



## **‘CONNECTING 100 TRADITIONAL WEAVERS TO THE EXPORT MARKET’**

***3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report***  
*(October - December, 2012)*

Submitted to COMPETE  
*January 4, 2013*

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

**3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report**  
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## **1. Introduction**

The major activities and the reporting during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, i.e. October to December 2012, focused on the following seven areas of focus:

- Second Round Training Launch & Progress of the Training,
- Progress on Training on Awareness Creation/Sensitization,
- Progress on Video Recording Activities & Production of Documentary Film,
- Status of the First Round Training Graduates,
- Visit by COMPETE Staff
- Discussion in the Ministry of Industry in Supporting the Trained Weavers and
- Constraints Faced.

During this reporting quarter, the project finalized the first round training and started the second round training, where most of the activities performed by CAWEE and Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers focused more on identifying and selecting trainees for the first round and following up the first round trainees.

As the project was entering in the second round training phase, most of the activities performed by CAWEE and Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers focused more on preparation of the training facility, well-coming the trainees and providing them orientation so that they can be able to adjust themselves to the training environment, by providing them trainings on cultural awareness and sensitization, preparing the trainees on how best they can be able to face the challenges and also enjoying the benefits of working in such an environment.

The skills training during the reporting period focused on teaching the trainees how to be effective and precise in the art of weaving and in addition providing them trainings for attitude and behavioral changes so that they can be able to adjust to the training and working environment in particular and in total to their whole life. The training went very well as planned.

Video recording also continued during the reporting quarter. The preparation of the script, the Amharic version, for the documentary film is finalized. The Amharic version of the documentary film is finalized during this reporting period and working on the English version has started.

It was in this reporting quarter that the second round training started with great success and CAWEE was involved in following up the status of the first round trainees.

During this reporting quarter, COMPETE team from Nairobi were in Addis Ababa and CAWEE organized a visit to those team to see the trainees while the training was in progress.

A meeting also took place during the reporting period at the Ministry of Industry, where officials from the concerned offices were present to discuss on how best the government can get involved on supporting the trained weavers.

## **2. Second Round Training Launch & Progress of the Training**

The first training round ended on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2012 and the 2 weeks after the end of the first phase 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 is expected to be finalized January 5<sup>th</sup> 2013. The second round training was

originally planned to start on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup> of October, 2012.

The selection criteria was the same criteria used in selecting the first round trainees which is basic knowledge of weaving, 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. On the starting day of the training all the 50 selected and registered trainees were present, out of the 50 trainees, 22 of them are women and the remaining 28 are men. On the day of the launch of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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, the trainees were mainly acquainting themselves with the training environment, the training site and facilities; they also received accessories needed for the handloom which was instrumental for the training, such as - reed, harness, beater, design stick, etc. and in addition each of them were assigned to a specific loom.

As the training curriculum is the same one which the first round trainees benefited from, the second round trainees also went through that curriculum and benefited from that. Based on the training curriculum, in conducting the training, the trainers' team used the different training sessions that were developed for the training.

During the reporting period, the following three main activities have taken place:

I. The Preparation Stage –

- a. Assigning supervisors and master weavers to lead the training,
- b. Based on the lay out already set, assigning trainees on the Loom - Loom No. 1 up to Loom No. 50,
- c. Distribution of hand loom accessories for each trainee,
- d. Trainees installing the harness, the reeds and pedals on the loom,
- e. Selection of raw material type and providing the trainees warp and yarn to be able to produce the required fabric,
- f. Tie-in and draw-in of warp and yarn using hand through held and reeds,
- g. Distribution of weft and yarn for the trainees according to the sample to be produced (yarn type, color code),
- h. Adjusting the hand loom setting according to the required fabric structure,
- i. Setting the whole hand loom and its accessories in place and receiving the required raw materials to start the training.



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

## II. The Actual Weaving Taking Place –

- With the guidance and close follow-up of their respective master weavers, trainees have started to weave different fabric structures.



*The start of the production stage*

## III. Polishing the Technical Skills of the Trainees –

- Selecting the right fabric,
- Knowing the amount needed to produce a given product, the exact measurement of the fabric needed and its shrinkage percentage,
- Improving the trainees effectiveness and efficiency,
- Improving their time management skill,
- Product cost (considering the different inputs that the trainees need to know, like - price of raw materials, overhead costs, labor used to produce, the amount of wastage and its cost) and
- Calculating profit margins.

As the project team observed it and witnessed, trainees are receiving the training with great interest and passion. 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 have started to learn the importance of socializing with their fellow trainees and started the training with great interest and went all the way up to end of December.

At the end of this reporting month, the training is left with only one week to get finalized. Apart from providing the basic skills knowledge, the training focused more on quality, efficiency and effectiveness. The trainees, with close follow up by their trainers, are working on how to produce quality outputs in keeping and maintaining their speed and accuracy. In addition they learned how to combine different colors, new patterns, 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 is observed that they have begun producing quality products.

Furthermore the trainees also learned to understand the effect of fabric design in fabric production process, differentiate weave type according to its application, and adjusting the handloom setting according to the required structure.



*Trainees working on different fabric*

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 by operating the hand loom correctly as per the given structure,
- Diversify the traditional basic cloth, penetrate and position their product in to export market,
- Get acquainted with and awareness building as an intention to new creativity and marketing,
- Learn the basics of product quality, production efficiency and effectiveness,
- Gain awareness of the potential customer,
- Produce in quality and regularity and
- Learn more about work discipline.



*The trainees getting guidance from the trainers and executing the trainer's instructions*

The other most important activity performed during this reporting period was evaluation of the trainees overall performance, based on their:-

- a. Know how about fabrics, warp and yarn,
- b. Awareness about quality of their product,
- c. Understanding the different designs and its structures,
- d. Know how about costing and
- e. Level of readiness for the future.

This reporting quarter covers training delivered for 11 weeks, until end of December 2012. The training will have one more week to add, which will make it final on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2013.

### **3. Progress on Training on Awareness Creation/Sensitization**

This part of the training focused on awareness creation/sensitization, where at the start of the training, trainees were given an introduction about the overall content of the training program, about the courses they are expected to attend and what to expect out of this training. Apart from this, different issues areas including the following was also covered:-

- a. Traditional attitude towards weavers and other crafts people,
- b. The importance of the weaving skill as a national heritage and the status and future development of the trade as an important export commodity,
- c. How trainees compare what they learnt to their traditional weaving,
- d. How the trainees envision the new skill to improve their livelihoods and improve their status as weavers.

In addition to the above issue areas covered, points that are more practical to what the training aimed at providing, was discussed and the main discussion points were:-

- i. The trainer explained about the hierarchy of human needs in the perspective of the weavers existing reality,
- ii. The facilitator encouraged the participants to take part in the discussion as to where they see themselves and to express issues of marginalization if any,
- iii. In smaller groups, participants used the Venn diagram to show institutions and individuals affecting their livelihood and their place in society/community both in positive and negative ways.

The main finding brought out during the discussion, which affect the livelihoods of the trainees, was mainly economic security issue rather than the traditional marginalization issue. In addition issues like - lack of place to sell their products, the role of the middle men who usually take about 30% of their earnings and the ever increasing price of raw materials was very well discussed. The weavers sell their end products for very low prices because the merchants have big influence on the market which again affects the livelihoods of the trainees. The other pressing issue and frequently asked question was their future i.e. after receiving this life changing training the biggest question they have is - is it possible to get a job/be employed? can the job market accept them as possible candidates so that they use what they have learnt and become successful?

So far from the sessions covered on awareness creation/sensitization, changes are seen in the attitudes, character and behavior of the trainees, which can easily be observed, when compared to the time of their start of the training, the change in their mind-set, where personal interviews with some of the trainees has also revealed that. This part of the training was very instrumental in changing the trainees, where they already started to believe that they can change their life and the life of their families through this training.

#### **4. Video Recording Activities & Production of Documentary Film**

The video recording task during this reporting period focused on recording the trainees in the training environment, how they are managing in the new environment, the process of setting up the loom including the accessories up to the tie-in and draw-in of warp and yarn using hand through held and reeds. In addition some of the trainees were interviewed to get their impressions and feelings about the training they received, where those recordings served as materials for the preparation of the documentary film.

Since the month of December is almost end of the training, as there is only one week left in January 2013, the video recording process is also at its final phase. The main task was to record the second round trainees activities and conducting some interviews with the trainees and finally including all the recoding taken on the documentary film.

The script for the documentary film is finalized and based on that, the Amharic version of the documentary film is produced and completed.

#### **5. Status of the First Round Training Graduates**

In the first training round CAWEE in partnership with Sara Garment Designers and Manufacture manage to train 50 traditional weavers and all the 50 trainees (13 female and the remaining 37 men) completed the training. Through different effort made by CAWEE and Sara Garment Designers and Manufacture different arrangements were made to facilitate the

employment of the trained weavers. One of the arrangements made was organizing a breakfast meeting at the training site, where owners and managers of companies (all of them women) got the opportunity to visit the training site and see the training taking place in practice and further talk with the trainees. This meeting was very instrumental where the following companies showed interest to employ some of the trained weavers:-

1. Nigest Ethiopia - a company that is already in export showed interest to hire 20 trainees,
2. Trio Craft - a company that is already in export showed interest to hire 10 trainees,
3. Yoas Tibebe - a potential/emerging company to enter the export market showed interest to hire 10 trainees,
4. Sara Yaro - a potential/emerging company to enter the export market showed interest to hire 9 trainees,
5. Enku Design - a potential/emerging company to enter the export market showed interest to hire 2 trainees,
6. Ayni Designs - a potential/emerging company to enter the export market showed interest to hire 2 trainees,
7. Muya Ethiopia - a company that is already in export showed interest to hire 20 trainees.



*Some of the trainees employed by Nigest Ethiopia at work*



*Some of the trainees in their new work environment at Muya Ethiopia*

At the end of this reporting quarter, below is the up-date on the status of the first round trainees:

- Out of the 10 trainees hired by Yoas Tibebe two of them left (because of their personal reasons) and the rest 8 are working in the company;

- Out of the 20 trainees hired by Nigest Ethiopia only 3 of them have left (because of their personal reasons) and 17 of them are working in the company;
- 13 hired by Muya Ethiopia are still working with the company;
- Out of the 7 trainees, 5 of them have started their university education and the remaining 2 are working on their own in weaving, which they preferred to do so.

The main reasons for the turnover of the trainees was found out to be transportation problem, being unable to re-allocate to places of the new working premises due to their marital status, disagreement over wages and finding better opportunity.

## 6. Visit by COMPETE Staff

COMPETE staff from Nairobi - Steven Humphreys and Chris Donohue accompanied by CAWEE staff, the assistant project manager, have visited the training site on December 17, 2012. The main purpose of the visit was to see the progress of the training. As the feedback received from the visitors indicated, it was observed that the visitors were very satisfied on what the project is accomplishing.



*COMPETE Staff with the trainers*

Based on the individual interviews that they conducted during the visit, the visitors were able to find out the importance of the skills training in transforming and building the self-confidence of the trainees and capacitating and preparing the trainees to be able to generate better income.



*Steven Humphreys with the trainees*

## 7. Discussion 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 31<sup>st</sup> 2012, chaired by H.E the State Minister of Industry at his office.

Present in the meeting were the following:

- 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 of the 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.

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 the 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.



**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.

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.

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.



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.

The contribution of the Director of the Federal 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.



As the government officials were very much impressed on what the project is performing, they requested for a visit at the training site and CAWEE took the assignment in making arrangements for their visit.

## **8. Constraints Faced During the Reporting Period**

In the process of implementing the project, there were different challenges and problems that the project team came across, the major ones were:

- The delay in the start of the training, which was due to the holiday (finding the true cross), celebrated during the time of the expected date of the training launch. This holy day is celebrated among the Southern Region of Ethiopia in a big way and almost all the trainees and the trainers are from this Region. For this reason the 2<sup>nd</sup> round training has not started as planned.
- The trainee's capacity in receiving the lessons provided by the trainers, as some of them were actively catching and some were not taking it fast as expected, which again was a problem the trainers faced in taking the trainees at the same wave length.

- Finding a proper organization/place for the trainees to be hired was a problem faced, where the distance of such places was far and cost of transport was high. This has been a problem for some of the trainees to work in a better and new environment, than what they were traditionally operating. Some of the trainees are already married and have kids so to relocate from their area and to come to Addis Ababa is very costly and difficult. So due to this reason some of the trainees are finding it very difficult to find suitable work place.
- The preference of the trainees in getting employed was also observed as a challenge, where they mostly want to work in areas that are nearer to their living area because they will have easy accesses to transport so, they don't prefer to go and work in the middle of Addis Ababa where all the potential employers are located.

## **9. Conclusion**

The reporting period of the third quarter, October to December 2012, has indicated that, based on the training sessions scheduled, the training tasks were all accomplished.

This quarterly report, that covers the periods of three month provides brief summary on the activities carried out during the reporting period by the Center for African Women Economic Empowerment (CAWEE) and its project partner Sara Garment Designers and Manufacturers, the training wing of the project.

In the reporting period, the project team was involved in six major activity areas which this report covers – second round training launch & progress of the training, progress on training on awareness creation/sensitization, progress on video recording activities & production of documentary film, status of the first round training graduates, visit by COMPETE staff discussion in the Ministry of Industry in supporting the trained weavers and constraints faced during the reporting quarter.

## 10. Photo Gallery



*The second round trainees*



*The 2nd round new trainees on their assigned looms learning the first phase of the training process*



*The first product of the second phase trainees*



*Trainees in their training environment*



*Trainees leaning different kind of warping*



*Trainees working on different designs*



*Trainers explaining to the COMPETE team about the quality of the product produced by the trainees*



*The COMPETE team in the training site observing the different activities performed*



*Trainees in their training site (Nigest Ethiopia)*