Boosting Self-Employment among the Youth

Fartun Abdi Omar and Rahma Abdi Omar are sisters and beneficiaries of the Youth for Change (Y4C) programme. Fartun is 20 years old and Rahma is 17 years old and both live with their mother in Mogadishu; the town they were born and grew up in. As children, they had attended Al Harameyn Orphanage Centre in Hamar Jajab where they studied the Holy Quran. Apart from this, they also received formal education and managed to reach class five before dropping out due to deteriorating security in the town. As a result, they stayed at home and helped their mother as she was the sole breadwinner. Although they were forced to drop out of school, they still believed that they would continue with their studies in the future.

Middle of last year, they had a chance to attend one of UNDP social rehabilitation training in Mogadishu where they underwent a six months social studies training course.

After completing the course, Fartun, Rahma and their fellow trainees were chosen as beneficiaries to the economic reintegration phase of the Youth for Change. They were imparted with business and entrepreneurship skills training after which they participated in a business plan competition which aimed to award the top 30 beneficiaries with business start-ups grants. Fortunately, they were among the top 30 and each won a start-up grant of $700. In addition, they also participated in a financial management training course.

The two sisters with the consultation of their mentors decided to buy a bajaj (tuk-tuk) - a public transport which is widely used in Mogadishu and generally in the big towns in Somalia. Since the money they won was not enough they borrowed additional amount to reach the price money from a creditor. Once they bought the bajaj, they hired their older brother Mohamed, 24 years old, who was jobless to be the driver.

“We have a great ambition of continuing our business, repaying the loan and buying many other bajajs, and applying what we learnt from the training we received. I strongly believe that we will be able to invest in other businesses if we manage our net income from this business effectively and will not stop until we have accomplished our goal” Fartun said.

Mohamed had this to say about the business, “On good days I manage to secure up to $30 per day, if I deduct the fuel expenses $5 and $5 of family food basket and $20 will be saved. I have made loyal customers who have my phone number and they call me whenever they need taxi.”
Creating Employment Opportunities and Improving Accessibility to Markets Baidoa, Somalia

With the support of the Government of Japan, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Community Road Empowerment (CORE) continue to promote durable solutions for Somali returnees. In Baidoa, an employment creation project utilizing labour technologies through Do-nou technology has been directly creating employment as well as improving physical infrastructure promoting wider inclusive economic growth.

Under the ‘Durable Solutions for Somali Refugee returnees through Repatriation, Assistance and Promoting Sustainable Solutions’ project funded by the Government of Japan, 100 metres of Cunaye road was rehabilitated using Do-nou technology which has opened up a further 400 metres of road which links to the main Baidoa trading market. USD 7,200 was injected into the local economy in form of wages.

Gender equity aspects were a key issue and all the stakeholders ensured women were assigned the appropriate tasks within the Do-nou road building process. The trainees were highly appreciative of the opportunity to learn; demonstrating their appetite for appropriate, practical, skills training. The resultant work was of a quality satisfying trainees, trainers and an impressed community now able to use the rehabili-

“W e are happy with the support from ILO and the Government of Japan,” said Mohamed Amin, a beneficiary who is a returnee from Daabab refugee camp in Kenya.

“We are happy with the support from ILO and the Government of Japan. Thank you to CORE for the skills. We are also happy because through the project we have acquired employment and we are able to earn a living,” said Mohamed Amin, a beneficiary who is a returnee from Daabab refugee camp in Kenya.

ILO is committed to work with the people of Baidoa and its administration to peace and stability to the region by creating decent work opportunities and will continue to draw on quality support from CORE regionally.

Prior to the commencement of the rehabilitation of the road, CORE and ILO trained 5 engineers and 25 beneficiaries from the refugee returnees and host community on Do-nou technology and basic road maintenance. The training was divided into two sessions with the first being theory and the second very practical on-the-job training. During the theory session the participants were taken through the theoretical aspects of Do-nou Technology and its application. During on- job training the participants were able to put into practise the skills learn during the theory session.
Habiba Aden Isak, 25 years old, was born, raised and lives in Baidoa with her husband and family. Habiba has three children, 2 boys and a girl. After severe droughts hit Bay region in 2010, Habiba and her children were displaced from Baidoa crossing the Ethiopian border to receive survival for her children. As she did not have any relatives in Dollo Ado-Ethiopia and with limited support from humanitarian agencies, Habiba decided leave Dollo Ado where she was a refugee for two years and return to her home in Baidoa.

Before she left Baidoa, Habiba used to help her mother in a home furniture business which later failed. Habiba returned as she believed the situation in Baidoa was now improving and better than life in the refugee camp. “Life in the camps is tough due to shortage of water and food as well as lack of employment to make income. We used to receive 10kgs of sorghum per month which was not enough to satisfy our family food needs” she said.

Habiba was among the selected caseloads for the returnees’ project implemented by ILO with funding from the Government of Japan. She underwent the entrepreneurship skills training where she gained knowledge on business management and entrepreneurship skills.

“The training has helped me learn skills like how to attract customers, develop a business plan and all aspects of business management” Habiba said.

“The training has helped me learn skills like how to attract customers, develop a business plan and all aspects of business management” she said. “I feel a light was shed on my inner entrepreneurial skills and I expect that I will be selected for the grants so I can make my dreams come true” she added “However if I do not get the startup grants, I am really satisfied with the knowledge I have received and I believe I can change my dreams into a reality by starting a business using the skills gained.”
As part of the support provided by International Labour Organization, Joint Programme on Local Governance and Decentralised Service Delivery (ILO/JPLG) to the central and local government administrations across Somalia, a set of technical engineering equipment was provided to seven of the JPLG target District Public Works Departments in Somaliland - Berbera, Borama, Burao, Gabiley, Hargeisa, Odhweine and Sheikh during a hand over ceremony at the recently concluded JPLG Review Meeting held in Hargeisa, Somaliland from 20-21st January 2015.

The equipment which included surveying, materials testing and other basic engineering tools as well as engineering software, computers and printers, is part of the broader package of capacity building support provided to enhance the local governments in their public works and service delivery functions. This includes technical assistance in the strengthening of institutional structures, development of public works standards and norms, systems and tools as well as in training across various aspects from public works project cycle management, surveying, materials testing and employment intensive road works technology.

On receiving the equipment on behalf of all the Mayors present, the Mayor of Burao Mohamed Yusuf Abdirahman and the Director General Ministry of Interior Abdisamad Omer both acknowledged with thanks the continued support provided by ILO through the JPLG to local governments which has enhanced the local government’s ability to plan and deliver basic services to their constituents. Also present was Lydia Wetugi from Sida representing the JPLG donors DANIDA, DFID, EC, Sida and the Swiss Government; as well as representatives from the JPLG UN agencies UN Habitat, UNCDF, UNDP and UNICEF.