Project 3-B1

Region: Asia
Country: India

Project:
Decent Employment for Women in India

Donors:
United States Department of Labor

Project Description:
Need for the project -
In India, the large majority of women workers are engaged in the informal economy, which is characterised by low skill levels, productivity, and pay; lack of social protection; and poor working conditions. These women languish in poverty in urban slums, with hardly any access to proper health services, basic nutrition, or child care facilities. Critical constraints on these women achieving better quality employment are lack of credit, limited access to education, skill training, market related skills, market knowledge, and new technologies. There is also a lack access to standard skill training programmes/methodologies available for use in non-formal training of this largely illiterate/semi-literate group.

Therefore, there is a need for specific interventions to improve the productive and social base of these women, to bring them into the socio-economic mainstream and enhance equality of opportunities and treatment between men and women.

It was in this context that the ILO, together with the Training Directorate in the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE), Government of India, began project activities over three years ago. It is being implemented in the cities of Delhi and Bangalore through NGOs working with urban slum communities and Field Institutions of the Women's Training Directorate (MOLE).

Objective -
To improve the skill levels and employability of women in the urban informal economy and ensure that women trained are organized and have necessary support to translate training into decent employment leading to improved family and child welfare.

Activities -
The focus of the project has been to make interventions on skills training and productive employment, in a holistic manner, to improve the socio-economic position of target women and their families. Following activities have been undertaken so far:

- Conducting community level participatory exercises among target communities to assess training needs and identify potential economic opportunities, resulting in training-trade linkages.
- Capacity building of formal training institutes and NGOs to impart demand driven, quality, non-formal training to target women, through development of their training infrastructure, training their trainers and preparation of standard, non-formal training curricula and material.
- Providing non-formal skills training to target women in traditional and new, non-traditional employable skills and simultaneously providing them support facilities (like counselling, health services, supplementary nutrition and child-care facilities), awareness raising on women workers’ rights / life skills and post training assistance (employment counseling, entrepreneurship training/development, establishing employment/market linkages and networks with micro-finance institutions and organizing women into production/credit/self-help groups/associations) to enhance income earning opportunities and productive employment. About 4,400 women have so far been provided such a holistic package of services.
Forming linkages between formal and non-formal training systems through the extension of training facilities of formal training institutes to cover non-formal, model training for target women.

Setting up a database centre to develop systems for providing information on non-formal training facilities and establishing an audio-visual lab for preparing short multi-media training clippings in critical elements of skills development to train the largely illiterate/semi-literate target group.

Preparing tested life skills training packages and establishing a Resource Centre on Women Labour to document information on women labour and women workers’ rights.

Conducting preparatory exercises in Mumbai and Kolkata to facilitate the replication of pilot interventions for a larger number of women in a wider geographical area.

Being a pilot project, it seeks to strengthen linkages between constituents in an effort to ensure that pilot interventions made so far can be sustained and replicated on a larger scale in future.

**Gender and Ethnic Components:**
The project is gender specific.

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