

Livelihood Skills & Micro-Credit Program

Education & Livelihood Project



BOARD
(Bureau of Obligate and Accompanier for Rural Development)
Bihar, India



Year 8 - Budget £ 31,843

INR 2677741.00

Project Timeline

FUNDED

FEB 2010

March 2019



Overview

The people of Bihar state have lived mostly in or near to extremely remote rural area. They are living in poverty with limited education, few skills and low self-respect. Skills-training is expensive in Bihar. Lack of low-cost training institute in rural or at local level keep them away from availing the benefits of livelihood skills. BOARD aims to help break this cycle by providing quality, low-cost skills training program. BOARD runs employable skill training programs in rural and semi-urban areas for young girls and women whom not being able to get it because of financial constraint.

This project has assisted poor and marginalized youth, adolescent girls & women aged 14-25 years in Daniawan block and Fatuha urban area of Patna district, Bihar. For youth, the training program is in motor re-winding and diesel engine pump-set repairing, which have big employability opportunity in rural Bihar. For girls & women, they provided computer, tailoring & embroidery training which are a tool that changes their reality at home and in local community. Dedicated staff members, whom have demonstrated with high standards of integrity and commitment for teaches this courses.

During eight years of the program, 376 girls & women from vulnerable families have been trained in computer, tailoring & embroidery skills. This provides them with extra income to help with the family expenses. 240 young boys from rural and Fatuha slum areas were provided motor re-winding and diesel engine pump-set repairing training. A few students (approx.12) dropped out for some time from training for unforeseen reasons. The facilitator maintained contact, visited them in their homes and encouraged them to continue study when their circumstances changed. These skills open the door for future employment and the possibility of starting a small business.

Small Loan, Big Impact!

The project targets entrepreneurial poor women in Fatuha semi urban and rural areas, creating self-help groups trust with five women per group. It is called Joint Liabilities Group (JLG). These women have the desire to help themselves break the cycle of poverty but lack of the start-up capital to run their own small business. This is made possible through an initial small loan and basic business training. It enables the women to work, earn a constant income, meet the needs of their household, and establishes savings and brings hope for entire families.

Project Aim

Skill Training: The initiatives aim to increasing employability opportunities in poor and vulnerable school drop-out youth & adolescent girls aged 14-25 through vocational training to become self-reliant and being able to provide for the basic needs of their families.

Micro-finance: Providing working capital to active women aged 20-35 of the vulnerable communities to start up their own income generating activities (IGAs) so that they can bridge the abyss their present poverty and meet out family basic needs and education of their children.

Objectives: 1(a)

Empower and build skills of 376 poor girls & women in Computer, Tailoring & Embroidery (Tailoring: 128, Embroidery: 160 and Computer: 88)

Impact



296 girls & women (targeted – 288) received training in vocational skills such as Tailoring & Embroidery and entrepreneurship management. Tailoring sessions include making garments, apron, bags and the like as well as mending work. Embroidery sessions included using stitches as a decorative feature & to take up any type of embroidery work as well as household articles apply them in various garments and articles.



88 girls & women received training in basic computer skills, entrepreneurship and financial management. The course of Computer Applications include develop skills in using OS, MS Office, DOS, Windows for general purpose and enhance skills in programming through C and C++. Further, the experience has consolidated by way of project work by applying the skills in developing a simple application. These are helping girls & women to provide an income-generating stream.

Objectives: 1(b)

Empower and build skills of 240 poor & vulnerable youth in Motor Re-winding and Diesel Engine Pump Set Repairing. (Motor Re-winding: 80, DEP Set: 160)

Impact



236 youth received vocational skills training in Motor winding and Diesel engine pump set repairing and entrepreneurship management. Now, they are able to do these types of machine windings & repairing.

They gained knowledge in general procedure for Rewinding - such as Tools required for Rewinding Armature, Rotor (taking data from original winding), No. of turns, types of winding, Gauge of wire, weight of winding, wire shape of coils, No. of layers, winding pitch, method of removing old coils connection, cleaning & preparation of slots, Methods of preparation of formers and inserting the coils, Taping of coils final etc.

These courses not only developed self-ability but also provided employment/self-employment opportunities.

Objectives: 2

Enhance employment/self-employment and self-reliance to youth, girls and women

Results/Outcome

Created excellent opportunities for the School dropouts and Xth or Xth failed candidates by these courses which develops the self-ability. Basic skills training were provided by experienced trainers to 10 participants per batch for six months. These trainings helped youth, women and girls in particular trades to gain vocational skills to earn a living. This is providing an income-stream as there is a demand for this type of service. The results are -

(a) Out of 296 (181 girls & 115 women) trainees in Tailoring & Embroidery courses, 198 trainees (67%) (Employed: 57 & Self-employed: 141) have gained employability in the existing market /job availability situation and 41 trainees (14%) have gone up for other technical courses. 33 girls (11%) have married after training and using her skill as well.

(b) Out of 80 youth, 79 youth trainees received training in Motor Re-winding course from 2010 to 2014, 68 trainees (86%) (Employed: 53 & Self-employed: 15) have gained employability in the local market, factories, lathe machine/mechanical workshop etc. and 05 trainees (6%) have gone up for higher education.

(c) 157 youth trainees in Diesel Engine Pump Set repairing courses, 139 trainees (88.5%) (Employed: 74 & Self-employed: 65) have gained employability in the local market, own village, factories, Agriculture workshop etc. and 11 trainees (7%) have gone up for higher education.

This helped the students and will hope enable a better space in the future.

Small Loan, Big Impact for August'2015 to March'2019



The project beneficiaries were chosen through group meetings and individual interactions that are organized periodically by BOARD at different community places in the target area. During these meetings and interaction programs, the probable beneficiaries were informed about the needs and benefits of the program for them. While choosing the beneficiaries, preference were given to the poor and vulnerable women who are unemployed or engaged in small business, earning very low income and have the right zeal to take loan for their business betterment.

After selection, BOARD organized a one day training session using a joyful game, to provide business strategies to beneficiaries, then provided small loans to the beneficiaries and assistant them to start a small business/improve or build their businesses. Each beneficiary is able to borrow 3 times, in increasing amounts as original and subsequent loans when they repaid.

Over the period of the project 165 loans were distributed, including repeat loans also. The repayment rate is 96.5%, a very acceptable rate, given the poverty and the literacy levels of some of the borrowers. In fact, our implementer/credit officer states that he had some concerns due to the low literacy and Numeracy skills of some of the participants. But, these people have surprised him with their good ability to implement business plans and develop thriving businesses. As the money is repaid, the original capital returns to the pool to be re-lent to others beneficiary in need.

Overall Impact

165



Loans were distributed to 165 unbanked women micro-entrepreneurs

living in the 2 urban and 2 rural targeted areas of Fatuha, Khushrupur and Daniawan blocks of Patna district, Bihar - not far from capital city, Patna. These women are specifically targeted and motivated.

825 dependents of the clients being served

benefited indirectly through the loan as profits that were used to educate children, provide essential healthcare, improved good living standards in general.

825



The operational cost for each new client

1000



for Year 3 is approx. Rs.1000/- Micro-loan programs (when done well) are cost effective and strategic in helping bringing the poor out of poverty - a hand up, not a hand out. These women often go onto second, third and fourth loans as they build confidence and skills. They are supported and mentored.

An additional 40 new clients have been added to the Year 5 target

due to increase by revolving fund. Hope, next year will be more 40 new clients will be targeted.

This is a revolving loan scheme in regular basis in the project areas. Groups of 5 women each are given business training and small loans to improve or build their businesses. They are then mentored and encouraged through group meetings. The aim is to focus on the poorest in the community, so they can gain self-worth and live dignified lives.

The focus is on helping them become self-sufficient, able to provide for their families needs, including paying School fees and being able to buy medicines for Health problems, when necessary.

All loan recipients meet strict selection criteria to make sure that it is the poorest whose have not access to the loans from any other institutions. Loans are paid back with a small amount of interest. As funds are paid back they become available for others to borrow, or for the same person to access another loan.

The loans, business training and moral support through mentoring have made a difference in the lives of the beneficiaries. Our implementer had this to say about one beneficiary:

"Rinku Devi a lady in Fatuha was testifying that through the loans and the trainings she has acquired from the Tzedek's project, she has been able to raise enough income that has enabled her to pay her children's school fees, food and medication. Her daughter has finished university education; which would have been so hard before she joined the BOARD's group."



Savita 's story

Savita, is 45 years old widow and belongs to a very poor family. Her husband died fifteen years ago. She has three children, one daughter and two sons, lives in Govindpur, Fatuha. After the death of her husband, she and her children were suffering from many antisocial elements and by her family members. She started small business with little capital when first child was 12 years old. Due to very meager income, it was very difficult for her family to live a good life. She was also struggling to adequately restock her business in a timely way and this resulted in lost sales opportunities. A friend suggested that taking a loan from BOARD office could provide her with working capital to increase more stock.

Savita has a small business (vegetable selling) at Fatuha town near railway crossing. She took her first loan INR 10,000/- in July'17 and added more type of vegetables to her stock. She has repaid this loan on time and taken a second loan of INR 20,000/-for adding some fruit items. In this business, she is now getting good profit. The income from the vegetable & fruit shop has raised her economic status now. As per her information, she is getting profit of INR 500- 600 per day. Today, Savita is capable of taking care of her family and also timely paying loan instalments. The micro-credit support has helped Savita living a life of dignity, respect and self-reliance. Savita Devi says that it would not been possible if there would have no financial assistance from BOARD. She hopes to increase this amount on her next loan as her business is showing growth.

Well done Savita!

CERTIFICATION



Ms. Galia Shilo Sum and Lucy Cohen from Tzedek, UK attended the Graduation Ceremony in Shahjahanpur, Patna, Bihar (India). She said,

“There was an air of excitement as students came forward to receive their Certificates. The students were asked to design on cloth and the standard of the sewing was seen with many creative designs. Not only have the students obtained a relevant and useful skill to provide an income, I could sense the feeling of achievement and self-esteem that the students gained from this course.”

We are thrilled that not only have these women and girls learned skills which will pull them from poverty, but are also engaged in building future and restoration of family status.

Thanks you to all the students!

Managing Director, Mr. Verma said, ***“Our one aim is to bring together different ethnic groups and to assist women to recover from traditional practice of discrimination of over decades. We observed that economically empowered women are stronger to ever tackle any situations. These courses were open to all to provide an opportunity for those from different caste and religions to mingle and get to know each other.”***

I want to be a tailor!

"My name is Rani Devi. I am grateful for the training and for what I have already learned. The classes were so motivating. I know that if the trainers continue teaching like this, all students would be well trained. I know that this project is more valuable for me. When someone is trained, they are respected in the society, and not just dependent on income of their husband. My dream is to be a tailor."

I belong to backward community and have two children. My husband is a daily wage earner and which is also not regular income. Both of them are very much concerned about their children education.

I wanted to do work to improve the poor economic situation of our family but unable to get a job due to my literacy. I was basically interested in stitching work but never received training on Tailoring before. I joined under the scheme of Livelihood & Entrepreneurship Training of BOARD and received training for 6 months from Feb.'2012 to July'2012. The training was valuable for me. With this basic training, I started doing tailoring work of my neighbors first which was liked very much by all. To further spread this work, I borrowed Rs 10,000 as loan from our SHG (Self Help Group). From this money, I bought a sewing machine and all other kinds of tailoring materials. Initially, finished products have been sold to local markets with support of BOARD and beginning to earn Rs 3000 per month on an average.

Now, I am getting regular orders of ladies & baby clothes that increase considerably during marriages and social functions. Since 2016, I am getting enough work orders and have to take help of other classmate friends to complete work orders in time. I am very much thankful to TZEDEK and BOARD helping me to live a life of dignity and prosperity.



Success Story of Komal



Komal Kumari belongs to Schedule Caste (SC) family lives in village Govindpur, Fatuha, Patna. She left her studies after 10th class due to the poor socio-economic condition of her father. She joined BOARD in April'17 to learn skill in embroidery work under Tzedek program. After the end of the training, she started hand embroidery work from home and taking order from the shops of the local area, who do sale and business in embroidery products. But the real challenge for them was to how to run the businesses because it demands capitals (tools & equipments, furniture etc.) for its success.

For this purpose, she took a loan of Rs 10,000/- from BOARD Micro Fin Seva Unit and established a workshop at home. Initially, she faced problems in getting more order but when her embroidery products has liked by the users in the area, she started getting more orders from the local shop owners.

She is now generating income of approximately Rs.6000/- per month from eight hours work and also saving some money for her family and future requirements after loan repayment. The work has changed her life now and empowered her economically as well as socially. She has become a motivation point for other trainees also. She is very much thankful to TZEDEK and BOARD to give skill training helping her to live a life of dignity and prosperity.

Computers can impart knowledge along with basic literacy skills!

Jyoti Kumari said *"I never imagined that I will ever be able to put my hands-on computers as the part of basic literacy knowledge. It was a tremendous experience for me. It's like an adventure journey that I never thought of. I have now learned all the basics of computing and had feel good doing it myself on my own laptop."*

Nitu Kumari said *"I never thought that I would get a chance to learn computers. I am very happy to be part of this training. People who come from backward communities like me can never imagining being computer literate. I am very happy to gain knowledge of computers and becoming more confident about myself. When I was given a Laptop by my father, I was very excited and has promises to teach my young brother and neighbor children at BOARD computer literacy centre."*



Rinki is 22 years old and comes from a poor family. She actually finished school and even studied a Bachelor of Science at Magadh University. She struggled to find a job due to lack of her computer knowledge. She was overjoyed to find out about the BOARD training institute, where in a small fee, she completed the computer training which has enhanced her opportunities for employment.

Rinki enrolled herself in the computer training centre at Fatuha in year 2015 (from Feb.'15), and took the training with great enthusiasm and dedication.

After passing out, she cleared the difficult qualifying exam of a Publication firm, Patna and now working as a Data Entry Operator in Malhotra Books Publication Pvt. Ltd., Patna and earning Rs.8000/- per month. She has now become a supporting hand for her family.

She said - ***"very thankful to this centre for building my confidence and skill. BOARD VTC is doing a very good job for the girls of rural community like me."***

Soni (Computer Instructor) said, *"We have had such good feedback from the trainees - they have really enjoyed the interactive nature of the teaching, exposure to topics that may not necessarily be covered in local teaching and the opportunity to learn new technology. The community is at the heart of this project. Now, that the training has been completed detailed follow-up and evaluation should be carried out to determine possible expansion of this program in the rural areas of Patna district."*

We are pleased that the programs have been a resounding success – thank you for Tzedek support to this project. A small amount has made a big difference in our areas!

Subodh' Story



Subodh Kumar belongs to a poor family living at Shahjahanpur, Patna. He is the elder son of Sri Jagadish Prasad, who has a small sweet shop in the village. But he was eager to do something worthwhile for improving the situation of his family. He contacted BOARD when Tzedek program started in Feb.'2010. He opted for mechanic program in Diesel Pump Set and Generator Repairing trade. He completed the training successfully with good theoretical as well as practical knowledge. He had vast responsibilities for his family, so he did not want to go other place for employment. He installed paddy and wheat mil with financial support of Rs. 15000/- by BOARD's Micro-Finance activities. He generated his clients by his hard work.

That time, he was earning approximately Rs. 2500- 3000/- per month after repayment installment of loan and interest amount. Two year before (2019), he opened a "Kirana Store" (General store) in the village through his saving money. At present, he is earning Rs. 18000- 20000/- in a month and able to support his family well.

Nikhil' story



Nikhil Kumar is 24 years old. He belongs to Other Backward Castes (OBC). His father is a daily wages carpenter and therefore the family socio-economic status is low. Due to poverty, he left his study mid way to earn for the family. He is 10th class pass. He received training in Motor Rewinding courses from Sept.'10 to Feb.'2011. After training, he worked in his relative's workshop "Electric Engineering work" at Fatuha. The workshop has been a good source of work exposure and income for him. In year 2015, he joined plywood factory, Fatuha as a technical assistant. At present, he is getting a salary of Rs 20000/- per month.

He is now enjoying the life with his family and supporting his parents for a better living.

Micro-Credit Activities



Usha Devi – Fruit shop

Malti Devi–Vegetable shop

Rekha/Rita Devi–Tilkut shop

Nitu Devi– Chips & Sweet shop

Malti Devi is 50 years old widow and lives with five children (03 daughters & 02 sons) in Kali Mandir Road, Khusrupur, Patna. Her husband died when she was 40 years. Before that, she lived in a village Narauli in Bakhtiyarpur block about 12 km away, where her husband was a labour. After the death of her husband, Malti and her children were thrown out from the house by her parents in law. She moved with her family into a single room at Khusrupur. She remembered that period of time of hunger and anguish.

In 2015, Malti came in contact with our Program Manager in Khusrupur and sought help. She was granted loan of Rs. 5000/- and by this she opened a vegetable shop at Khusrupur. After repayment of loan & interest amount, she now received second & third loan up to Rs. 25000/-. Today, Malti is capable of taking care of her family.

Life to change

- Income-generating skills will help provide a sustainable income for participants/beneficiaries to help support themselves and their families.
- Women & girls will feel empowered through learning practical skill training and business opportunity; they will support their children's education, food and healthcare.
- The restoration of dignity and self-esteem of those who have suffered so much in their life.
- Small steps towards building a cohesive and peaceful society.
- BOARD has an ongoing income stream through Micro funds to support and train other groups.