



‘CONNECTING 100 TRADITIONAL WEAVERS TO THE EXPORT MARKET’

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

April 01, 2012 – March 30, 2013

Submitted to COMPETE

April 09, 2013

**Center for African Women Economic Empowerment (CAWEE)
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

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1. Introduction

The Center for African Women Economic Empowerment (CAWEE) secured funding from COMPETE/USAID to implement an innovative project – “Connecting 100 Traditional Weavers to the Export Market”, that targeted a unique business model.

The total number of the project beneficiaries was 100 traditional weavers, where the project has targeted that possibly 30%, i.e. 30 of the participants to be women.

The project was implemented by three organizations, where CAWEE was the lead implementing organization. Two partner private companies, both owned and managed by a pioneer woman exporter in Ethiopia (Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturer - SGDM - the training arm of the project & and Muya Ethiopia – the export marketing wing of the project) were the project partners.

This project completion report provides brief summary on the activities carried out and accomplished by the major project actors, i.e. CAWEE, which is the lead project implementer and SGDM, which is the project implementation partner, i.e. the training wing of the project, during the periods of the past twelve months, April 2012 - May, 2013.

In the preparation for the implementation of the project, CAWEE signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with COMPETE and following that, the project implementation officially started. The actual implementation of the project started in April 2012. Thus, the project is planned to have a life time of nine months, i.e. April to December, 2012. But, when going through the practical implementation process, the project was not finalized as planned and because of many reasons for its extension, the project was finally ended in May 2013.

During the project life time of one year, following the implementation schedule designed and agreed up-on, CAWEE, with its project partner SGDM, had been mainly involved in the following thirteen main activity areas:

- Training Participation and Signing of MoU;
- Project Staff Employment and Signing of Work Contracts;
- Preparation of Training Curriculum;
- Production and Purchase of Weaving Looms & Accessories and Purchase of Raw Materials;
- Selection of Potential Trainees;
- Participation in Origin Africa Trade Expo;
- Preparation of Promotional Materials;
- Project Launch and Press Conference;
- Training Launch;
- Briefing Provided During the AGOA/CSO Forum in the US;
- Meeting in the Ministry of Industry in Supporting the Trained Weavers;
- Facilitating Employment Opportunities for the Trained Weavers and
- Project Closing Event.

For all the major activities performed during the reporting period of one year, i.e. April, 2012 to March, 2013, brief activity report is presented below.

2. Training Participation and Signing of MoUs Between CAWEE, COMPETE & the Concerned Ones

Basic brief training, on how best CAWEE staff can closely work with COMPETE in implementing its project, mainly focusing on delivering financial and performance reports, was given by COMPETE, using different kinds of templates developed by COMPETE. In the training, the project manager, i.e. the Executive Director of CAWEE and the accountant were

involved. The training was provided by two COMPETE staff - Winnie Gecaga and James Ndiangui, COMPETE Grants Assistant and COMPETE Finance Manger respectively, that came from Nairobi. This brief training took place at CAWEE's office.

In reinforcing the brief training, soft copies of relevant templates and other relevant documents were handed over to CAWEE. The training session was very instrumental in raising crucial issues of concern and questions by CAWEE team and get clarifications and responses from the trainers.

After finalizing the training, CAWEE's signature part of the MoU was signed by its Executive Director on the 4th of April, 2012. As it was originally designed, the project with a life time of nine months started to be operational in April 2012 and was planned to get finalized end of December 2012. When CAWEE submitted the project document to COMPETE, originally the project was planned to be implemented for one full year, 12 months – January to December 2012, but because of going through the project approval process, it was not possible to start the project implementation as scheduled. Once the project implementation was in place, it was not possible to finalize it, as it was planned to end it up in December 2012. Through request made by CAWEE for the project extension for three more months, with the original agreed project budget, the project extension was approved by COMPETE, thus the project was ended up in March 2013.

In the implementation of the project, CAWEE has signed the following MoUs with the following six (6) companies:

a. Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers (SGDM):

In preparation for the implementation of the project, MoU was developed, agreed and signed between the two parties, CAWEE the lead project implementer and SGDM, one of the project partners, which is the major training wing of the project. The MoU was very instrumental in clearly stating the roles and responsibilities of each of the signatories, thus facilitating the smooth implementation of the project.

b. Ensera Plc:

This was a company involved in working on the PR (Public Relations) task of the project launch event that took place on the 18th of May 2012, where the company was able to successfully mobilize media crew, both print and electronic media. Based on the MoU signed, the company submitted media coverage report.

c. Digital Impressions Plc:

Preparation and production of promotional materials was given due focus in the implementation of the project, where such promotional materials are major tools to pass key messages of the unique project that CAWEE with its partners was implementing. For the launch and the closing events of the project, different kinds of promotional materials like – press release, event program, broacher, event folder, invitation cards, banners of different kinds, etc were prepared.

The company involved in the preparation and production of the promotional materials was Digital Impressions Plc, where CAWEE signed MoU with the company to work together throughout the project phase.

d. Hilton Addis:

CAWEE signed agreement with the Hilton Addis, for the services that the hotel provided during the project launch event. This agreement included the services of the Hilton Addis – event room facilities and refreshments.

e. Sheraton Addis:

CAWEE signed agreement with Sheraton Addis, for the services that the hotel provided during the project closing event. This agreement included the services of the Sheraton Addis, which included event room facilities and refreshments.

f. Rehobot Promotion:

CAWEE signed MoU with Rehobot Promotion to work on recording of relevant events throughout the project phase and the preparation of documentary film.

The MoU clearly states the roles and responsibilities of both signatories, and it was very instrumental in facilitating the smooth completion of the recording tasks and the production of the documentary films in two languages, Amharic and English.

The video recording tasks of the closing event and extract recordings of the closing event to be part of the documentary film; were not part of the agreement in the first MoU that CAWEE signed with Rehobot Promotion. In this respect, CAWEE amended its MoU, so that those two activities mentioned are included in the amended MoU.

Those MoUs agreed up-on and signed with all the concerned ones were very instrumental in facilitating the implementation of the project.

3. Project Staff Employment and Signing of Work Contracts

The project had two full time project staff – project manager and assistant project manager, where other CAWEE staff – accountant, cashier and IT expert, spent considerable time for the project, who were involved in supporting the implementation of the project. The post of the project manager was endorsed by CAWEE Board approving that, the Executive Director of CAWEE manages the project. The project being an innovative and unique of its kind to be implemented in the country, the Board noted that CAWEE in partnership with the other project partners, need to show tangible results and for this reason, the involvement of CAWEE's Director as the project manager was considered very relevant.

In the selection process of the assistant project manager, from the three candidates that applied for the post, CAWEE Board, in its 38th board meeting, selected the right person for the position. The Board further decided on the salary and benefit packages of the project staff. Following the Board's decision, CAWEE's office prepared terms of reference/job description for the project staff and contract agreements were prepared and signed between the concerned ones.

4. Preparation of Training Curriculum

SGDM, the major training wing of the project, was responsible in working on the training curriculum, which served for both the two training rounds. The training curriculum developing team was lead by the owner and manager of the two project partner private companies - SGDM and Muya Ethiopia, who has over 25 years practical experience in the area of expertise. The training curriculum developing team involved ten experts in the concerned disciplines, among those were - master weavers, elderly people, lead trainers, social worker, and textile engineer.

The training curriculum covered major training issue areas of concern, nine detailed chapters, where each of the chapters has detailed sub-topics and sessions covered in each of the training rounds. The training curriculum was prepared in two languages, English and Amharic versions. Based on the training curriculum, the training team developed different training sessions for the training. It was with this training curriculum and the training sessions developed that the two round training were successfully accomplished.

5. Preparation of Training Equipment/Tools and Purchase of Raw Materials

The activity of the production of the weaving loom was carried out by the training wing of the project, i.e. SGDM, where the organization has research based rich experience in producing weaving looms and some parts of the accessories. SGDM conducts continuous researches in modifying the traditional weaving loom, in making it user friendly, modern tool that can facilitate production efficiency with a focus to produce quality products.

Weaving looms and accessories are the major training tools that needed to be ready before the launch of the training. Fifty weaving looms, traditional looms with modern designs, was produced by SGDM. Apart from producing modern weaving looms, SGDM also produced some parts of the accessories, where on the other hand the rest of the accessories were purchased from the rural artisans through the existing business links that SGDM has already developed.

Raw material was one of the most vital components of the training program. The purchase of raw materials was carried out by SGDM and this task started in the month of April 2012. The first process was giving purchase orders to two manufacturing factories and a total of 55 bales was purchased and the delivery was made at Sebeta Site, where the training took place. In the preparation for the training, the task of selection and preparation of yarn and warp yarn was completed.

6. Selection of Trainees

Based on the project implementation strategy document developed, SGDM was fully involved in the task of the selection of potential trainees/traditional weavers. To start working on this particular task, selection criteria was developed, so that potential trainees selected fulfill the expected criteria set. SGDM took the lead role in this particular task.

In Oromia Region, Sebeta Town, which was identified as the project site, the place is very much known as the first settlement area of the traditional weavers migrating from the Southern Region of Ethiopia. In exploring for potential trainees; information, consultations and advice was secured from the town's traditional elderly leaders and the local government officials. Acknowledged, recognized and known weavers and other concerned ones were also instrumental in providing relevant information in this particular task.

At the project site area, briefing was given by SGDM, to a group of traditional weavers on the overall project involvement, where participants of the briefing event showed their interest to join the training. The selection criteria included, basic knowledge on weaving, as the first requirement, and the second condition was, that they have to be from the weavers family and finally at least to recruit 30% of the trainees to be women

The selection of the trainees, for both the two training rounds was finalized, for the first round training, the number of registered trainees was 132 (21 women and 111 men). Out of those who were registered for the first round training, 50 trainees (16 women and 34 men) were finally selected for the first round training. Even if the first round training was to involve 50 trainees, it was planned to have 10 weavers on the waiting list to be able to respond to any drop out, if in case happening.

For the second round training, the selection criteria was the same, 66 traditional weavers were registered and recruited, where 30% were women), this number was expected to include potential trainees for the waiting list.

Following the selection of the trainees, training venue lay out and sitting arrangements of the trainees was prepared by SGDM. In the project document, it was agreed that five master weavers get involved in both the two training rounds. As indicated in the lay out, three master weavers (1 woman and 2 men) where each of them were responsible to closely work with 16,

17 and 17 trainees respectively were assigned and the rest two senior master weavers were involved in the overall supervision task of the training. In the preparation for the start of the two rounds trainings, uniforms for the trainees, two for each trainee, was prepared by SGDM.

7. Preparation of Promotional Materials

In the preparation for the launch and closing of the project, different kinds of promotional materials like – invitation cards, press release, event program, broacher, event folder, banners of different kinds, business cards for project staff, etc., were prepared.

The write-ups of all the promotional materials was prepared by CAWEE project staff and the different layout and design tasks were done by Digital Impressions, with continuous proof reading and follow-up from CAWEE's side. Editorial support and guidance was provided from COMPETE and final approval for the printing of all the promotional materials was secured from COMPETE's project office.

For references purposes, sample copies of the event folder, particularly of the project launch (which includes – event program, press release, broacher and invitation card) was attached to the report of May 2012, which was sent to COMPETE through DHL.

8. Project Launch and Press Conference

The official project launch for “Connecting 100 Traditional Weavers to the Export Market” was held on May 18th, 2012 at the Hilton Hotel, Addis Ababa. This event was an opportunity to popularize the official launch of the project and to inform all the concerned ones that this particular project is going to bring out tangible results and impact the lives of many who will be the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project.

Following the official launch of the project, was a press conference where journalists representing both the print and electronic media were present to cover the event. The coverage was a great success, that as planned, the news of the project launch was broadcasted using different media that has reached an estimated figure of 50,000 readers and the electronic media coverage mainly targeted the FM radio channels that have wide coverage and good number of listeners where it was expected that they have reached about 5 million listeners, a figure which was more than what was planned.

The project launch event was a great success, where the presence of invited guests including the American Ambassador to Ethiopia Donald E. Booth, Representative from USAID/COMPETE Steven Humphries, State Minister Tadesse Haile, Ministry of Industry, made the launch more colorful. All the invited guests including Sara Abera owner and Manager of Muya Ethiopia and SGDM and Nigest Haile the Executive Director of CAWEE delivered their respective remarks and opinions during project launch.

The major respondents for the press conference were representatives of the project actors – Sara Abera and Nigest Haile, where the State Minister of Industry Tadesse Haile also joined the project partners in responding to the questions raised by the media team. The event had great media coverage where total number of the invited media crew was 24 people. Out of those invited, 19 of them were present during the launch: from the print media - 6 Amharic and 5 English rapporteurs, 7 from Electronic and 2 from international media have given large media coverage to the project launch. Apart from the very wide media coverage that the event got, all the activities of the project launch event was video recorded by CAWEE and all the news coverage was up loaded on CAWEE's web site – www.cawee-ethiopia.org.

All in all, 60 participants, including the media crew participated and took part in the project launch and the press conference, which was a great success.

9. Participation in Origin Africa Trade Expo

Origin Africa Trade Expo brought together business leaders and decision makers from across Africa, providing opportunities for international buyers and regional businesses alike, to establish contacts and to do business. It was a great opportunity for promoting trade in cotton, textiles and apparel – from fiber to fabric, from corporate wear to fashion, from clothing manufacturers to home décor and fashion accessories. Almost 60 exhibitors from Africa and Asia participated in the trade show.

Origin Africa partnered with the Hub of Africa to celebrate Eco-fashion Week in Addis Ababa. Eco-Fashion is part of the growing design trend in sustainable fashion where a product is created and produced with consideration to its environmental and social impact. Simply put, "eco-fashion" refers to stylized clothing that uses environmentally sensitive fabrics and responsible production techniques. The event showcased the talents of different young designers from across Africa representing Gambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Zanzibar, Ghana, and Cote d'Ivoire. Designs were created with commercial appeal and African flair, many using cotton and other raw materials & accessories sourced from the continent.

The Origin Africa Trade Expo was great opportunity for CAWEE, where the Center was able to popularize its COMPETE funded project – “Connecting 100 Traditional Weavers to the Export Market”, for the first time. In facilitating participation on the trade expo, flyer and roll-up banner was produced in popularizing the project to all the concerned ones. Soft copies of flyer and roll-up banner were attached & send to COMPETE on the monthly report of May 2012.

The Trade Expo was officially opened by a keynote remark delivered by the late Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The Prime Minister visited each booth, where CAWEE/COMPETE and Muya Ethiopia were within the same booth and the booth got the opportunity to be visited by him and other concerned high officials, where Mrs. Sara Abera, CAWEE/COMPETE project partner, explained briefly to the Prime Minister on the whole project initiative and expected outcomes. The Prime Minister took time to listen to her and encouraged Sara that she has the potential to exceed, connecting not only 100 weavers but reaching to a level of connecting 1,000 weavers to the export market. The Prime Minister assured to Sara that she will get the Ethiopian Government's continued support in all her efforts of connecting traditional weavers to the export market. News coverage of this particular event was posted at CAWEE's web site, www.cawee-ethiopia.org.



Sara explaining the COMPETE funded initiative to the late Prime Minister of Ethiopia

Among the concerned high officials that visited CAWEE's/COMPETE's and Muya Ethiopia's stand were, the US Ambassador to Ethiopia and the USAID Ethiopia Director, who were impressed by the initiative.



Sara middle, with the US Ambassador right and the USAID Country Director left at the expo

The origin Africa Trade Expo was a great opportunity to briefly introduce the initiative of - “Connecting 100 Traditional Weavers to the Export Market”, an innovative project, unique of its kind in Ethiopia, which the project implementers strongly believed that, the success of this initiative is very instrumental in encouraging other donors and also the Government of Ethiopia to come on board, to be able to continue what is started by COMPETE’s support to another higher level in bringing out tangible results.

During the Origin Africa Trade Expo, Sara was also interviewed by COMPETE staff that were in Addis Ababa during the Origin Africa Trade Expo.

10. Training Launch

The project started to be operational starting April 2012; lots of preparatory activities were performed to be able to launch the training on the scheduled time. The training was originally planned to start on June 1st 2012, however because of unfinished tasks, in the preparation of the training facilities, it was not possible to start as scheduled. Once all the training facilities were set in place, the training started on June 18, 2012.

On the 1st round training launch day the 50 registered trainees, (16 of them women) were present. On the launching of the training, the training team from SGDM gave orientation for the 50 trainees, on what is expected from the trainees and what the project in general and what SGDM in particular is going to provide them during their stay in the coming three months, going through the planned training.



1st round trainees receiving orientation and briefing on the overall training program at the training site

Based on the training curriculum, the training team developed different training sessions for the training. It was with those training sessions developed that the first and the second round trainings took place.

The first training round ended up on the 18th of September 2012 and the 2 weeks after the end of the first phase training was used for preparations to be able to launch the second round training at the scheduled time. The second round training started on October 8, 2012 and went until end of December, where it was finalized on January 5th, 2013. The second round training was originally planned to start on the 1st of October 2012, however the preparation for the training took more time than what was planned and also due to the large number of the recruits' turnout, the selection process took longer time. It was after solving all those problems that the second round training was launched on the 8th of October, 2012.

The selection criteria was the same criteria used in selecting the first round trainees. On the starting day of the second round training all the 50 selected and registered trainees were present, out of the 50 trainees 22 of them were women and the remaining 28 were men. On the day of the launch of the 2nd round training, the training team from Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers gave orientation for the 50 trainees, what is expected from them and what Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers in particular is going to provide them during their stay in the three months of the training duration, going through the planned training curriculum.

Following the orientation, for both the training rounds, the trainees were mainly acquainting themselves with the training environment, the training site and facilities; they also received weaving loom, accessories needed for the handloom they were trained with, such as - reed, harness, beater, design stick, etc. and in addition each of them were assigned to a specific loom.

11. Progress of the Training

The training has two parts, where the provision of the technical training was a major focus; training in awareness creation/sensitization was also given.

The training curriculum developed served both training rounds. Based on the training curriculum, the training team used the different training sessions that were developed for the training.

11.1. Technical Skills Training

During the preparation in the technical skills training, the preparation stage covered the following activities:

- Assigning supervisors and master weavers to lead the training,
- Based on the lay out already set, assigning trainees on Loom No. 1 up to Loom No. 50,
- Distribution of hand loom accessories for each trainee,
- Trainees installing the harness, the reeds and pedals on the loom,
- Selection of raw material type and providing the trainees warp and yarn to be able to produce the required fabric,
- Tie-in and draw-in of warp and yarn using hand through held and reeds,
- Distribution of weft and yarn for the trainees according to the sample to be produced (yarn type, color code),

- Adjusting the hand loom setting according to the required fabric structure,
- Setting the whole hand loom and its accessories in place and receiving the required raw materials to start the training,
- Following the start of the training, with the guidance and close follow-up of their respective master weavers, trainees started to weave different fabric structures.



The preparation process (tie-in and draw-in of warp and yarn)

In the actual weaving taking place, with the guidance and close follow-up of their respective master weavers, trainees were able to weave different fabric structures.



The start of the production stage

In polishing the technical skills of the trainees, the following sessions were covered:

- Selecting the right fabric,
- Knowing the amount needed to produce a given product, the exact measurement of the fabric needed and its shrinkage percentage,
- How to measure the different patterns, because in the products they produced, the measurement in every centimeter and every inch was very important for the quality of the product, as this is very instrumental for the quality of the product in keeping the export market standard,
- Improving the trainees effectiveness and efficiency,
- Improving their time management skill,
- Combining different colors,
- Developing new patterns,
- Product quality,
- Product cost (considering the different inputs that the trainees need to know - price of raw materials, overhead costs, labor used to produce and the amount of wastage and its cost) and
- Calculating profit margins.



One of the female trainees during the training developing pattern and working on color combination

Apart from providing the basics, the technical training focused more on quality, efficiency and effectiveness. The trainees, in close follow up from the trainers worked on how to produce quality out puts in keeping their speed and accuracy. In addition they learned how to combine different colors, new patterns, to change styles, and also learn to produce products with consistency, where they were trained to measure the different patterns because every centimeter and every inch is very important when it comes to the quality standard of the finished products. As a result, it was possible to observe that they have started producing quality products.



Female trainees working on different fabrics

Furthermore the trainees were able to:

- Build understanding the sketch and its derivative woven structure as per the customer requirement,
- Weave design, draft, lifting plan and reed plan for a given fabric structure,
- Select the quality raw material/warp and weft yarn/, produce quality woven fabric correctly as per the given structure,
- Diversify the traditional basic cloth, penetrate and position their products in to export market,
- Get acquainted with and awareness building as an intention to new creativity and marketing,
- Gain awareness of the potential customer,
- Produce in quality and regularity and
- Learn more about work discipline.



Trainees getting guidance from the trainer and executing the trainer's instructions

11.2. Awareness Creation/Sensitization

Beyond the provision of technical skills training, the training also focused on providing awareness creation/sensitization, where different sessions were conducted. The sessions on cultural awareness covered the following major issue areas:

- Introduction on the overall cultural awareness,
- The importance of giving due respect to the weaving profession that the trainees are involved in,
- Traditional attitude towards weavers and other crafts people,
- The importance of the weaving skill as a national heritage and the status and future development of the trade as an important export commodity,
- How trainees compared what they learnt during the training to their traditional weaving,
- How the trainees envision the new skill to improve their livelihoods and improve their status as weavers,
- The trainer used Abraham Maslow's ladder of human needs to discuss the hierarchy of needs, the trainees tried to put their human needs on the ladder from the perspective of their own reality.



Almaz Fesseha delivering the awareness creation/sensitization session

On the sessions on awareness creation/sensitization, ideas more practical to what the skills up-grading training is providing were discussed. The facilitator encouraged the trainees to speak out and contribute to the discussion where they see themselves on the Abraham Maslow's ladder and to express issues of marginalization if any.

Trainees were divided in small groups to explore and find out institutions and individuals affecting their livelihood and their places in society/community in both positive and negative ways. Those sessions were very relevant in that, trainees were given the opportunity to get an overview on the overall cultural awareness with a focus to the weaving profession. The trainees were also given opportunity to reflect their views, opinions and learn as to how the weaving profession that they are involved in is a profession that needs to be respected and that the trainees themselves need to change their attitude towards that.

As opinions of the trainees after the sessions reflected, the trainees have started considering their weaving skills, like any other profession, a profession to be respected, that can equip them to be able to generate better income and change their lives as well as the lives of their families.



Partial views of participants during the awareness creation training

The discussions brought out different concerns and issue areas, where the issue of finding rental houses to produce their products was identified as one of the weavers' problems. This means the land lords do not want to rent their houses to weavers because weavers usually dig holes in a room to set up their weaving looms, which is usually unacceptable by the house owners. Other issue that came out as a concern was, in the weaving profession, the trend is that, fathers do not want to train their children this art of weaving. They rather prefer their children to be involved in other professions, which they believe are paying.

The biggest worry, as the trainees put it is their future, "after the training" and the economic problem that they are expecting to face. Following the group discussions, in the plenary discussion that the trainees had, the following major issue areas came out concerning the main reasons why they are unable to receive fair prices for their products: -

- Lack of places to sell their products,
- The role of the middle men who take about 30% of their earnings,
- The ever increasing price of raw materials,
- The weavers sell their end products for very low prices because the intermediaries have big influence on the market.

The sessions conducted on awareness creation/sensitization was observed to be very instrumental in changing the attitude and mind set of the trainees and the trainees have started appreciating the weaving profession and are now more focused targeting the change of their lives.

As the project team observed that, trainees received the training with great interest and enthusiasm. Most of them believe that after the training they can be able to change their lives from subsistent to more fulfilling life for themselves as well as for their families. The trainees learnt the importance of socializing with their fellow trainees and parctipated in the training with great interest.

12. Photography, Video Recording Activities and Documentary Film Production

Photography and video recording tasks took place throughout the project implementation period, with a focus to interviewing all the concerned ones. The recordings focused on covering all aspects of the training with the ultimate purpose of collecting information, opinions and ideas on how the training was progressing. Those recordings served as materials for reporting and the preparation of the documentary film, which was produced in two different languages – Amharic and English.

12.1. Photography

Thanks to the generous support of COMPETE, CAWEE was able to buy camera form the project budget and it was able to take photos at different times, during the project implementation period. From the hundreds of photo shots taken, it was able to print six hundred (600) photos, and those printed photos are kept in two big albums at CAWEE's office.

12.2. Video Recording

The video recordings focused on the following target group:

i. Interviewing Trainees –

During the project implementation period, 3 female trainees were interviewed. As their opinions during the interviews indicated, the training has helped them to produce products with measurements, which they were not doing that before the training, as they were producing same products over and over again and they were not able to manage their time properly. But after the training, they all underlined that the training is changing their life to the better, it is providing them different perspectives about weaving, encouraging them to apply the new techniques about color combination, working with different designs, quality control, and using their time properly to produce better products and generate better income, so that they can be able to support their families.



Ms. Aynalem Ayele, explaining about the training, how much she is benefiting from the training, and how she wants to be a role model for her family and her surroundings

Mrs. Yeshbirget, in her 14 years weaving experience, She has never used different measurements and color combination, but now things are changing, she is able to produce different kinds of products benefiting from the training and now she is capable enough to use measurements, change designs and mange her time very well.



All the interviewed trainees underlined that, they have shared what they have learned so far to their family members, friends and neighbors, which indicated that the training has started creating impact on their family members, their friends and neighbors.

ii. Interviewing the Trainers –

During the project implementation period, one of the training team member, the group leader, was interviewed and he provided his opinions underlining the role of Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers, which is a project partner and the training arm of the project, on how the training progressed, underlining the readiness of the trainees to capture the skills and their motivation to practically implement what they are thought.



Mr. Ayele, group leader, providing his interview

iii. Interviewing the Project Implementers Staff -

The staff of the lead implementing partner of the project, CAWEE, assistant project manager, in his interview provided up-dates on the status of the training.



Mr. Robel, assistant project Manager, during the interview

12.3. Documentary Film Production

The video recording task took place throughout the project implementation period, where those recordings served as materials for the preparation of the documentary film.

The scripts for the documentary film, both the Amharic and the English versions, were prepared by CAWEE's project team. In the preparation of the documentary film, CAWEE's project team was fully involved in editing the films until it reached its final stage.

It was originally planned to produce the documentary film in the two languages, 7-10 minutes, but because of the vast information collected during the project life time, it was agreed to cover all the necessary issue areas and the final versions of the documentary films came out

to be 26:43 minutes for the English version of the documentary film and 27 minutes for the Amharic version of the documentary film.

In an amended MoU agreed with the producer, i.e. Rehobot Promotion, extracts of the project closing coverage was also included in the final versions of the documentary film, both the Amharic and the English versions, of the documentary film.

13. Meetings and Visits Undertaken During the Project Life Time

During the life time of the project, different meetings and visits, related to the project activities took place.

13.1. Briefing Provided During the AGOA/CSO Forum in The US

The Executive Director of CAWEE had the chance to participated in the 11th Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Session of the AGOA (African Growth & Opportunity Act) Forum in the US on a theme focusing on “Enhancing Africa’s Infrastructure for Trade”, June 12-15, 2012. Mr. Stephen Walls, COMPETE Chief of Party was also one of the participants of the forum. This was an opportunity for the Executive Director of CAWEE to discuss with Mr. Stephen on how best the Center can continue getting supported by COMPETE, so that it can be able to scale-up what it already started. It was further agreed to continue the conversation on that line with COMPETE office and CAWEE took note of that.



Nigest 1st from the left, Mr. Stephen 1st form the second raw, during the AGOA/CSO Forum in the US

During the opening ceremony of the AGOA/CSOs forum, a remark was delivered by the USAID Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa, Mr. Michael Curtis. In his remark, from the examples of success stories and initiatives taken, he mentioned the initiative taken by CAWEE and COMPETE in connecting traditional weavers to the export market.

In this CSOs session, CAWEE’s Director had the chance to be a panelist in one of the panels that focused on the theme “**Trade and Gender: Empowering Women Entrepreneurs**”. This was an opportunity where the Director was able to share the initiative of “Connecting 100 Traditional Weavers to the Export Market”, that the Center worked with the financial support of COMPETE/USAID.



Nigest presenting in the panel



Partial view of participants of the forum

During the Ministerial session of the AGOA forum, June 14-15, 2012, all the participants of the CSOs session got the chance to participate. In this Ministerial session, one of the plenary sessions focused on the theme “**The Importance of Infrastructure in Women’s Economic Success**”, the plenary session of this panel was an opportunity for CAWEE to share the best practice started in connecting traditional weavers to the export market, where this message was able to be heard by all the Ministers of Trade and Commerce present during the session, the Minister of Trade of Ethiopia was also present, where most of them personally requested for further explanations on that and CAWEE/COMPETE flyer was also given to those requested for further details on the project.



During the AGOA Ministerial Forum, Mr. Stephen Walls with Nigest Haile, in between Ambassador Donald Yamamoto, the past US ambassador to Ethiopia

The Executive Director of CAWEE was also invited to share her best practices during the AWEP (African Women Entrepreneurship Program), an initiative of Hilary Clinton, which was a parallel event of the AGOA Ministerial Forum, held at the State Department. The Director in this event, among the different best practices that Ethiopia has (establishing the first women’s commercial bank in the continent, etc) also shared about the initiative and the best practice started to be operational in connecting traditional weavers to the export market.



Nigest sharing best practices at the AWEP Event



Partial view of AWEP 2012 participants

The briefings delivered by the Executive Director of CAWEE, during the CSO's AGOA session, the note made at the AGOA Ministerial forum and also the experience shared at the AWEP event in 2012 in the US was very instrumental to popularize the CAWEE/COMPETE project.

13.2. Breakfast Meeting Held at the Project Site with Potential Employing Companies

The main purpose of the training is to upgrade the skills of the traditional weavers and connect them to the export market. So far from what is observed from the training, great improvement is seen in each of the trainees' skills, comparing to what they were producing before and what they are producing this time. Being equipped with such skills, the trainees wanted to know the next step and they kept on asking about what will happen to them after the training ends.

So, to answer the question of the weavers, CAWEE in collaboration with Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers organized a breakfast meeting. The meeting involved ten women owned and managed companies led by the respective company owners, where most of them are already in export and some of them are ready to enter the export market, who were expected to be potential employers of the trained weavers.



The Company owners together with Sara and Nigest at the training hall

The company owners were given a tour in the training hall and had the chance to see the trainees while in action and they expressed their impression and joy to see such a project being carried out. According to the company owners, their biggest challenge to expand/join the export market is lack of skilled weavers.

List of the companies present during the breakfast meeting were:

No.	Name	Organization	Tel	Email
1	Mekdes Hawze	Hawaz's Design	911625866	Mekdifwfu@yahoo.com
2	Aster Seme	ADU Women's Clothing	921388533	Astuiya@yahoo.com
3	Rihan Ali	Ricoh Gift Shop	930000119	rihan_alil@yahoo.com
4	Eyerus Taye	Gerry Design	911698369	eyeruse-taye@yahoo.com
5	Martha Debouch	Sara Yarrow Hand Woven Design	911468176	dejeffu@yahoo.com
6	Shitaye Kinfe	Yoas Tibeb	911165560	shitaye_2005@yahoo.com
7	Genet Kebede	Paradise Fashion	911456228	paradisef@gmail.com
8	Elizabeth Kassa	Trio Craft	911641949	kassaelsa@hotmail.com
9	Aster Retta	Negist Ethiopia	911216944	sammya@yahoo.com
9	Nigest Retta	Negist Ethiopia	924431718	sammya@yahoo.com
10	Hiwot Gashaw	Abugida Fashion	910360316	abugidafashion@gmail.com

The company owners and managers expressed their happiness that, this project will be very instrumental in solving their problems, which can definitely facilitate their work, where those trained weavers can easily follow the exact design and at the same time be effective and efficient in producing the quality products needed for the export market.



The company owners in tour in the training hall, guided by Sara

Following the visit was a discussion session with the company owners, where Sara and Nigest provided discussion points, focusing on the overall project objectives, the training cycle and requesting the company owners on their opinion of employing those trained weavers.



Sara Abera, Nigest sitting close to her, explaining About the training cycle

Following the discussion, mainly on the issue of employing the trained weavers, almost all the companies have shown interest to employ the trained weavers; they expressed their interest and promised to inform CAWEE the number of weavers they wanted to employ.

According to Aster, the problem of the weaving sub-sector, not to grow as much as expected is, lack of skilled weavers. After seeing the project site and the progress of the training, she believes that the problem of lack of skilled weavers will be solved soon, which also improves the acceptability of hand woven product. She also expressed her impression about the 'women weavers' that are involved in the training, because changing the lives of women has the biggest impact on the family's as well as the country's economy.



Aster Retta, Owner and Manager of Negist Ethiopia

Aster emphasized the importance of the training program in solving the problem of skilled weavers. She further expressed her view that the training is also instrumental in changing the lives of the weavers themselves, where a family of a weaver on an average has 8 family members and this project training 100 traditional weavers will be changing the lives of about 800 family members, which is a huge number to be considered.



Genet Kebede, Owner and Manager of Paradise Fashion

Genet has 20 years of experience in the hand weaving sub-sector producing home and fashion accessories and in all these years she hasn't seen such kind of training and success. Earlier, there were different trials to change the work habits and the mind-set of the traditional weavers, but it was not that successful so she expressed her joy of seeing such a training that changes not only hand weaving skills but also the total mind set of the weaver, therefore her wish is to see the successes of those trained weavers.

For the companies that are involved in hand weaving, Genet believes that it will provide skilled weavers that are capable of producing quality products that can meet the standard of the export market. In addition she also advised the weavers to work hard and to respect their profession and it's her wish that such kinds of trainings continue and produce as many skilled weavers as possible.

Elizabeth expressed her gratitude to see such dying craft getting great attention and also for the art to be transferred to the young women and men. She believes that the training will alleviate the problem of skilled weavers and addresses one of the biggest challenges of the weaving sub-sector of this country.



Elizabeth Kassa, Owner and Manager of Trio-craft

Shitaye is one of the young designers emerging in the country having made a breakthrough in the export market. The reason of her visit was to see the weavers while they are in the training and also to decide for herself how many weavers she can be able to employ.



Earlier there was no emphasis on the standard, quality and delivery time of the weaving products, but in thinking of joining the export market, these things should be met as Shitaye states that. In the breakfast meeting, she was able to discuss together with the other company owners, network and overall get the chance to see the training in progress.

Shitaye Kinfe, Owner and Manager of YOAS Tibeb

As all the designers in the country experience, she also faces a problem of getting skilled weavers, so it's her wish for the training to continue and solve such a huge problem. Because the availability of skilled weavers will enable the designers to meet the needed standard of the export market.

Shitaye concluded that, this breakfast meeting has created a great opportunity in encouraging her to think of employing few weavers, the number which she promised to inform CAWEE soon, where it also has given her the chance to create employment opportunities for some of the trained weavers. She thanked the donor of the project in availing such an opportunity to companies like hers and she also thanked CAWEE in creating such a forum and a visit, which was very instrumental for her company's growth and expansion.

From those present during the breakfast meeting, most of the company owners and managers have expressed their desire to hire weavers from the training, where some of them have already decided to take from the existing training batch (as this breakfast meeting was organized during the first round training) and some of the companies expressed their interest of employing the weavers from the second training round.

13.3. CHEMONICS Team Visit

CHEMONICS team which involved - Lisa Ku – Regional Representative, East Africa Region, Andrew Chapin - Consultant, East Africa and Nicole Cupp, met CAWEE project team and visited the first round trainees at the training site.

As per the team's request, the team had discussion at CAWEE's office focusing on the DFID bidding that CHEMONICS has planned to bid and the possible partnership with CAWEE. CAWEE represented by its Executive Director provided all the relevant information and documents to the team and the Center assured its availability and willingness to collaborate with CHEMONICS on that.

The CHEMONICS team, guided by the assistant project coordinator, Mr. Robel and led by Sara, visited the training site at Sebeta and they were very much impressed by the progress made by CAWEE and its partner Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers and the trainees. The CHEMONICS team also had a chance to discuss different ideas with Sara Abera the owner and General Manager of Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers, who was also available at the training site during the visit.

Some of the ideas that were raised during the team's discussion with Sara were:-

- About the progress of the training,
- What inspired Sara to create the different designs,
- About export market and its challenges,
- About Sara's involvement in the international trade fairs up to now, and

- About US market being her biggest market and her plan to expand to other markets like Europe and Japan.

After the discussion with Sara, the CHEMONICS team visited the trainees while the training was in progress.



The COMPETE team taking a tour in the training hall

13.4. Visit by COMPETE Staff

COMPETE staff, Steven Humphreys and Chris Donohue accompanied by the assistant project manager visited the training site on December 17, 2012, 20 kilometers from Addis in Alemgena. The main purpose of the visit was to see the progress of the training. The team was able to observe what was happening and was also able to interview some of the trainees, the team had a satisfying feedback from the trainees and the trainers, as well as form the CAWEE project staff.



COMPETE Staff with the trainers

From the different conversations that it had, the team was able to find out that the trainees have changed from the traditional way of production, developed their confidence, the training preparing them to earn better income to change their lives and the lives of their families, aspiring of establishing their own business and live much better life.



Steven Humphreys with the trainees

13.5. Meeting in the Ministry of Industry in Supporting the Trained Weavers

In facilitating the employment opportunities for the second round trained weavers on how best

those who want to work in groups can come together as a cluster/cooperative/association and also to discuss the issue of replicating initiatives like this project, a focus was given by the government and a meeting was organized by CAWEE, which was held at the Ministry of Industry, December 31st 2012, chaired by H.E the State Minister of Industry at his office.

Present in the meeting were:

- H.E. Tadesse Haile – State Minister, Ministry of Industry,
- H.E. Asfaw Abebe – MP and Deputy Manager of the Federal Micro & Small Enterprises Development Agency (FeMSEDA),
- Mrs. Konjit Debela – Manager of the Addis Ababa Regional Micro & Small Enterprises Development Agency (ReMSEDA),
- Mr. Enawgaw Nigussie – Director, Weaving and Knitting Technology Directorate, Federal Textile Industry Development Institute,
- Mrs. Sara Abera – Owner & Manager of Muya Ethiopia and Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers,
- Mrs. Nigest Haile – Executive Director, Center for African Women Economic Empowerment & Project Manager and
- Robel Woldyes – Assistant Project Manager.



Participant of the meeting at the Minister's office

The meeting started with a briefing about the project by Mrs. Nigest and followed by Mrs. Sara. The main issues discussed during the meeting were:

- The options and modalities that the trained weavers can get organized to be productive after the training is completed,
- The respective roles of the government offices present in the meeting in carrying out this task of supporting the trained weavers,
- The need to work on the continuity and replication of such type of skills training and
- Methods of tackling the different potential problems that the trainees might face in trying to work in clusters/groups/associations.



Nigest and Sara presenting about the project during the meeting at the Minister's office

The Minister further underlined the need for continuity and replication of such an effort and a project with tangible results, as it is a core focus area in implementing Ethiopia's poverty reduction strategy and help in keeping the country's tradition intact for the future generation.



H.E. Tadesse, State Minister underlining his points

The Deputy Manager of FeMSEDA also agreed with the views of the State Minister and also underlines his organization's full dedication in helping the trainees by providing working premises, helping them to form cluster and provide them different kinds of support services, including credit facilities.



Deputy Manager of FeMSEDA and Director of Weaving and Knitting Technology at the Textile Industry Development Institute contributing during the meeting at the Minister's office

The Director of the Weaving and Knitting Technology at the Textile Industry Development Institute focused more on complementing what his predecessor speakers contributed where he also assured his organization's full commitment in supporting those trained weavers and also in replicating such efforts at a bigger scale where good number of weavers can benefit from such kind of life changing training programs.

The Manager of the Addis Ababa ReMSEDA also indicted her organization's full support in providing working premises once the trainees come in clusters/groups and further providing them different kinds of support services.



Manager of A.A. ReMSEDA contributing her views

The issue of market linkage, with the end result of connecting to the export market, was also underlined during the discussion, where the market connection, in working on the value-chain, definitely creating better income, improving the living standards of large number of people in the society and being source of income for the country was underlined during the discussion.

As the government officials were very much impressed on what the project is performing, as per their request for a visit at the training site, visit was organized to them by CAWEE and they were very much impressed on what the project is accomplishing. They further committed themselves that, their respective offices will do their level best in supporting the trained weavers and also in replicating such a great initiative and best practice.

14. Facilitating Employment Opportunities for the Trained Weavers

One of the major tasks of the project implementing team, beyond providing technical skills and awareness creation/sensitization trainings, was facilitating the employment opportunities for the trained weavers, using different employment modalities, like – the trainees getting employed in women owned and managed companies that are already in export or potential, companies that are preparing themselves for export, the trainees organizing themselves in clusters/cooperatives/associations, the trainees producing on their own and supplying their products to exporting companies.

In this process, CAWEE jointly working with different companies that are already in export or potential companies preparing themselves for export, different meetings were organized with potential employing companies and discussions were made with concerned government officials in supporting the trained weavers to get organized through the provision of working premises and facilitating credit.

The process of facilitating employment opportunities focused on the 100 trainees that were involved in two training rounds.

14.1. First Round Training

The first phase of the skills training has come to an end mid-September 2012. In the facilitation process of employment to the trained weavers, quite a lot of companies, women owned & managed, both existing and potential exporters have showed interest to employ the trained weavers.

In facilitating employment opportunities, two visits were organized – visit organized at the training site and experience sharing visit that took place at Muya Ethiopia. The visit at the training site was very instrumental; that the women owned and managed companies that were part of the visit were able to see the actual training taking place, visit the facilities, talk with the trainees and also discuss on the benefit of employing the trainees. The experience visit at Muya Ethiopia further gave the visitors the opportunity to see an organized production flow and facilities set in place to facilitate export market.

In facilitating the employment opportunities for the first round trained fifty (50) weavers, CAWEE was involved in a continuous process of consulting the potential employing companies, all owned and managed by women, where priority focus was given to those companies that are already in export.

As a result of the combined efforts made by CAWEE, Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers and Muya Ethiopia, different companies showed interest to employ the trained weavers form both training rounds.

Two companies owned and managed by women and that are already in export, committed to hire 30 weavers and Muya Ethiopia agreed to employ the remaining 20 weavers, form the first round trainees.

From the second round training, thirteen (13) companies have expressed their interest to employ seventy one (71) weavers, where all of them expressed their interest of employing the trained weavers form the second round. It is unfortunate that the number of the trained weavers will be only 50 but what was requested by the companies was 71. This shows that there is huge demand in getting trained weavers and huge potential that companies are ready to employ the trained weavers. This is also to note that, there are other companies that were not yet requested, where it is expected that they will also show interest in employing trained weavers.

In this process, the following requests were made by each of the companies:

No.	Name of Company	No. of Weavers Requested	Remarks
1.	Negist Ethiopia	20	<i>This is a company that is already in export. The company has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 1st round</i>
2.	Trio-craft	10	<i>This is a company that is already in export. The company has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 1st round</i>
3.	Muya Ethiopia	20	<i>This is a company that is already in export. As almost all the 13 companies, listed below, 4-16 expressed their interest to employ the trained weavers form the second round, Muya Ethiopia took this opportunity to take the rest 20 trainees.</i>
4.	GiGi Ethiopia	10	<i>This is a company that is already in export. The company has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2nd round</i>
5.	Salem's Design	2	<i>This is a company that is already in export. The company has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
6.	Paradise Fashion	10	<i>This is a company that is already in export. The company has requested to employ the trained weavers form the 2ndround</i>
7.	Yoas Tibebe	10	<i>This is a company that is already in export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
8.	Richo Gift Shop	4	<i>This is a company that is already in export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
9.	Sara Yarrow Hand Woven Design	9	<i>This is a company with a great potential for export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
10.	Ayni Design	2	<i>This is a company with a great potential for export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
11.	Enku Design	2	<i>This is a company with a great potential for export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
12.	ADU Fashion	5	<i>This is a company with a great potential for export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
13.	Gerry Design	7	<i>This is a company with a great potential for export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
14.	Weyra Souvenirs	4	<i>This is a company with a great potential for export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
15.	Hawaz's Design	4	<i>This is a company with a great potential for export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
16.	Abugida Fashion	2	<i>This is a company with a great potential for export and it has requested to employ the trained weavers from the 2ndround</i>
Total		121	

At the completion of the first round training, the trainees were employed by the following three companies:

- Negest Ethiopia – 20 trainees (all men);
- Yoas Tibebe – 10 trainees (all men);
- Muya Ethiopia – 13 trainees (8 of them women);

Five of the trainees have started their university education and the remaining two are working on their own in weaving, which they preferred to do so.



Some of the trainees of the first round in their new work environment (Negest Ethiopia)

14.2. Second Round Training

The same effort of facilitating employment opportunities for the second round trainees also continued. From the 50 trainees that completed the training, the following three companies employed twenty trainees where fifteen 15 of them were women:

- Salem's Design – existing exporting company employed 4 trainees, all women;
- Muya – existing exporting company employed 10 trainees, where 5 of them are women;
- Yoas Tibeb – potential exporting company employed 5 trainees, all women.

Twenty six of the trainees have agreed to form a cooperative and are in the process of getting their legal license. In this respect, CAWEE is closely working with the Addis Ababa Regional Micro and Small Enterprises Development Agency, where the Agency is in the process of providing the cooperative working premise, free of charge. In the meantime, those twenty six trained weavers are receiving continuous orders from Muya Ethiopia and have already started earning much better income.

The rest of the four trainees from the second round have preferred working on their own.

15. Project Closing Event

The project closing event was held at the Sheraton Addis on February 7, 2013. The purpose of the event was to inform all relevant stakeholders what the project achieved in its operation of one year. The closing event program had four main activities in it:

15.1. Documentary Film

At the start of the project closing event, a documentary film was seen by all the invited ones. The documentary film covered different issue areas of concern, including the challenges that the trainees face before the training and their future worries after the training, the progress of the training, including what type of solution the training brought about on their life and skill, and the situation of the trainees after the training, particularly focusing on the first round trainees, which many of them are already involved in

production, the majority of them employed by women owned and managed companies that are existing as well as potential/emerging women exporters.

The documentary film also tried to show the effort exerted by all the project actors to improve the situation of the trainees, to be able to preserve Ethiopian culture for future generation and also help the country's economy by creating competitive work force which will be great input to the export oriented businesses and improve the country's capacity to generate foreign currency.

15.2. Closing Event Remarks

The welcoming speech and the first remark was made by the Executive Director of CAWEE. The Director thanked the guests of honor and all the invited guests for being part of the project closing event. She underlined that the implementation of this project was only possible with the financial support that CAWEE secured from the USAID/COMPETE.



Nigest Haile delivering her welcome remarks

Following the Director's remarks was, a remark delivered by Mrs. Sara Abera, Owner and Manager of Muya Ethiopia and Sara Garment Designers and Manufactures. Sara in



Sara Abera delivering her remarks

her remarks noted that, emphasis was given to women traditional weavers, even though finding women in this area was very difficult as weaving is traditionally dominated by men. Her remarks focused on how the training was very instrumental in building the capacities of the traditional weavers, equipping them with all the necessary knowledge and technical skills.

The third speaker of the closing event was Mr. Barry Fisher, representative from USAID/COMPETE, Mr. Barry described the main focus sectors that COMPETE is involved in and the reason for Ethiopia to be selected, being a country, fast growing in textiles and clothing industry. As COMPETE's main focus is to build the capacity of the large work force involved in those sectors, which has transformational impact, and improve competitiveness of the work force, he indicates that the success of this project is one that COMPETE is proud to mention.



Mr. Barry Fisher from USAID/COMPETE delivering his remarks

The speaker following COMPETE's representative was, H. E. Tadesse Haile, State Minister, Ministry of Industry, whose message was read by his representative. According to the State Minister's message, the hand weaving sector employees a very large number people in both in Urban and Rural areas of Ethiopia and there is a lack of technical skill

along the value chain and access to appropriate technology, where there is huge problem curtailed in the development of this field. The project undertaken by CAWEE mainly focused in trying to improve the capacity of the major players in the value chain and connect them to already established women exporters. This activity will greatly help the export sector which faces an acute skilled human resource problem and it is in line with the Government's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP). The message read highlighted that the project has contributed a lot in that respect.



Representative of H. E. Tadesse Haile, reading the message of the State Minister

The speaker following the read out of the Minister's message was, H.E Donald E. Booth, US Ambassador to Ethiopia, where he started his speech by appreciating the efforts made by CAWEE, Sara Garment Designers & Manufacturers and Muya Ethiopia for the success of this project. The Ambassador underlined that, Ethiopia's traditional product, that is the reflection of its great cultural heritage, is getting in the global market including USA, where this project's main focus was helping the traditional weavers through the provision of capacity building training, where this process created competent work force which will be great input to the businesses involved in export.

The Ambassador stressed that, this means better living conditions, where weavers can send their children to school and in general the country's economy grows, in building future society of Ethiopia. Donald Booth also mentioned that, this project will act as a show case at the 2013 AGOA Forum, which Ethiopia will be hosting, as an example of how America is working with Ethiopia to build capacity and strengthen the trade ties.



H.E Donald E. Booth delivering his remarks

The final remark was presented by Mr. Seyfu Adane, trainee's representative, where he tried to shade some lights about the historical aspect of traditional weaving, how it reached this generation and how the income generated through used to support large families. These modernized traditional closes nowadays started to be exported to the different parts of the world and generating income to the country.

According to Seyfu, traditional weaving represents Ethiopia's culture and heritage so the main issue that needs great focus is the issue of copy writes. He presented his fear to the US Government how their product is being replicated by countries like China and India through their electric machines which only takes an hour to produce the same product and this undermines the products produced purely by hand. He thanked CAWEE, Muya and everyone participated in the training.



Seyfu Adane, trainees' representative delivering his remarks

15.3. Handing Over of Certificates

Certificates of recognition, in the full participation of the training, was prepared to all the one hundred (100) trainees, but due to time constraint, only those 10 top achievers from each of the two training rounds were handed over their certificates by the guests of honors. Among the high scoring trainees, almost half of them were women.



Handing over of the certificates for the 1st round training top achievers, by H. E. Ambassador Booth



Handing over of the certificates for the 2nd round training top achievers, by Mr. Barry, COMPETE representative

15.4. Products Exhibition

The final activity of the project closing event was, the products exhibition that was display of the trainees' products. The main aim of the exhibition was to show to the guests of honors and the invited ones, the impact that the training has brought out, in building the technical capacities of the traditional weavers, to be able to produce such kinds of export focused products.



The US Ambassador and other invited guests visiting the exhibition stands



Invited guests visiting the exhibition stands

16. Constraints Faced

In the process of implementing the project, in the time frame of one year, there were constraints, internal and external, that the project implementing team faced. The major constraints were:

- When CAWEE submitted the project document to COMPETE, originally the project was planned to be implemented for one full year, 12 months – January to December 2012, but because of going through project approval process and the process of working on a new bank account for CAWEE-Chemonics, it was not possible to start the project as planned, on January 2012 and end it up on December 2012, but because of different reasons, the project started in April 2012 and was completed in March 2013;
- The production of the weaving looms, production and purchase of loom accessories took some time, more than what was planned, which has contributed its part not to start the training at the original scheduled time;
- The unavailability of potential women trainees, as expected was a challenge that the project team faced. As weaving being a male dominated area of involvement, it was not an easy exercise to find women potential trainees/women traditional weavers. Even if this is the case, the search for the women traditional weavers continued and the target met was over what was planned, i.e. in both the training rounds, 32 women trainees were involved, where the target set was 30 women trainees;
- The trainees didn't agreed on the amount set as the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA), as it was not at all covering their expenses and they were threatening to leave the training site altogether. In overcoming this problem, SGDM came out with its strategy of responding to their request in adding some amount of money to their DSA (*this amount is reflected on the cost sharing part of SGDM in the budget tracker*); in the second round training, there was request made by the training team that the payment they received during the first round training was very low and it needs to be corrected. In responding to this request, CAWEE was forced to change some of its budget lines and with the approval received from COMPETE, the payment for the trainers was increased from the budget that was allocated to cover CAWEE's administrative expenses;
- There was delay in the start of the second round training. The preparation for the training took more time than what was planned and also due to the large number of the recruits' turnout, the selection process took longer time. It was after solving all those problems that the second round training was launched on the 8th of October, 2012, late by two weeks than what was originally planned.

- The trainees, coming from very different backgrounds, the way of life that they were leading as migrants from their birth places, lack of family attachments, etc, for some of them, it was not easy to continue and adjust to the training environment, work ethics and discipline and because of this, from the first round, eight of the potential trainees have left the training on the second day of the training, and this number of the trainees was replaced from the waiting list, which was already set aside.

During the first round training starting the first day of August 2012, 4 women trainees stopped the training; CAWEE was informed from their colleagues that they have gone to Arab countries, where most women this time are traveling to work as house helpers. SGDM tried its level best to replace other four women trainees but it was not possible to get women potential trainees that time and the project team was forced to agree and replace them with four men trainees, who were already on the waiting list and believed that they can catch up what they have missed. SGDM tried all its level best in providing crash courses to the new four trainees, using all their spare times available. The trainees in the rest of the training days were be able to catch up and were able to graduate acquiring the required skills.

- The time the first round training started, in Ethiopia, June - August, 2012, was rainy season, with slight reduction continued until mid-September. Because of the continuous rain during the training, it was difficult to do the task of warping, as this task is usually done outside the training venue in the open air, which again makes it difficult to keep this raw material clean, because of the wet ground. The rain was also observed as a problem, because of the nature of the road to travel to the training site, it was a problem to access transport and to reach on time.
- In facilitating employment opportunities to the trained weavers, one problem observed was that the trained weavers do not want to travel far distance to get employed, as many of the companies are located in different sites and most of them are a bit far out of town and this demanded looking for house rents, which most of the time is expensive. To mitigate this problem, company owners tried exploring house rents at reduced prices for the weavers, and some of the companies took the initiative of providing additional money for covering the weavers transport costs.

17. Conclusion

This project completion report, that covers the activities of twelve months, April, 2012 up to March 2013, provides brief summary on the activities carried out during those twelve months by the Center for African Women Economic Empowerment (CAWEE) and its project partner Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers (SGDM).

During the implementation period of this one year, the project team was involved in the following thirteen major activity areas:

- Training Participation and Signing of MoUs;
- Project Staff Employment and Signing of Work Contracts;
- Preparation of Training Curriculum;
- Production and Purchase of Weaving Looms & Accessories and Purchase of Raw Materials;
- Selection of Potential Trainees;
- Participation in Origin Africa Trade Expo,
- Preparation of Promotional Materials;
- Project Launch and Press Conference;
- Training Launch;

- Briefing Provided During the AGOA/CSO Forum in the US;
- Meeting in the Ministry of Industry in Supporting the Trained Weavers;
- Facilitating Employment Opportunities for the Trained Weavers;
- Project Closing Event.

Based on the agreement that CAWEE signed with COMPETE, monthly and quarterly reports were regularly submitted, and in this respect 11 monthly reports and three quarterly reports were submitted to COMPETE, in most cases submitted before the dead line set.

Apart from those monthly and quarterly reports prepared and submitted to COMPETE, CAWEE has produced quarterly e-newspapers, that were posted at CAWEE's web site – www.cawee-ethiopia.org

This annual project completion report is compiled from the 11 monthly reports and the three quarterly reports that are already sent to COMPETE.

The implementation of the project “Connecting 100 Traditional Weavers to the Export Market”, was a great success, where the guidance and follow-up of the COMPETE team was very instrumental in this respect. In concluding, CAWEE would like to take this opportunity to thank the COMPETE team for all their support in making this project a success.

18. Photo Gallery



Women trainees during the training



Women trainees during the training



Male Trainees during the training



The training hall



Partial view of the raw materials store



Trainees having lunch and taking break together



The process of warping



The trainees during the training



The trainers sharing their knowledge to the trainees



The trainers discussing about the training



The 1st round 50 trainees



Training on awareness creation



Visit by CHEMONICS Staff



Briefings for company owners and managers by Sara and Nigest



The visit of the training site by company owners and managers



Companies visit at Muya Ethiopia, Sara providing briefing at her facility



Warp strengthening and warping area at Muya Ethiopia



During the question and answer session



Group picture of the visit participants at Muya Ethiopia