

Report on

Experience Sharing & Advocacy Workshop

Integrated Support Program to Home Based Workers

(Technical and Financial Support provided by ILO & UN-WOMEN)



Sialkot

January 29 & 30, 2011

Acronyms

BISP	Benazir Income Support Program
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DCO	District Coordination Officer
EDO	Executive District Officer
EOBI	Employees' Old Age Benefits Institution
HNP	Home Net Pakistan
FPAP	Family Planning Association of Pakistan
HBW	Home Based Workers
HBWWG	Home Based Workers Working Group
ILO	International Labour Organization
IP	Implementing Partner
MBO	Membership Based Organization
MFI	Micro Finance Institution
MoLM	Ministry of Labour and Manpower
MoWD	Ministry of Women Development
NCHD	National Commission for Human Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PPAF	Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund
SAFWCO	Sindh Agriculture & Forest Workers' Cooperative
SCCI	Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industries
TRDP	Thardeep Rural Development Program
UNIFEM	UN Agency for Women Development
WWF	Workers' Welfare Fund
WDD	Women Development Department

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Background

‘Home-based worker’ refers to the general category of workers, within the informal or unorganized sector, who carry out remunerative work within their homes or in the surrounding grounds. However, the term ‘home-based work’ encompasses a wide diversity. Home-based workers do piecework for an employer, who can be a subcontractor, agent or a middleman, or they can be self-employed on their own or in family enterprises. They can work in the new economy (assembling micro-electronics) or the old (weaving carpets). Home-based workers are not confined to the developing countries only but are found in developed countries as well. It is estimated that there are over 100 million home-based workers in the world and more than half this number are in South Asia – of whom around 80% are women.¹

ILO has adopted **convention No.177** for Home Based Workers – which calls upon the member Countries to adopt, implement and periodically review a national policy on home work aimed at improving the situation of home workers, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers and, where they exist, with organizations concerned with home workers and those of employers of home workers.

Situation in Pakistan

Pakistan has neither adopted C-177 of ILO nor it has a Policy on Home-Based Workers (HBW).

In the past, the UNIFEM (now renamed as UN-Women) had facilitated a large number of discussions and consultations with Pakistani civil society to highlight the plight of HBWs in Pakistan.

Later on, after a number of national and provincial consultations, supported by ILO & UN-Women, a draft National Policy on HBW was prepared which was routed through the Ministry of Women Development (MoWD) to the Ministry of Labour & Manpower (MoLM) for final endorsement – which is in process right now.

Both ILO and UN-Women are committed to support the Government of Pakistan (through Ministry of Labour & Manpower) to process this much needed national policy.

¹ There is a fine line difference between Home-Based Workers and Domestic Workers. HBWs work in “their own” homes or ground, while Domestic Workers work in “others” houses. They have completely different set of problems.

ILO: Towards Gender Parity in Pakistan

ILO in Pakistan is currently implementing a project titled “Towards Gender Parity in Pakistan (TGP)” which aims to contribute towards promoting gender-responsive policies and work practices in the country.

Among various other interventions, the Project has a major focus on promoting Decent Work for the informal / home-based workers – which constitute more than 70% of the workforce and yet not given full rights. The project has adopted a three tier strategy to address this issue effectively:

a. Policy level support

- a) Supporting an advocacy campaign through national civil society organizations
- b) Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Labour & Manpower (MoLM) for reviewing and processing the draft national policy on HBWs

b. Institutional level support

- a) Mobilized Workers & Employers to support HBWs policy as well as support HBWs through their regular programs
- b) Advocacy campaign with social security institutions (Employees Social Security Institutions, Employees Old-Age Benefits Institution, Workers Welfare Fund etc) to include HBWs in their program
- c) Facilitated an exposure visit to Philippines & Thailand for key national Labour-Market Stakeholders to learn from their experiences on including HBWs in national policies and programs.

c. Grassroots level support

- a) Five pilot programs have been started to provide integrated support to HBWs while focusing on nine Decent Work Deficits (mentioned above). These pilot programs are jointly funded by ILO and UN-Women and are being implemented by the following partners in different locations:

S.#	Name of Partner Agency	Location	Target Group
1.	HomeNet Pakistan	Kasur (Punjab)	Chik-makers (bamboo blinds)
2.	Baidarie	Sialkot (Punjab)	Football Stitchers
3.	Rahnuma-FPAP	Faisalabad (Punjab)	Quilt-makers
4.	SAFWCO	Hyderabad (Sindh)	Handicraft makers
5.	TRDP	Mithi (Sindh)	Handicraft makers

UN-Women: Towards Gender Equality: Women's Economic Empowerment – Home-Based Workers

UN Women's programme on economic security and rights entitled, 'Towards Gender Equality: Women's Economic Empowerment-Home Based Workers has the following objectives,

- Make home based workers and their issues visible.
- Advocate for national policies for home based workers in Pakistan.
- Strengthen the grassroots and particularly the membership-based organizations of home based workers in Pakistan.
- Create and strengthen South Asia Network of home based workers and their organizations.

The main achievements of the programme are in the areas of policy advocacy and outreach, creating and strengthening partnerships, raising awareness and building capacity, and facilitating policy dialogue with the goal of enhancing women's human rights. The programme has achieved the following specific results in 2009 and 2010.

- Home Based Workers Policy drafted and handed over to the Ministry of Labour (MoL) by the Ministry of Women's Development after following an extensive consultative process with stakeholders.
- Home Based Workers Resolutions were passed by 3 Provincial Assemblies (Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh) asserting the need for recognition of home based workers as workers and establishing minimum wages.
- Advocacy and networking role of HomeNet Pakistan (a representative umbrella network of home based workers mainly involved in the advocacy and capacity building of the home based workers organizations) was strengthened through undertaking a rigorous process of institutional capacity enhancement.

UN Women is the founder member of Home Based Workers Working Group (HBWWG), a national level body working for enhanced coordination on advocacy related initiatives for HBWs amongst various government and non-governmental organizations.

The media campaign to highlight home based workers issues is being carried out. Posters, radio programmes, leaflets, booklets are developed on home based workers issues and TV talk shows, and other initiatives are in the process.

UN Women facilitated an exposure visit to Nepal including a delegation of high officials from the provincial WDDs, Labour Department Balochistan, MoWD and CSOs partners working on HBW issues to learn from their counterparts and share their experiences. A follow up regional activity was arranged in Islamabad in august 2010 and Ministry of Labor, Labour Departments,

MoWD and WDDs participated in it and brought forth meaningful recommendations for Home based workers policy issues

UN Women collaborated with ILO, Ministry of Labour, MoWD and NGOs (Baidarie, TRDP, FPAP, SAFWCO, HNP) to develop 5 small scale projects on providing integrated support to home based workers in four project areas in Sindh and Punjab. UN agencies, government ministries, departments and NGOs will work together to provide support to select groups of home based workers in communities, which will enhance their market access, improve their skills, enhance their capacity to earn decent wages and improve their access to social security schemes amongst other things.

The focus of 2011 is on the endorsement of the HBW policy by the cabinet, advocacy on incorporating HBWs concerns in Labour laws, support for the finalization of social protection bill for HBWs and the execution of pilot projects for HBWs

Experience Sharing Workshop

Once all partners had started their interventions with their respective target groups and are in different stages of implementation. It was a high time to convene a workshop at one of the project areas to discuss various challenges faced by the implementing partners (IP) and add value to their interventions.

For this purpose, a two-day workshop took place in Sialkot - organized by Baidarie – on Saturday, 29th January 2011.

The first day of the workshop was allocated for an internal review amongst five partner agencies, ILO and UN-Women to review progress of all five partners and identify key challenges, good practices and mutual learning.

The second day was budgeted for an advocacy workshop within Sialkot where all labour-market stakeholders including Government, Workers, Employers, Media, and political leadership of Sialkot were invited to highlight the significance of HBWs' work and advocating for their due rights.

Participants

For internal review, two officials from each partner agency (one from field and one from Management) were invited for the workshop to share their experiences and field level learning with other partners. ILO and UN-Women representatives were also there (list of participants is attached at Annex-I)

On second day, the advocacy event was chaired by the Federal Minister for Women's Development, Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan – who was elected from Sialkot as Member National Assembly. More than 200 delegates from District and Provincial level government departments, employers, civil society, academia and home-based workers were also present.



Progress Review Meeting (29th January 2011)

The day began with recitation of verses from the holy Quran by Mr. Akram.

Welcome by Baidarie

After introduction of participants, Ms Hina Noureen, President Baidarie formally welcomed the participants at Baidarie office. She thanked ILO and UN-WOMEN for providing Baidarie Sialkot with the opportunity of being host for all of their partner organizations. She hoped that this experience sharing event would create strong linkages among partners and will help in evolving a regular platform for sharing of experiences on regular basis with each other in the future. She requested the participants to very kindly provide their feedback and identify areas of improvement in the work being done by Baidarie for adding value to the ongoing work.

Comments by UN-Women

Addressing the participants Ms. Uzma Quresh said that this experience sharing event has been designed on purpose. In fact, it was felt that the organizations working in partnership with ILO and UN-WOMEN should share their experiences with each other and get benefit of each other's lessons learnt during the field operations. She added this exercise is expected to surface the operational problems being faced by the partner organizations during implementation of their relevant schemes.



ILO Remarks

Mr. Saad Gilani expressed his gratitude for all of the participating organizations joining in this important workshop. He also thanked the participants for travelling all the way

from different parts of the country to Sialkot. He informed participants about the background of this workshop and requested them to frankly present the actual facts and figures before the house so that an understanding of actual field problems may be developed for arriving at better planning of the initiatives and for taking appropriate decisions.

Presentation by Baidarie

Mr. Arshid Mehmood Mirza Executive Director Baidarie Sialkot made a presentation reflecting accomplishments, strengths and weaknesses of Baidarie during the preceding 17 years. Presentation on Baidarie was followed by briefing on the project titled “Integrated Support Program to Home Based Workers in Sialkot”. It included rationale for the interventions, expected output results, methodology and the progress made in accomplishment of the project objectives.

Mr. Arshid Mehmood Mirza said that thousands of women workers in Sialkot are working in private and public sector offices. They work in every kind of institutions, factories and home based units catering needs of local industry and business concerns. They are contributing through their input to maximize the performance of the entire range of social and economic service delivery mechanisms in sectors like health, education, agriculture and banking in Sialkot however those who are stitching soccer balls for the industry, in numbers surpass every other category of women workers in the district.

He added that these Home-based Workers are a major part of informal workforce which is temporarily engaged, retained unregistered, unprotected, isolated, and unorganized. The structure of the supply chain in soccer industry that established the relationship between the main manufacturing units and the home-based workers makes it very difficult to monitor the labour rights issues.

As a first step for supporting these Home-Based Workers, Baidarie has conducted a detailed Baseline Assessment on a group of 100 Home-Based Workers in Sambrial Tehsil.

Highlighting the plight of the home based women workers Mr. Mirza said



that the findings of the baseline assessment indicate that mostly young women coming from the poor family background work as home based soccer stitchers. More than half of them are un-married illiterate or less educated girls who work to supplement their family income. They are not privileged enough to have vocational training through some formal arrangements. Instead they have to rely on the coaching provided by some skilled workers living and working in the family or neighborhood. They get work orders from the middle persons and generally earn from Rs 2,001 to Rs 4,000 per month- an amount which is considerably less than the legal minimum wage of Rs: 7,000 - determined by the law. Of course in the wake of ever increasing prices of daily commodities they are highly dissatisfied with the wages they are presently getting. No written employment contract is drawn between the middleman and the home based workers to govern the terms of the toils of the workers. Almost all the home based women soccer stitchers have to work while sitting in insufficient spaces with inadequate arrangements for light, unbearable heat in summer and chilling cold in winter seasons. Because of the bad conditions of work and improper sitting postures they develop complaints of body and joint pains and related diseases.

Mr. Mirza said that the home based women soccer stitchers have very poor knowledge of the labor rights and basic requisites of Occupational Safety and Health. They have no knowledge of the rights to collective bargaining and/or formation of any labor/workers union or association, Social Security, Employees Old Age Benefit, Workers Welfare Fund and Group Insurance etc. They are however interested in changing their profession if they find some access to suitable options and opportunities for doing so. Home based workers very much desire to receive training of some alternative income generating skill and want to have access to the skill application slots.



Mr. Arshid Mirza explained that it is inevitably crucial to bring the home based women soccer stitchers out of the vicious cycle of poverty by pacing up the process of their economic and social empowerment for enabling them to enjoy reasonable choices in life.

Question Answer Session:

The briefing session by Mr. Arshid Mirza was followed by questions, queries and suggestions etc. This question-answer was hosted by Mr. Arshid Mirza. Some of the questions and their answers are given below.

Q: The poor people do not get motivated without material/tangible benefit. How did you succeed in motivating them for group formation?

Baidarie mobilizes the communities through sensitization about the existence of their basic problems and the needed measures to solve them. The content of the discussions with the communities is picked from the realities of daily life. Actual situations are placed before the community members and leading questions are put to them so that they may come up with practical solutions for hitting upon the solutions.

Q: During football stitching female workers face different health problems. What are you doing for solution of these kinds of problems?

Baidaries has set up its own hospital and local female workers get benefit of the facilities provided there. Discussions are in progress with Sialkot Chamber of Commerce Industries (SCCI) for provision of the social security facilities.

Q: What kind of help workers can obtain from SCCI related to low wages?

Home based women workers in facilitation with Baidarie and SCCI will negotiate with the industrialists to get betterment in their wages and better working conditions.

Conclusion of the Experience Sharing Meeting

While summing up the deliberations of the session Mr. Saad Gilani highlighted the following points:

- We should plan our activities keeping in view the local ground realities. These should be implemented and monitored in close working partnership with the local and directly related stakeholders. For better understanding of the problems and their solutions dialogue sessions should be conducted between employees and employers.
- Efforts to introduce 'change' in attitudes are gradual and incremental. The implementing agencies should never try to dictate and impose their self-conceived activities. Instead the interventions and activities must be designed and

implemented to cater the actual needs of the target beneficiaries through indigenous modalities.

- Support should be obtained for blending the local and external knowledge for securing the best possible results. The implementing agencies should always remain ready to face every kind of challenge and should build-up networking with other partner organizations to bring improvement in the work. We should not adopt only project approach. We should work as volunteer for the long-term benefit for the poor people.
- Partner organizations should keep an eye on the changing situations within their local areas, region/province and at country level. Referring to the recent constitutional developments in the form of 18th Amendment, there would significant changes in the Labour Market Governance which may require a changed strategy for interaction with different stakeholders.
- We should work with existing institutions instead of creating parallel new structures. Any intervention, for which there is an existing facility (e.g., trade union, training institution or health facility) in the area, should be utilized, strengthened and stimulated for better outreach to the most vulnerable communities. Particularly mentioning the Government infrastructure, he encouraged participants to work closely with them and inform them of all new developments taking place in the area – for their capacity building and better outreach.
- Enhance the visibility of interventions which *inter alia* leads to better awareness of masses and policy-makers on the critical issues like home-based workers.



Field Visit

After detailed discussions, the participants visited the project area and went to some HBW households in village Korowal. During the field visit, the visitors met different Home Based women workers and practically observed their living and working conditions. They also asked several questions to have an assessment of their

employment practices and wages and benefits etc. Every household depicted a different dimension of poverty and they had different stories – all converging on the fact that they have least resources and least opportunities.

The home visits were followed by a meeting between the trip participants and a group of home based workers. During the meeting every visitor introduced him/herself and his/her Organization's working details. They put different questions to the women workers. Summary of the question-answer sessions is as under.

Q: What did you learn from Baidarie?

Answer: Baidarie taught us about our basic rights and that we can get these rights only if we get our selves organized. We further learnt that we must get our rights. We have to recognize ourselves and learn to raise our voice and wage struggle for securing our rights. We want to get social security benefits, health facilities, education facilities and pension facilities etc. Our employers pay low wages to us. We should be given fair wages for our labor.

Q: Do you know the appropriate posture of sitting during the Soccer ball stitching?

We have no knowledge about it.

Q: What kind of health problems do you face because of football stitching?

We have to face different kinds of health problems like weakness of eye-sight, stretching muscles, knee pain, backache and Headache etc.

After discussion with the group, Mr. Sa'ad Gilani and Uzma inspected the record of the group documents.



Winding up the discussions with the group, Mr. Arshid Mahmood Mirza remarked it to be a very important occasion because of the presence of the delegates coming from three provinces of the country. He lamented that everybody violates the rights of the poor people but these

violations occur because of lack of unity in the ranks of the poor. If they get organized, vigilant and active then no one can dare to usurp their rights.

He cited the verses of holy Quran saying that God does never change the condition of any such nation who herself does not make struggle to change her lot". He further added a quotation "God helps those who help themselves".

He made a very emphatic plea to all the HBWs to provide education to their children at least till metric. He said that due to advancement in technology we have to keep pace with the world otherwise we will remain alone and behind and would never be able to get rid of poverty and the exploitations coming in its lap.

Debriefing on Field Mission

After field visit Mr. Saad invited feedback from the participants one by one. Summary of the participants' feedback is as under.

- It was good to see that home based workers are committed to bring change in their lives.
- Home based workers do not have any other option for job diversification. They are totally dependent upon football stitching.
- Home based workers are well aware about different institutional facilities. The credit goes to Baidarie for this extensive awareness raising.
- Home based workers have lot of trust upon Baidarie. This should not be broken.
- Home Based workers are looking committed and have positive attitude.
- Appreciated Baidarie's team work for building this kind of trust. This trust must be maintained. It's very sensitive matter. We have to work very consciously.
- Representatives from Baidarie welcomed all comments and pledged that they would develop a mechanism so that peoples' trust may not be broken. They suggested to conduct a study to identify locally marketable income generating skills and the slot for the application of such skills. They extended thanks for the nice and kind words of appreciation and assured that Baidarie is ready to render its services for all types of positive and productive work in the benefit of home based women workers.

Progress Review by other Partners

Next session of the day was to review the progress made by other partners in their respective areas. Representatives from each partner gave a brief description of their interventions as follows:

a. HomeNet Pakistan

- HomeNet Pakistan is implementing similar project with *Chik-makers* in Kasur District of Punjab
- A baseline for assessment of their pre-intervention status was completed
- The biggest issue for HBWs was the non-issuance of national identity cards. HomeNet has facilitated their linkages with NADRA and the process has started for issuing their ID cards
- HBWs were given Community-Management Skills Training and were organized in form of Membership-Based Organization (MBO)
- HBWs are facilitated in linking up to different microfinance institutions including Akhuwat, CWCD etc
- After motivation by HomeNet, HBWs have started saving little amount for rainy days. Although magnitude of savings is still very low.
- After linking up with NCHD, an Adult Literacy Centre has been established for HBWs in their locality
- For education of HBWs, advocacy with local affluent people was carried out and got three (3) kanals of land donated for Girls High School in the area
- A group of HBWs has been registered with Social Welfare Department of vocational training



- NCHD and EDO (Health) have assured free health facility for HBWs at the local RHC. For this purpose, EDO(H) would issue health cards to HBWs – once they get their national ID cards
- BISP officials had a meeting with HBWs and assured them of their support. Follow-up is in progress
- HBWs were informed about benefits of EOBI and they are motivated to get registered under the Universal Registration Scheme – for which they are ready.
- Linkages with other local NGOs are also established for HBWs and as a result, different micro-infrastructure including street pavement and sanitation are being improved
- HomeNet has also briefed the District Government about the HBWs issue and the District Coordination Officer (DCO) has assured full support for any initiative to help HBWs in the District

b. Rahnuma-FPAP

- FPAP-Rahnuma is working with 50 HBWs in Faisalabad – involved in making bedsheets, pillow-covers and quilts for the textile factories
- They have recently completed Baseline Study which they promised to share with ILO and UN-Women in a week time
- They have also conducted meetings with Sanatzaar and Khushali Bank for supporting HBWs and got their commitments
- They said that their prime focus is to enhance incomes of HBWs – for which they are focusing on their skills upgrading and linking them to prospective markets
- Linkages were established with Benazir Crisis Cell for legal facilitation
- Linkages established with Sarsabz Foundation for help in issuance of Social Security Cards



- From its own resources, FPAP-Rahnuma has established a model Health Clinic in the area – which is accessible for HBWs
- Khushali Bank has offered their services to HBWs under Poverty Alleviation Funds
- HBWs are also being linked with new employers for enhancing their productivity and bargaining terms
- The biggest challenge faced by FPAP-Rahnuma is to build Confidence and Trust with communities – as communities are skeptical about the role of FPAP

c. SAFWCO

- SAFWCO is working in Hyderabad District of Sindh - with HBWs involved in making artificial bouquets and recycling of clothes
- They have recently started their interventions
- Had meetings with local trade unions and lawyers for possible linkages
- They have not started the baseline study as yet



d. Thardeep Rural Development Program (TRDP)

- TRDP is working in Umerkot District of Sindh – with HBWs involved in making handicrafts
- They have also started recently and are in the process of group formation for HBWs
- They have the facility of providing soft-loans to communities under PPAF



- They have also facility of providing health coverage to HBWs in collaboration with another NGO named HANDS

Assessment of Progress on “Decent Work Deficits” for HBWs

The last session of the long working day was to get feedback of participants on the work carried out by Baidarie – in particular reference with the nine areas of Decent Work Deficits and to know what other organizations have learnt from Baidarie and plan to proceed on these areas. The representatives from four “visiting organizations” were asked to sit in organization-specific groups and fill out a format which mentioned the nine Decent Work Deficits and the performance of all partners against each area. An analysis of this working is attached at Annex-3.



Advocacy Event for Home-Based Workers

Hotel One Sublime Chowk, Sialkot: 30th January 2011

Remarks by Chief Guest

Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan, Federal Minister for Women Development

Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan assured the home based women workers that Federal Ministry of women development will be working in close collaboration with ILO and UN-WOMEN to introduce a “National Policy for Home-Based Workers” and effect legislation for generating such an atmosphere in which the process of economic and social development of women workers may be reasonably paced up.

Dr. Firdous emphatically highlighted the need for taking practical steps to tangibly deliver the much needed facilities to the poor. She was enormously critical of those who use the name and vote of the poor to have access to the power and after getting them elevated to the powerful offices at the cost of the poor, they forget their basic constituencies.



The federal minister lamented that the poor continue to be exploited in an atmosphere where “might is right” is becoming order of the day. She however assured that the present government plans to take all the needed pro-poor steps for offering them better choices in life. She acknowledged that home based workers are also “workers” but unfortunately the prevalent legal framework do not accept them to be so - hence they are not considered entitled for any kind of social security benefits and old age pension. She said that she will bring the issue of exploitation of the home based workers into the notice of the President of Pakistan and will seek his support for necessary legislative and administrative measures to improve the lot of those neglected women workers who, by virtue of their un-noticed hard toils considerably contribute to the strength of the national economy.

Remarks by UN-Women

Mr Sagheer Bukhari, Senior Programme Officer

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Saghir Bukharie said that his organization would be enhancing UN Program regarding home based workers for facilitating their access to their vitally basic rights. He added that UN-WOMEN is supporting pilot initiatives in Sialkot and other parts of the country for empowerment of the home based workers and basing on the lessons learnt these models will be offered to the government agencies for their replication and up-scaling in other parts of the country.

Remarks by ILO

Syed Saad Hussain Gilani, Project Manager TGP

Mr. Saad Gilani shared that in spite of equal population of men and women in Paksitan, the share of women workers is hardly 27 percent. More than 70 of of the working women work in agriculture sector and out of every 100 working women only one woman works in Formal Economy. He persuaded the Federal Minister to bring the details of the excesses meted out to women workers in to the notice of the policy and decision makers in state structures and try to pace up legislation for providing access to those rights to the home based women workers as are admissible to common workers in the formal sectors of the national economy.

He briefly delineated upon ILO's work in Pakistan – for promoting Decent Work in close collaboration with Government, Employers and Workers organizations.

He also elaborated the purpose of pilot interventions on “Integrated Support to Home-Based Workers” and the details of the five pilots in different parts of the country. He informed the gathering that ILO and UN-Women are jointly supporting the Ministry of Labour & Manpower to finalize draft National Policy on Home-Based Workers in line with ILO Convention 177 and present the same for approval by Federal Cabinet – so that HBWs could become eligible to claim their basic rights as workers. He requested the Federal Minister to support this policy whenever it is presented in the Cabinet.

Presentation by Baidarie

Prof. Arshid Mehmood Mirza

Addressing the participants of the seminar Prof. Arshid demanded that Government of Pakistan should take immediate steps to formulate and adopt National Policy on Home Based Workers in line with the requirements of the ILO Convention 177. The federal and provincial governments should also expedite necessary legislation and take much needed administrative measures for accomplishment of the objectives of the policy for the home based workers.

Prof. Mirza said that it is necessary that Home Based Workers should be legally accepted as “workers” ensuring that they receive at least the legal minimum wage prescribed by the government. It should be the legal requirement that working environment is safe and hygienically up to the mark. There should be legal arrangements in place that the home based workers have access to the social security, old age pension, workers welfare grant and other privileges and entitlements.

Prof. Mirza said that in wake of the facts that due to shift of the soccer ball business to other countries, sophistication of the production mechanisms and rapidly adopted automations the requirements of soccer stitchers is fast decreasing in the Sialkot Industry. It is feared that very soon thousands of home based women workers will lose their major means to earn their livelihood. Hence it is necessary that access to opportunities of job diversification should be facilitated for them. This may be done through imparting training to them on marketable income generating skills and linking the trained workers with job opportunities in the local markets.

Welcome Remarks

Ms Hina Noureen, President Baidarie

Addressing the house Ms. Hina Noureen shared the findings of the base line assessment done by Baidarie Sialkot. She said that according to the findings of the research study mostly the young females coming from the poor family background were found working as home based stitchers in the soccer ball manufacturing industry. Slightly more than half of this lot happens to be un-married illiterate or less educated girls who work to supplement their family income. In addition to doing the home based work, almost all of these women perform their domestic duties like cooking, washing and cleaning the house but their performance at the domestic front gets compromised because of their excessive engagements in home-based soccer stitching work.

Ms. Hina said that there are no formal training arrangements for the beginners to learn the soccer stitching skill. Home based soccer stitchers get work orders from the middle persons and earn their bread in great difficulty. The employers/sub-contractors do not issue any wage slip to the workers. The home-based women workers are not satisfied with the wages they are getting presently. In their opinion the wages are very low while the prices of essential commodities are increasing on day to day basis without any reasonable and effective check on them.

“There exist no written employment contract between the middleman and the home based workers to govern and regulate the employment practices and ensure availability of labor rights. Almost all the home based workers work in uncomfortable environment, insufficient space, improper light, and unbearable heat in summer and chilling cold in winter seasons.” Ms. Hina added.

She said that the home based workers have complaints of body and joint pains and related diseases due to uncomfortable sitting postures and working in unhealthy environment. Their work requires them to meticulously engage their eye sight and apply full force of their arms/shoulders related strength so that they may do fast stitching and bind good knots. This kind of work causes them to suffer from body pains etc. The study indicates that neither the home based workers have been trained on the requirements of Occupational Safety and Health and use of Personal Protective Equipment nor have they been provided with the needed Personal Protective Equipment. The contractor/middleman provides them with no health care facilities.

They usually visit the Govt health care facilities where the condition of diagnostic and curative facilities is just hopeless. The study indicates that the home-based women workers do not have balanced diet intake.

Ms. Hina said that according to the findings of the research study the overwhelming majority of the women workers expressed their interest to change their profession if they find some access to suitable options and opportunities for doing so. They desired to get training of some alternative income generating skill so that they may earn more money to help and support in improvement of their socio-economic status.

The others who spoke on the occasion included Kahwaja Zaka-ud-din, Abdul Shakoor Mirza, the women home based soccer stitchers and Rana Shahzad Ahmad.



Participants – Review Meeting

1. Mr. Saad Gilani International Labor Organization,
2. Mr. Sagheer Hussain Bukhari UN-WOMEN,
3. Ms. Uzma Quresh UN-WOMEN
4. Mr. Ikramullah Khan, UN-WOMEN
5. Mr. Muhammad Javed Pasha, Senior Programme Officer Home Net Pakistan
6. Ms. Nabeela Yaqoob, Programme Officer Home Net Pakistan
7. Ms. Madiha Kazi, Manager Enterprise Support Unit TRDP
8. Ms. Kulsoom Sindhu, Social Organizer, Umer kot TRDP
9. Mr. Abdul Rasheed Chandio, Project Coordinator SAWFCO
10. Ms. Shabana Imtiaz, Training Coordinator SAWFCO
11. Ms. Uzma Memon, Social Organizer SAWFCO
12. Ms. Mobeen Aslam, Project Manager Rahnuma FPAP
13. Mr. Farrukh Bashir, Program Officer Rahnuma FPAP
14. Ms. Hina Noureen Baidarie
15. Mr. Arshid Mehmood Mirza, Baidarie, Sialkot

AGENDA FOR REVIEW MEETING

Time	Activity	Facilitated by
Briefing and Experience Sharing at Baidarie Office		
0900 hrs	Recitation from Holy Quran	Participant
0905 hrs	Introduction of participants	Participants
0915 hrs	Welcome Note	Baidarie
0920 hrs	Objectives of meeting & agenda	ILO & UN-Women
0930 – 1030 hrs	Briefing by Baidarie on integrated support to HBWs	Baidarie
1030 – 1045 hrs	Tea Break	
1045 – 1200 hrs	Discussion and experience sharing	Participants
1200 hrs	Lunch	Baidarie
Field Visit to Meet HBWs and Discuss issues		
1300 hrs	Departure for field	Participants
1330 – 1500 hrs	Discussion with HBWs and physical observations of their working conditions	Participants
1500 hrs	Plenary meeting: debriefing;	Participants
1600 hrs	Review of partner organizations	ILO
1620 hrs	Concluding remarks	UN-Women
1630 hrs	Refreshments / Tea	Baidarie

Participants of Advocacy Workshop for HBWs

1. Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan, Federal Minister of Women Development, Government of Pakistan Islamabad.
2. Mr. Saad Gilani, Project Manager TGP, International Labor Organization (ILO)
3. Mr. Sagheer Hussain Bukhari, Senior Program Officer, UN-WOMEN
4. Ms. Uzma Quresh, Program Officer, UN-WOMEN
5. Mr. Ikramullah Khan, Finance Assistant, UN-WOMEN
6. Kh. Zaka-ud-din Former President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot
7. Mr. Mirza Abdul Shakoor Executive Director Community Development Concern Sialkot.
8. Representatives of Partner Organizations (HomeNet, Rahnuma-FPAP, SAFWCO & TRDP)
9. Ms Hina Noureen, Baidarie
10. Mr Arshid Mehmood Mirza, Baidarie ,
11. Home Based Women Soccer ball Stitchers (50+)
12. District Line Departments (20+)
13. Media and Academia (30+)

Progress Review on overcoming “Decent Work Deficits”

DW Deficit	Baidarie	Rahnuma-FPAP	TRDP	SAFWCO	HomeNet Pakistan
Employment Deficit	- Baidarie is looking for alternate source of employment – but did not succeed as yet - More employment options can be explored - Awareness raised well	Planning to impart training in new skills and increasing access to market	Plan to give training on product diversification which hopefully would help increase orders	Plan to raise awareness for group formation and get employee benefits from Government	Developing linkages with market
Rights Deficit	- After orientation sessions, HBWs are aware of their legal rights and they are planning to access their rights through organized forums - Done a good job in this area	Will replicate the best practice of Baidarie in Faisalabad to make HBWs aware of their basic rights	- HBWs are not yet aware at all about their rights. - Plan to engage legal advisors, HomeNet and Sabah Pakistan	Plan to raise awareness on Labour Laws and ILO conventions and human rights	Awareness raising has completed and linkages with other partner organizations on going
Social Protection Deficit	- The process is ongoing - Can be further explored - Awareness raised adequately - Need more !!!	For this purpose, facilitated linkages with BBSCC and Sarsabz and other service providers and NGOs	Plan to develop social protection module for HBWs	Will conduct trainings and social protection IEC material	Linkages developed with EOBI, BISP, Health and Education Departments for benefiting HBWs
Representation	HBWs are organized in	Formed groups of	Hopefully, our	Preparing	Following the

DW Deficit	Baidarie	Rahnuma-FPAP	TRDP	SAFWCO	HomeNet Pakistan
Deficit	formal groups – having proper record • HBWs are well represented and are well versed • Done well on this front	HBWs and established a permanent representation channel of HBW	beneficiary group will be model for further projects	communities for representing their work and activities	footprints and will replicate the same intervention
Growth Deficit	• No tangible progress as yet • HBWs have shown that there are growth prospects and Baidarie is guiding them towards it	• Beneficiary HBWs will be facilitated to enhance their income and improve working conditions by skills training and other related courses	• All TRDP available factors would be used to ensure growth of HBWs	• Community group will be formed	• Have organized the community and developed local leadership to guide the community towards growth
Lack of Access to Financial resources	• Process is on going • Linkages with microfinance should be developed • Linkages required with MFIs, BISP, EOBI and WWF • Depending on support organizations	• Held a meeting with microfinance institutions to facilitate HBWs in getting small loans. Follow-up required	• Plan to provide soft loans, BISP and microfinance projects	• Will develop linkages with MFIs, BISP, EOBI and Workers welfare Fund	• Success of linkages depend on support organizations
Absence of Fair Wage System	• This seems challenging as there is no substitute employment in the area • Plan to give trainings on fair wage and linkage with other networks	• It is being done by having awareness raising sessions with HBWs and middle-persons	• Plan to link the HBWs with Sabah, HomeNet and trade unions focusing on fair wages as well as give training	• Hold dialogues with trade union and other stakeholders for minimum standard wages for HBWs	•

DW Deficit	Baidarie	Rahnuma-FPAP	TRDP	SAFWCO	HomeNet Pakistan
Lack of freedom of association and bargain	- Awareness, as a first step, is there. - HBWs are aware of thei fact that they lack the freedom of association and bargain. Linkages with trade union should be developed - Created space for the community for freedom of association and bargaining - Need more !!!	Awareness raising sessions are ongoing	Plan to link HBWs with trade unions and advocate for them	Plan to conduct training and awareness session for freedom of association and bargaining	Connected HBWs with market and arranged business management skills training
Occupational Safety & Health hazards	- Performed well on this point. Provided health service from existing facility – owned by Baidarie - Further trainings are planned - Further support is required in this sector	Will be dealt via various activities planned in work plan and meeting sessions	Occupational therapist would be engaged	Planning to conduct training and awareness sessions	
Any other	Good rapport developed with communities and seem committed			Learnt how to build rapport with communities – with commitment	