporting period	6
5.	Challenges, lessons learnt and modifications to the project	7
6.	Summary Table	7
7.	Sustainability.....	7
8.	Visibility.....	8
9.	Planned activities for the next reporting cycle (April to August 2021)	8
10.	Annexes	9
	Annex A: Pictorial view of some activities	9
	Annex B: Summary of End-line.....	10
	Annex C: Success Stories	11

1. Summary and Background of the project

1.1 Context

Pakistan hosts 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees, of which 46% are women and girls. A majority of these refugees reside in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (58 percent) and Balochistan (23 percent). In recent years, a significant number of Afghan refugees have moved out of the refugee villages. Today, 68 percent live in urban or rural areas, while the remaining 32 percent reside in 54 refugee villages across the country. The major challenge that we face regarding the wellbeing of these refugees residing in these villages is the lack of economic opportunities for them and for the host population.

UNHCR's solution for Afghan Refugees aims at enhancing resilience and co-existence through greater responsibility sharing. This approach offers a comprehensive and integrated framework for joint interventions aimed at facilitating voluntary return, sustainable reintegration as well as social cohesion; while at the same time, also assisting refugees and host communities to learn skills in order to earn their living.

Balochistan is the area facing major scarcity of food in the country where the post-harvest losses are very high (average around 40%). Additionally, addressing the serious plastic waste issue in Pakistan is of a high priority for the government. It is estimated that 55 billion plastic bags are used each year, resulting in polluting the environment and causing health hazardous.

Majority of the population living in the Provincial Capital of Balochistan - Quetta city are extremely poor. Only 18% live in their own family houses and 82% live in rental houses. The living standards of both the communities (refugees and host) are low. Majority are unaware of even the basic knowledge of health and hygiene. Most of the People (75%) dispose of garbage in the streets. Hand washing practices with soap is low except after using latrines is comparatively higher. They fetch water from the neighboring sources wherever available or occasionally purchase water tankers. People lacked the knowledge about water purification before drinking. COVID 19 was termed to be a catastrophe for the neighborhood as they believe it to be a conspiracy theory in the initial stages. It was after many people got ill and died that they noticed the severity of the threat. Furthermore, due to lack of resources, they are unable to bear the health expenses. Their poor diet is resulting in an even weaker immune system which adds to alarmingly low tolerance to this disease. A noticeable number of people, particularly youth, are unemployed. The larger number (21.62%) are either unemployed or temporary wage earners, 15.32% keep livestock (mainly goats and chicken) and a mentionable number of the people (9.01%) live on charity¹.

Considering the above situation, Jobs Trust proposed to work in partnership with GIZ to implement Women Empowerment Project to create livelihood opportunities for Afghan women linked with their social cohesion into the local communities and sustainable repatriation back home (when and if they return). Therefore, livelihood project uses the Sunny Miracles, Paper and Plastic Miracles approach to focus on women from the refugee and host communities which was planned in 4 Union Councils of district Quetta, Balochistan.

1.2. Project Description:

JOBS Trust and GIZ agreed to implement a project (Nov 15th, 2019 to Feb 14th, 2021) for Afghan women and women from the host community. The project worked towards the social cohesion of these women into the local communities in 4 semi-urban UCs of Quetta city with the goals and objectives of reducing post-harvest losses, improving food security, positively impacting the lives of marginalized young women by offering them income generating opportunities, developing a successful income-generating model and

¹ Baseline with beneficiaries 2020

contribute to the government's efforts towards improving the surrounding by reducing and slowly eliminating paper and plastic waste from Pakistan. The activities were successfully completed within the time frame, training 120 women (50% refugees) but considering the success and high demand from the communities and other stakeholders, a new 5 months project was approved (April to August 2021) to train 40 additional women and give more focus the marketing component.

1.3. Social Cohesion

Overall, the refugees and Pakistani community living in Quetta have been peaceful. Majority (80%) population in these areas are migrants and refugees from all over Pakistan and Afghanistan. Although they never had major conflict reported among the population in this area, there has been segregation especially between refugees and local communities. Refugees and the women from the local communities never visited each other despite living in the same streets. After joining the training programme initially, they used to stay in their own (refugee or host) groups, (did not mix up).

During the training they were made to work in groups and pairs mixing participants from refugees and host community. This approach gave them the opportunity to mix-up and work for 2-3 hours with the participants from other groups. Due to regular interaction, the relationship between the groups (refugees and host) grew to be friendlier and improved significantly. They have become acquaintances and have started visiting each other after work and on special occasions, weddings or funerals etc.

2. Key Achievements during reporting Period

January to June 2021

2.1. Trainings:

40 new women have been trained (30 refugees and 10 host) in food processing (mainly sun drying). All made it to the next level, to practice and get paid for their work and become professional producers.

Beneficiaries total Trained	Refugees	Host communities
40	30	10

Male	Female
0	40

2.2. Exhibitions:

Project staff along with selected beneficiaries participated in 4 exhibitions organized by different organisations.

- In Boys Scouts on 13th Feb organized by a local organization (Today's organization),
- in Darbaar hall on 27th Feb, organized by women empowerment organisation
- In Askari Park on 2nd March, organized by SAHAR
- In BRSP compound on 22 March, organized by social welfare department.

The participation in the exhibitions was to introduce and promote the work of beneficiaries in Quetta which was appreciated by the broader community visiting the exhibition (See pictures attached as annex A).

Date	Venue	Organized By
13.02.2021	Boys Scouts	Today's women organization
27.02.2021	Darbar Hall	Women Development Organization

2.03 2021	Askari Park	Sahar
22.03.2021	BRSP	Social Welfare Department

Learning from the exhibition, Ms Zeba Bakhtiar (a well-known social activist and media actress) visited community centre to see the process and meet the beneficiaries. She appreciated the project activities and staff efforts and invited beneficiaries to display the product in her mall which will be open soon.

2.3. End line survey:

As part of original project implemented between November 2019 to February 2021, an end line survey was conducted in targeted areas of Quetta. It shows that the beneficiaries skills and income both has increased as a result of their participation in the project activities. The relationship between the refugee and host population also improved. Women have started making friends and visiting each other. (Summary report is attached, see annex B)

2.4. Marketing Activities:

Dried products food products and paper jewellerys were introduced to the number of stores and outlets. The team was able to partner with 5 outlets so far, here is the detail,

S.#	Store/outlet	Product	Location
1	Qudoosi Store	Dried food products	Meezan Chowk
2	Al-Riaz Gift Centre	Dried products and paper products	Jan Moh Road
3	MDS	Dried food products	Toghi Road
4	Karachi Masala store	Powders	Sariab Road
5	Hayat Beauty pallor	Dried food products and paper products	Kawari Road

2.5. Awareness sessions:

Awareness and behaviour change activities on disease prevention, hygiene, garbage disposal (includes say no to plastic), safe drinking water and importance of food preservation and drying are the regular feature of every day training sessions and practices.

2.6. Production Activities:

54 women are regularly working on production that includes drying, packing, quality control and some also participate in selling (exhibitions). Out of 46 women working on food drying project, 26 (57%) are refugees and 20 (43%) are from the host community.

Out of total 20 trained in paper products, 8 are regularly working as producers. The others have left (2 got married and moved away and others have shifted with the families to other cities and some even gone to Afghanistan).

Beneficiaries total	Refugees	Host communities
46 Food processors	26	20
8 paper products	5	3
Total: 54		

3. Work plan status for the period under review

3.1. Brief description of the activities

S.No	Activity/Task	Date Planned	Current Status
1.	Selection and registration of Beneficiaries for the training for SM training	April,21	Completed
2	Purchasing Training Material & vegetables and fruits for the training	4 months	on-going
3	Basic training of selected beneficiaries for SM	April to Jun,2021	Completed
4	Awareness session on COVID-19 and its precaution, hygiene, safe water and introductory session about skills development training	April to June, 2021	On-going
5	Practical training on drying fruits and vegetables using solar dryer	April to August, 2021	On-going process
6	Baseline survey forms & consent form fill with the beneficiaries	April to June, 2021	Survey completed, report will be done next month
7	Awareness session on Women rights, Child protection, Harassment, early marriages etc.		Need base
8	Distribution of stipend	April to August, 2021	On-going process
9	Testing events (Cooking with Dry vegetables & fruits)	June & aug,2021	postponed (because of COVID-19)
10	Exhibition	May & July,21	postponed (because of COVID-19)
11	Monitoring , Management & Documentation		On-going Process

4. Additional activities carried out during reporting period

- Meeting with Farmers from Ziarat and Loralai districts to aware them about the project activities. They were very happy and would like to get their women trained as master trainers.
- Meeting with PARC staff to display products in their established shops
- WESS HUB Visited with beneficiaries to aware them about the health facilities which are available there for them

- Meeting with owners of super stores in Quetta to introduce food and paper products and to display products in their stores. Have succeeded to get their support for 5 outlets as of today

5. Challenges, lessons learnt and modifications to the project

- As Balochistan has high post-harvest losses in fruits and vegetable, the project needs to expand to the other parts of the province. As they become aware, farmers from other districts are visiting us in Quetta and requesting training of their females.
- There are still a considerable number of destitute women who are approaching for the admission in the training and want to earn their living, so training more women is recommended.
- Marketing component (especially behaviour change campaign) needs special long term continues attention in order to sustain continues orders for the trained beneficiaries.

6. Summary Table

Overall goal of the project	Overall assessment:		
Expected Results	Performance Indicators (PI) and associated Target (T)/baselines (b)	Achievement(s)	Outputs/deliverables contributing to expected results
Help to reduce postharvest losses and improve food security among marginalized communities in Baluchistan	High post-harvest losses (40%) and male nutrition among the people especially women and children	*160 women (80 Host and 80 refugees community trained in food drying process using solar dryer units *Market linkages developed with 5 supper stores	The women Beneficiaries are learning about the importance of food processing and using it for their daily cookings.

7. Sustainability

Overall, communities are now motivated to help themselves to improve their lives by taking an active part in their community activities including proper garbage disposal, following and sustaining hygiene standards and to improve overall sustainability of the environment in the surroundings.

The producer groups are organized into smaller groups (5 each) under the leadership of an active member from the same community. Group leaders are trained as leaders as well as entrepreneurs. These leaders are organized in a separate group with mentoring and marketing responsibilities. The project has been able to place sunny as well as paper beads products at 5 outlets in Quetta and need to extend the network to the other partners within Quetta and gradually to the provincial levels. In addition, project was able to participate in 7 exhibitions in 2020 and 2021 for the promotion and sale of products.

8. Visibility

Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials material was designed, printed, distributed and displayed in the training centre for the learning and visibly.

Exhibitions and tasting events are being organized time to time where people from different organizations and communities are invited to learn about the initiative.

Beneficiaries are taken around to expose them to the exhibitions to learn to see their product being sold and what feedback people have for them if any. Selected beneficiaries' are also taken to the exposure to the available services like health and education services at WESS and other places.

Products are displayed at prominent stores in Quetta and Islamabad and people are educated to pass on the positive messages to the potential customers.

9. Planned activities for the next reporting cycle (April to August 2021)

S.No	Activity/Task	Date Planned	Current Status
1.	Training sessions on Processing fruits and vegetables using solar dryers.	April to June 20 21	80 % completed
3	Tasting events	June to Aug, 2021	Not done
4	Building linkages with established market channels (outlets)	April to July, 2021	40% completed
5	Market events (exhibitions, fairs and Fashion shows)	April to August, 2021	Not done
6	Tool kits distribution	July, 2021	Not done

10. Annexes

Annex A: Pictorial view of some activities



Annex B: Summary of End-line

In the end line survey, 60 women were interviewed, 10 from paper miracles and 50 from the sunny miracles. These also include 15 women who attended business management training. Out of the total 45 women responded that they were able to apply all the skills they learnt at this place.

“When we go home and sit together as family, we discuss what we learnt and how we spend day. We talk about hygiene, family laws and rights.”

“We also talk to the friends and relatives about the awareness sessions and especially men because they are the ones who refuse give us shares in the inheritance. We have attended the sessions on women and children rights and hygiene and we like all these sessions because they were many new things to learn and how to apply.”

“Women relatives in my family always request to include them in such sessions in future. would like to know all this useful information.”

They have earned 2500 to 3500 per month working there since May 2020, they were very pleased as this had resulted in their improved status in their family as bread earners.

“Now our families are looking at us as earning hands. So our importance has increased in family”

91% responded that the family's health has improved as a result of having continues food at home. We have cash in hand and can ask to get anything any time

Relationship, 60% responded that their relationship within the community improved, 25% said not improved and 15% could not decide if their relationship has improved

Spending, mostly girls buy cloths and women buy groceries. 2 girls said they are students and pay their tuition fee.

Shumaila is one of the students in Kectch baig center and has been paying her fee for learning tailoring

Annex C: Success Stories

1. Gul Seema

Gul Seema is one of the project beneficiaries working on sun drying of fruits and vegetables.

Gul Seema's family migrated from Afghanistan 26 years back. She was born in Quetta and has never been to Afghanistan. They are 8 siblings living with the mother in a rented house. Father is in Afghanistan to take care of the house and little land. The children do not want to go to Afghanistan because they think they only have heard sad stories and bad experiences from Afghans. They feel at home in Pakistan and have no interest to go to Afghanistan.

Gul Seema did her Matric and wanted to continue further with the studies but had to stop because of financial issues. She wanted to do something in life after completing her education but her dreams were broken when she had given up the studies.

One day a young lady from the neighbourhood visited and told that she has recently started learning drying fruits and vegetables where she also gets paid for the training. Gul Seema became interested and visited the centre next day. After waiting for a week, Gul Seema got the admission and started working in a production team.

She was very happy when she got her first weekly payment. She gave this money to her mother and they celebrated together as a family. Gul Seema said, it was a small amount but was a big encouragement for her. After a month, project team introduced her to WESS team where she got the stitching training of facemasks. Very next day she got an order of 200 masks for a local company in Quetta.

Only because she came out to work on food processing and got exposure to the people and available opportunities, she is now able to restart working to fulfil her dreams. Currently Gul Seema is very busy. She is working 2 hours per day on food processing, in the evenings she attends English language classes and also preparing for her Next level (FA) exams.



2. Shumaila

Shumaila's mother is a widow and recently started working in food processing centre. At her return from the work, she had many interesting stories to share at home every day. So Shumaila got interested to visit the community centre to see what they are doing there. Next day she went to the centre and enjoyed her time among the women and girls and learning new skills. .

Shumaila is 10th grade student, lost her father when she was very young (around 6 years) and lives with the family of 11 adults and 15 children. They live in a rented house. The family migrated from Afghanistan 40 years back and has no intention to go back because they all the siblings were born in Pakistan and her parents even never went back since they came as refugees. Her 2 brothers are driving rickshaws to earn their living and this is the source of income for this big family.

Shumaila would like to continue with her studies but also realizes the financial issues for the family. She thinks that the priority for the brothers should be their own kids not the sister's education.

So in the training centre she liked the paper beads component the most. Her school was closed due to COVID and she requested the Jobs staff to accept her in paper miracles and she succeeded in getting in to the next class. She was fast learner and became very prominent in her group. She was soon recognized as jewellery designer.

Shumaila is now financing her education and monthly groceries for the family from her work in paper miracles.

