

Project Title: Orphan Girls Empowerment through Vocational Skills Project

Project Summary:

The studies have shown that 10% – 15% of orphan children commit suicide before they reach age eighteen and the studies also show that 60% of the girls become prostitutes. The environment in which the majority of these orphans grow up is fraught with numerous challenges and access to basic rights such as health care, education, protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation, are all compromised. This project will enhance the capacity of 40 orphan girls of the age of 18-24 years through provision of vocational skills, vocational kit including sewing machine and material/equipments. The project will also add strategies such as mentoring, psychosocial support, networking with micro-finance and service providers, marketing and documentation of best practices in order to support them in starting their decent work. The project will directly benefit to 150 orphan girls and indirectly to more than 80 others i.e. brothers/sisters etc. This includes vocational skills, full sewing kit including the sewing machine, material/equipments and direct linkages with service providers which will result decreased level of dependency, enhanced level of confidence, positive feelings, permanent source of income which gradually will lead towards change in the position of orphan girls in the society.

Location of the proposed project: Mirpurkhas, Sindh province of Pakistan

Name of implementing organisation:

Advocacy, Research, Training and Services (ARTS) Foundation

Name and Title of Project Leader:

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Detailed information on the proposal, including on the need for a project, the project's objectives and activities required to achieve the objectives:

Background and Need of Project:

According to UNICEF data each year 14, 505, 000 children grow up as orphans which means every day 5,760 more children become orphans. The studies have shown that 10% – 15% of these children commit suicide before they reach age eighteen and the studies also show that 60% of the girls become prostitutes. The environment in which the majority of these orphans grow up is fraught with numerous challenges and access to basic rights such as health care, education, protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation, are all compromised.

The orphan girls are the more marginalized sub-group within the group of orphan children. Although all religions ask their followers to treat orphan children particularly girl orphan with respect and dignity, however, it is evident that the traditions and superstition supersede religious diktats. The orphan girls are even not treated on equal footings with other girls and children of the society. There is a high level of psychological trauma and mental distress. Indeed, orphan girls are highly vulnerable to sexual exploitation. The number of orphan

children is rapidly increasing, due to terrorism, wars and armed conflicts, ethnic cleansing, religious and cultural taboos, natural disasters and HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Keeping in view the plight of orphan girls, it is important to recognize them as equal and contributing members of the society by empowering them as much as possible so that they are able to lead a normal life. It is also equally important to understand that orphan girl can still continue to live a dignified life and decent work.

ARTS Foundation came across this issue during routine field work, social mobilization meetings with communities and carried out a baseline data of 76 orphan girls. It was observed that orphan girls were not given equal chances to participate in development process and orphan girls were observed in depression that leads them in acute isolation. ARTS Foundation takes this issue on top priorities in its plans and designs a project specifically for orphan girls to give them a social status and a chance to mainstream them in socioeconomic process.

Many orphan girls live in circumstances that make them especially vulnerable and limit their choices and future potential. The vocational training shall provide them knowledge and markets based skills and decrease their dependency level. The vocational skills also enable self-employment for orphan girls and increase possibilities of income generation, confidence, courage and respect by providing them access to open market.

Area of Project: The Mirpurkhas district has a population of 1,304,600. The district has the largest population of urban dwellers (33.1%), after Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur with density of 303 persons per sq. km.

Objectives of Project:

1. To enhance capacity of 150 orphan girls of the age of 18-24 years through imparting vocational skills and providing them vocational kit to start their own decent work;
2. To empower 150 orphan girls through increasing their access to micro-finance institutions and service providers to sale their products, skills and work to bring visible change in their lives.

Activities of Project: The proposed project will be undertaken in the following manner:

Inception:

- a) A female vocational trainer preferably an orphan girl will be taken on board as per HR policy of the organization. The orientation will be arranged at ARTS Foundation's Head Office at Mirpurkhas, the session will aim at acquainting the concerned staff with the project objectives; nature and schedule of planned activities; potential bottlenecks; expected results; and their roles, responsibilities & reporting hierarchy, with reference to the same.
- b) As a next step a modest project launching ceremony will be organized at ARTS Foundation Head Office. The ceremony will be attended by trainees, micro-finance/service providers, representatives from the government, civil society organizations, media and the local designer/couture houses, this ceremony will serve as a means of: (i) bringing the key stakeholders on board; (ii) spreading awareness about the nature, objectives and expected outputs of the intervention and (iii) reducing any challenges that may arise during the course of project implementation.

Beneficiary Identification & Selection:

- a) As a local organization ARTS Foundation has good relations with key stakeholders and communities through different activities. The already established links will play an

effective role in inviting applications from needy and potential orphan girls as a trainee. The following criteria will be encouraged to apply:

- Must be an orphan girl;
 - 18 – 24 years;
 - Permanent resident of the district;
 - Having at least full primary level education;
 - Religious Minority and People with Disabilities will be encouraged to apply;
 - Willingness for two and half months long training course and willing to establish their own decent work or join formal employment;
- b) All those applying will undergo the following process:
- *Shortlisting*: All applicants will be called in for verification of the particulars such as orphan hood, age, qualification, evidence of residence etc. as given in the application.
 - *Interview*: Those shortlisted will be interviewed during which an effort will be made to:
 - ☞ Determine the need, willingness and availability of the candidate;
 - ☞ Assess if the candidate possess basic know how and essential set of skill for developing expertise;
 - ☞ The interview will be comprised on a very basic written test in local language followed by oral.
- c) The organization will develop an excel-based database for maintaining complete record of all its trainees including the name of orphan girl, date of birth, age, education, contact number and complete home address at the time of their registration till subsequent paid/self-employment.

Finalization of Training Venue: The training will be imparted at organization's premises located at Mirpurkhas comprising of a hall with essential training material/equipment for catering to the training needs of a 20 trainees' batch.

Imparting Training:

- a) The organization has been engaged in providing such training to widow women in collaboration with USAID/SGAFP. So the organization has comprehensive syllabus of vocational i.e. basic tailoring, packing and marketing. The procedure of training shall not only be explored the hidden skills of the individuals but also to enhance and refine them to be utilized professionally wherever required. The syllabus books for 150 will be prepared and handed over to each trainee at the start of training.
- b) The organization plans to provide basic tailoring, packing and marketing training to total 150 orphan girls as a trainee in total 02 batches in total five months (120 working days).
- c) Each batch will comprise on total 20 trainees to complete course in total two and half months. The timing of training will be 10:00am to 2:00pm.
- d) At the inception of training, each trainee will be provided with a tool kit, comprising of both consumable & non-consumable items.
- e) Upon successful completion of the training, the trainees will be given the tool kit (for home) for further utilization to initiate their own business/income generation activity.
- f) During the course of training each trainee will be given TA/DA @ Rs.50/day. The TA/DA will be tied up with daily attendance (number of days the trainee remained present in the class) of trainees.
- g) To ensure that all trainings are carried out in line with best standards & practices, the project coordinator, monitoring and documentation officer and the trainer will devise a testing mechanism on a monthly basis.
- h) At the end of the course, all the successfully completing the course, the trainees will be awarded Course Completion Certificates bearing the logs of ARTS Foundation and DAP.

Linkages Building - Connecting to Service Providers: The organization will establish the linkages of trainees through organizing formal 02 meetings one meeting with each batch with micro-finance institutions and service providers to support in getting small loans for trainees to be self-employed by either initiating small businesses or related income generating activities or a formal engagement/employment with service providers.

How will the organisation measure whether the project objectives have been achieved?

- # of orphan girls identified and selected for vocational training
- # of orphan girls successfully completed their full training course
- # of orphan girls connected to micro-finance to expand their work
- # of orphan girls connected to service providers to get orders for their products
- # of other orphan girls trained/engaged by project beneficiary orphan girls through cascade

Who will benefit from the project, and what will they gain from it? The project will directly benefit to 150 orphan girls and indirectly to other 1280 orphan girls family members. This includes vocational skills, full sewing kit including the sewing machine, material/equipments and direct linkages with service providers which will result decrease level of dependency, enhanced level of confidence, positive feelings, permanent source of income which gradually will lead towards change in the position of orphan girls in the society.

How will women benefit from the project, and what will be their role in making decisions about the project, carrying out the activities and evaluating the results? This project is exclusively focused to women (girls) in order to address orphan girls socioeconomic issues. This project will be of the girls, by the girls and for the girls as the beneficiaries, the trainer (preferably will be an orphan girl) and monitoring and documentation officer, the whole team will be consisting on girls/women. The whole process from inception to end will be carried out by the girls/women.

What plans are there to ensure that the project is sustainable after funding has ended?

The long-term impact of the program has been considered in the design of the project. ARTS Foundation will make it mandatory through a formal MoU with the trainees at the time of selection to cascade the vocational skill or engage with them at least other two orphan girls. So, this way, at least 80 more orphan girls will get skills/income to continue project learning as a sustainability and project impact. Along this, ARTS Foundation shall develop linkages of orphan girls with micro-finance institutions and service providers as well as govt. institutions so they could be able to start their own decent work for better income. ARTS Foundation shall be providing technical, moral support and equipment kit to orphan girls and always remain open to play bridging role between trainees and service providers.

What previous experience does the organisation have in implementing similar projects?

ARTS Foundation has implemented two similar kinds of projects;

1. Addressing Widow Women Life Issues through Vocational and Life Skills: This project made possible through funds from USAID/SGAFP and benefitted 200 widow women and more than 700 dependents through vocational and life skill trainings, vocational kit and linkage building with micro-finance institutions and service providers.
2. Empowering Women through Small Enterprises Project: This project funded by Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) to provide 100 women entrepreneurship skills and small financial support to initiate home based business i.e. grocery, make up, cut piece, tailoring and confectionery items etc. This project is running successfully and will end by 2014.