PDAAI 815

Final Report

of the

WEAVING TRAINING PROGRAMME
A FRIDA Project
Maseru, Lesotho

to the

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

The FRIDA Weaving Training Programme (WTP) began in November, 1979. It was the first attempt by any international donor to coordinate an effort within the weaving handicraft sector with the unified goal of assisting all workshops. There has been considerable assistance given to workshops individually but none to the weaving sector as a whole. The 14 month weaving training programme was established in Lesotho by FRIDA (Fund for Research and Investment for the Development of Africa) with the support of a $145,000 grant from USAID, and other donors. FRIDA is a private, international institution whose objective is to promote labour intensive industries in the smallest and poorest countries of Africa, and to develop their exports. They are a registered PVO. The goal of the FRIDA Weaving Training Programme was to improve the skills and design work of the mohair tapestry weavers of Lesotho, making their products more competitive in the international market.

Through regular meetings of the active spinning and weaving groups, initiated by FRIDA and Kingdom of Lesotho Handicrafts (KLH), the Lesotho Handicrafts Association was formed. They have been meeting since 1978 to discuss matters of mutual concern. It was stimulus from this group which eventually led to the establishment of a weaving training programme.

While there have been some changes recently within the weaving sector, the groups which participated in the programme included:

Sherra
Royal Lesotho Tapestry Weavers (RLTW)
Setsoto Design
Thabana-Li-'Mele Handicrafts
Thorkild Handweavers
Moteng
Thabong Weavers
Melita Tsane (last active weaver from Mazenod Women's Group)
Leribe Craft Centre
Lesotho Council of Women
Lesotho Handspun Mohair (CARE)
Lesotho Cooperative Handicrafts (LCH)
Baithuso Weavers
'Mohati Gosini (an individual artist)

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Some were more active than others in their participation and support of the programme. The workforce is made up of mostly women. About 500 women weave, while another 1800 have been trained as spinners. A majority of the spinners in Lesotho have been trained by CARE.

PURPOSE

The purpose of WTP has been to begin a programme to upgrade and improve production of Lesotho's handwoven mohair products. The programme was meant to instill an understanding of international markets, particularly those in the United States. Consultants were identified:

George Millard - marketing research specialist
Arabella Simon - video consultant
Pearl Sunrise - Navajo weaver
Gerald Carter - UK weaver (separately funded)

DESIGN SUMMARY OF PHASE I

The design of Phase I followed closely the project proposal. WTP prepared and administered a four-week weaving seminar with a nine-month follow-up programme. WTP contracted a three-month consultancy with an American marketing research specialist, George Millard. He worked in close cooperation with Chris Mohapi, general manager of KLH, and the WTP. Together they researched the potential market in the United States for Lesotho's handwoven products. Phase I also included a three-week marketing and sales trip by Mohapi to the USA.

The four-week seminar was held during March 1980. The first and last weeks were held at Sherra Weaving Centre, five kilometers south of Teyateyaneng. During the second and third weeks the weaving consultants and the film maker visited the various workshops giving in-house demonstrations and working on problems particular to the individual workshops. The visits also made it possible for the workers who did not attend the sessions at Sherra to be exposed to new ideas and people in the weaving field.

During the weeks at Sherra, presentations were also given by the Trade Promotion Unit of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as KLH and

George Millard. These presentations were given to help the participants gain an awareness of the importance of quality, good designs, product development and related subjects. It was also an opportunity for response and reaction between the producers and KLH, which markets for many of the workshops. The audience participation was active and showed many of the workers do feel loyalties to their workshops.

A representative from the Ministry of Agriculture also gave a short nutrition presentation about better use of wages in feeding and caring for the weavers' families.

Two areas of the programme which were amended from the project proposal were the video film and the resource manual (details to be covered later in this report).

During the follow-up period the WTP kept in contact with all workshops through visits and work with the LHA. The Mosotho coordinator worked closely with KLH to develop a better liason with producers. We also shared the marketing information gathered from the consultant in the United States. Producers were provided with up-to-date feedback on design, color, size and other market demands.

Several short seminars were organized during the follow-up. The first, presented by Institute of Development Management (IDM), covered workshop administration, i.e. planning, budgeting, costing, pricing, quality control. A second seminar was presented for us by the BEDCO staff. It covered management techniques and practices. A third seminar was held in conjunction with the American Cultural Center and a visiting artist Ms. Nancy Heminway. She held a workshop on drawing and embroidery as it related to textile work for embellishment. She also showed slides of textile work from around the world.

The WTP also gained the services of an IVS (International Voluntary Service) volunteer weaving adviser from June through December, 1980. She was assigned to work directly in the workshop with the Basotho weavers. During her time with us she worked for Thabong Weavers in Masianokeng, then moving to Boithuso Weavers in Sekakes.

WTP coordinated an art competition for school children in Lesotho. Funds for the art supplies were furnished by the Anglo American Corporation. The thirteen winning drawings were printed into the Lesotho National

Tourist Organisation (INTO) 1981 calendar. All the better drawings have been made available to local workshops for use in new designs for weavings. Others are being used as teaching aids and inspiration in the workshops by the IVS volunteer.

A small selection of books, periodicals and catalogues was collected by WTP. These were shared with participants at seminars, and are now being used by the IVS weaving adviser as teaching aids. Upon completion of her work in Lesotho, this collection will be passed on to the International Communication Agency in Maseru.

The film produced by consultant Arabella Simon, while primarily being produced as a promotional film for sales, has also been used as a teaching aid to show the individual workshops an overall view of what is being done in Lesotho and how it relates to their own culture. It has prompted an awareness of their own work and the importance of all the people involved in the production. This awareness is also a form of pride in their jobs.

THE CONSULTANTS

Pearl Sunrise - Navajo Weaver

Ms. Sunrise travelled to Lesotho to share some of her Navajo traditions in weaving. She found many similarities between her own culture and the Basotho. This helped her to establish an immediate rapport with the participating weavers. Ms. Sunrise's presence created an awareness that weaving is a part of her culture and her life, and it is not just a job. Many of the Basotho weavers have difficulty in relating to this. Weaving is often merely a means to securing a living for themselves, but seldom goes beyond. Working alongside Ms. Sunrise one could not help but feel her enthusiasm and dedication to weaving. While many Basotho do not share an equal enthusiasm for their work, they did note and appreciate the same in Ms. Sunrise. She also exposed them to other skills and other ways of doing things. She brought some resource material that she openly shared with the participants and they obviously enjoyed paging through other

examples of weaving and textiles. Although she showed them many techniques which would not apply themselves well within the Basotho weaving, (most are far too time consuming for a weaving industry to pursue economically), they gained an awareness through demonstration that there are alternative ways to do weaving, and how the end product can differ by using different methods. Ms. Sunrise was excellent at getting the Basotho spinners and weavers to participate together and to become actively involved in the demonstrations. This cooperation and interchange of ideas was an important benefit from the seminar.

I believe it was difficult for Ms. Sunrise to be teaching simultaneously with Gerald Carter, who tends to be aggressive and domineering, while Ms. Sunrise is not.

Gerald Carter
Joan Carter British Weaving Advisers (separately funded)

The Carters formerly lived and worked at the Sherra Weaving Centre, and share an enthusiasm and understanding of life and work in Lesotho. They do not speak Sesotho fluently, but they do understand enough to ease communication. Mr. Carter introduced some new techniques and concepts that he felt were applicable to Lesotho's weaving industry. As a master weaver himself, Carter is aware of the limitations of the loom weaving now being produced in Lesotho. With only four warp threads per inch there is limitation to the design and detail possibilities. Most often Basotho weavers have used a double strand or heavy weft in producing tapestries and rugs on their frame looms. While this does make the weaving go faster, it produces a very heavy product. For hanging on a wall, there is no need for this excess weight. It contributes nothing but added cost to the piece, particularly in mohair, a very expensive weaving material. This excess weight makes Lesotho tapestries and rugs very expensive to ship. Shipping costs add at least 25% to the F.O.B. priceof Lesotho tapestries in the United States. By introducing the shed loom and eight or more warp threads per inch, and different techniques for spinning, Carter showed an alternative

method to the Lesotho workshops. Since the seminar, several workshops have been experimenting with these changes. The new looms can be produced locally and inexpensively at Leh-Coop. There is no need to import a special European loom. The shed loom is simple and easy to understand.

As a direct result of the seminar, Setsoto Design has introduced this weaving technique. They had looms built and the Carters returned for 75 days (as consultants to Setsoto) to teach the weavers use of the new equipment. The resulting experimental carpets produced during this time show great potential for future use of these looms. The follow-up by the Carters was also a direct result of the conclusions by marketing consultant Millard. He has emphasized the need for a lighter carpet, as well as the need for Lesotho's weavers to be ready with new products as the markets change, grow or become saturated with what is presently being produced.

Arabella Simon - American film consultant

An element of the March seminar was to be the production of a video training film on the contents of the seminar. It was realized shortly after the programme began in November that this area had not been researched thoroughly in the proposal, and that far too little money had been alotted for this particular area of the programme. There was also difficulty in obtaining the needed equipment as well as the complication of two separate systems of video (North American and another for this part of the world). We applied for assistance from Anglo American Corporation - Lesotho, but when the consultant arrived we still had not heard whether or not the funding would be provided. We had no choice but to go ahead with what was available and do the best we possibly could under the circumstances. It was apparent from the start that using equipment rented from the Thaba Tseka project, and the disruptions caused by the shooting during the seminar were causing problems. A number of personality problems surfaced during the attempts to produce training footage. At this time our request for assistance from Anglo American was granted, so we decided to take a look at what our alternatives might be. The result was a change from video to Super 8 and 35mm slides. It was also apparent that training films were not going to be possible under the existing conditions. It was then

decided to produce a film that could be used for promotional purposes. The intent was to produce a film that could be taken to trade fairs, exhibitions or potential customers to show them the origin of the mohair products, who makes them, and how they relate to the Basotho culture. The film has been and will continue to be used in the workshops to help the weavers have more pride in their work and see it in a different perspective. A one-piece, screen/projector combination was purchased with the Anglo American funds to facilitate easy transport and use of the film.

The editing and production of the film were done in New York by Ms. Simon, where she had access to many pieces of technical equipment and laboratories not available here. Ms. Simon spent considerable time in Lesotho filming the land, the animals, the lives and experiences of the Basotho people. She also taped sounds of these lives and daily experiences. From these collected materials she has created LILOHI TSA LESOTHO or LESOTHO TAPESTRY, a thirteen minute, Super 8 format film. It is a visual dialogue correlating the mohair handicrafts of Lesotho with the Basotho culture. The human quality of the Lesotho tapestries is emphasized. The weavings are presented as expressions of the Basotho life and the Lesotho land. The film was awarded a Special Certificate of Merit from the 16th International Chicago Fim Festival - 1980. The film was also shown by the Mosotho coordinator at the World Craft Council (WCC) Biennial Meeting in Vienna in July, 1980. There was overwhelming positive response to the film. It has helped already to educate the rest of the world as to the existence of Lesotho and what it has to offer. It has also been shown in Washington, D.C. and New York, by the consultant, to people who have indicated an interest in the film. Some of those interested in viewing or using the film have been: the World Craft Council (NY), Religious Council for the Arts of the United Church Board, United Nations Lesotho Delegation, National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), USAID Audiovisual Department.

It was also used by Marshall Field's in Chicago during their November exhibition of Lesotho tapestries. Marketing consultant Millard indicated that the film was not only well received, it was an essential part of the merchandising done by Field's.

Copies of the film are now being produced in several formats to broaden the possibilities for future use. These will include Super 8 reel, Super 8

cartridge for continuous play machines (no rewind necessary), transfer to 16mm and video cassettes for use by other interested people, i.e. American Cultural Center video playback device. There has been a keen interest in the film both in Europe and the United States. FRIDA - Paris has purchased four copies for use in their Paris shop in merchandising Lesotho tapestries. The copies of the film have not yet arrived in Maseru for distribution but are expected imminently.

George Millard - American marketing research specialist

Mr. Millard's work for WTP on behalf of the mohair handicrafts sector of Lesotho has been of great benefit to the producers. Millard initially spent a month in the United States with samples of Lesotho's products doing market research in Chicago, Kansas City, Minneapolis, New York, Washington D.C. Dallas, Los Angeles and Sante Fe. He visited different distribution channels to determine where Lesotho's mohair products would best fit. These included import specialty shops, department stores, designer/decorators, home furnishing outlets, museums and galleries. He determined from these visits that the larger mohair tapestries and rugs were acceptable for the US market at four to five times the F.O.B. price by the time they got to the consumer. Millard concluded the best channels for their US distribution are department stores, museum galleries, and designer/decorators. These can afford these higher priced products. Initially the Midwest looked the best market, but later Millard determined that there was also keen interest in the Southwest and the East Coast.

This initial work done by Millard helped local producers to begin to conceive what the international market would expect from them. Most traders here have had no experience and cannot relate to the international marketplace. Millard visited Lesotho in March and participated in the seminar at Sherra. Here he was able to point out that the competition abroad is stiff, and the Lesotho product is very expensive comparatively, so the Lesotho product has to be excellent to compete. He also spent time visiting the individual workshops and was able to see during these visits the full range of products available here and which are suitable for export. He also was able to pick out samples, as well as to advise on modifications that could be adopted

to produce a more exportable product. He also advised what was necessary on this end to maintain an international market. He shared the concepts of the American consumer: how they buy, what they expect, and that quality, prompt delivery and reliability are imperative to continued export. As a result of his trip here, the scope of the US market for Lesotho tapestries and rugs is now known. He found the potential is better for the ethnic tapestries rather than the geometrics. There is still a market for geometrics, but actual orders show the ethnics are more popular. He found the price to be very high, but not out of the market. He found that mohair is not a selling factor. He spent considerable time with the KLH general manager, and his report was distributed to the local producers.

Millard then returned to the US where he lined up meetings and a sales tour in April 1980 for Mohapi. For three weeks, Millard took Mohapi around to these contacts. Mohapi returned with an even better idea of the US market, as well as some good orders. These visits were follow-ups of Millard's initial contacts, and the follow-up proved helpful and necessary to procure orders. A major conclusion of this trip was the need for a US point of distribution and constant contact with potential customers by phoning and visit in order to be taken seriously in the US market. Millard said he could not stress these points strongly enough; there must be constant contact and communication with potential customers.

Because of this obvious need we did amend the programme to include more follow-up. While Richard Hess was abroad, he made a brief trip to Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles to those contacts which had shown keen interest. Then Millard later did another quick trip around to follow-up again. These trips proved commercially successful, as good orders were received. A direct result was an exhibition in November 1980 of Lesotho tapestries in Marshall Field's Art Gallery in Chicago, which proved to be more successful than either Field's or Millard had envisioned. It was so successful that Field's has since reordered. Millard assisted with the opening by briefing the staff on the product and the country of origin. The WTP film LILOHI TSA LESOTHO was used during the exhibition as an effective sales tool. WTP also provided a set of a dozen large sepia prints that show the story of mohair from the goat through the tapestry. The Lesotho National Tourist Office publications on Lesotho were also distributed.

There have also been other orders as a result of the follow-up trips. A karakul rug for an upcoming Smithsonian catalogue has been produced. There are other definite orders from museums, department stores, and catalogues (such as Horchow). The interest was there initially but many were waiting for someone to be the first. The success of the Marshall Field's exhibition has given credibility of the sales potential of the Lesotho tapestries and rugs in the US and many are jumping on the bandwagon now that it is "safe".

The work done by Millard is only a beginning step toward a good US market. He believes it is now important to continue to press for sales as conditions seem rightfor selling the Lesotho tapestries and rugs. He is convinced that incipient orders and markets will die without monthly contact and follow-up.

THE SHORT SEMINARS

WTP sponsored two (2 or 3 day) small seminars and participated in a a third. These were outlined in the proposal, but no funds were budgeted for them; however, funds from other areas were used to cover these costs (i.e. a driver was not hired so the money was available for other uses).

The first workshop in September was planned with two people from JOBS (Johannesburg Organization to Boost Self-help) who also work with DEVCRAFT, an organization that markets African handicrafts. The goal of the workshop was to help weavers gain an understanding of what is involved in selling their work once it leaves the loom; it was to stress keeping up with the market. The sessions were held at the Victoria Hotel Conference Rooms. Unfortunately, at the last minute, their presentation was cancelled due to a serious medical problem of one of the consultants. We were fortunate to obtain the services of a local representative of the Institute of Development Management (IDM) Mr. Chicanot, who made a management presentation to replace the Johannesburg consultants. This workshop covered planning, budgeting, management, costing, pricing, marketing and quality control skills. There was good representation from the producers and many

commented that the coursework had been helpful to them.

In October, WTP responded to a request from the USICA director that representatives from weaving workshops be invited to participate in a short seminar at the American Cultural Center by American artist Ms. Nancy Hemenway. The artist was billed as a weaver, but turned out to be a textile artist with skills in collage and embroidery. The participants had difficulty relating their own work to Ms. Hemenway's abstract approach. They did, however, get caught up in her enthusiasm. Many picked up crayons and made drawings for the first time, including an outside session to learn about perspective. She taught embroidery stitches and tried to show the weavers how to experiment with their own weavings. Initial reaction by WTP was that this seminar was less than successful. Later discussions with the participants revealed that they had enjoyed this new approach and felt especially keen about learning about perspective.

In November WTP held a management seminar at BEDCO for three days. The BEDCO staff prepared an exceptional presentation. The participation by the workshops was low and disappointing. However, those who did attend were presented with important and practical information on local management practices and techniques. It was done in a manner that made it easy for the participants to relate as individual workshops with individual problems. There was good response during all the sessions by the participants. The presentations by various BEDCO representatives were thorough and impressive. WTP received positive feedback from those few who had taken the opportunity to attend.

VOLUNTEER WEAVING ADVISER (IVS)

Early into 1980 the WTP learned that there were two IVS (International Voluntary Service) volunteer weaving advisers available for work in Lesotho, but they needed a programme to work under. As we had funds that had been allotted for use by a Peace Corps person, we could support their work with us with these monies. USAID supported this amended use of our funds. In the end only one of the two volunteers came to Lesotho, Ms. Christabel Jackson arrived in June to begin her work with WTP. Her job is to be a teacher

in individual workshops for two to four months at a time. The duties vary from place to place because the level of sophistication and needs are different in each workshop. Having someone working directly with the weavers on a longer-term basis than a seminar has proved to be revealing. By working closely with the Basotho weavers she has been able to establish areas of need that would not be apparent to an outsider during a brief look. She has also been able to establish a network of communication and cooperation among workshops.

After her arrival Ms. Jackson began her work in Lesotho with Thabong Weavers at Masianakeng, a small cooperative. Her work with Thabong was difficult, but she did make headway in making some of the changes needed so this particular cooperative can make their monthly wages. Ms. Jackson spent five months there, and I have been encouraged by visits since her move on to Boithuso to see they are utilizing many of the practices and techniques she introduced, and they have been able to make a month's wages with their own showroom sales. They seem genuinely interested in what they are doing now, although this workshop still has many internal problems to sort out.

Ms. Jackson is now in the mountains at Sekakes at Boithuso Weavers. Boithuso is a small (15 to 20 weavers), relatively unknown workshop which was started several years ago by the Southern Mountains Water Project. This workshop is unique in that the business belongs to the weavers themselves. Each individual weaver owns her own loom and materials, and is responsible for all the necessary processes herself. She buys her own raw mohair. She cleans, cards, spins and dyes the mohair, warps her own loom and then weaves and finishes her own pieces. There are two Mosotho supervisors in the workshop whotogether determine and control quality. The volunteer has found the weavers to be conscientious and attentive and not afraid to ask questions or to say that they do not understand, which was different at Thabong. This small cooperative also has money in the bank, which is unusual. They earn by what they produce and understand that concept.

The apparent differences between Thabong Weavers outside Maseru and Boithuso Weavers in the mountains raise some interesting questions. Thabong has been heavily assisted over the last ten years and is part of the Lesotho Cooperative Handicrafts group, yet they still do not seem to be able to manage on their own. The Boithuso Weavers (the name means Help Yourself Weavers) have had little assistance from the beginning, except from one

Swiss woman with a little knowledge but a lot of enthusiasm. They were forced to be self-sufficient from the beginning and had to learn everything individually. After a relatively short life, Boithuso weavers are able to make a monthly income to support their families.

As of January 1981, the IVS weaving adviser has moved under the auspices of the Lesotho Handicraft Association. There are now two more IVS weaving advisers coming to do similar work under LHA. While they are not the complete answer to the training needs, they will certainly help.

LESOTHO HANDICRAFTS ASSOCIATION (LHA)

In 1978 FRIDA and KLH initiated meetings of the active spinning and weaving workshops to discuss what was needed to develop a training programme in Lesotho. These meetings eventually led to the establishment of the FRIDA Weaving Training Programme through a grant by USAID. These meetings also led to the establishment of the Lesotho Handicrafts Association (LHA). LHA representatives have been meeting regularly since 1978 to discuss matters of mutual concern. All workshops have been involved at one time or another, but during the last 14 months the active participants have been:

Sherra
Setsoto Design
Thabana-Li-'Mele Handicrafts
Thabong Weavers
Leribe Craft Centre
Lesotho Cooperative Handicrafts (LCH)
Boithuso Weavers
Lesotho Handspun Mohair (CARE)

The WIP coordinated meetings of LHA until members decided that a constitution should be drafted, officers elected from the membership, and that LHA should register itself with the government. At this time it was decided by those participating to include only established registered active mohair workshops as voting members. Observers from other organizations were welcomed to participate, but could not vote on issues or hold office.

An executive committee was elected. Sister Marjorie-Jean of Leribe Craft Centre was voted chairperson, H. Thogersen of Thorkild Handweaving was voted Vice-Chairperson, and Simon Taylor of Lesotho Handspun Mohair was selected as Secretary-Treasurer. The Weaving Training Programme remained an active observer in LHA. Coordination of meetings was turned over to Mr. Taylor. The constitution was approved and was registered late in 1980. LHA is now a recognized and registered organization and is independent of any ties with a specific group or Ministry.

The objectives of LHA are:

(a) To upgrade the skills of handicraft in Lesotho.

(b) To promote handicraft products made in Lesotho.

(c) To provide a forum through which active weaving, spinning and other handicraft enterprises can expose and discuss problems of mutual concern.

(d) To help establish and monitor a formal training school.

(e) To initiate and monitor courses for those involved.

(f) To provide a section with instructional literature, at the National Library, for those involved in handicraft production.

(g) To evaluate training programmes and to pursue the follow-up work after they are completed so as to make sure they are used to the best advantage.

(h) To raise funds and administer expenses of approved projects.

(i) To represent the handicraft sector of the economy in such areas as: labour negotiations, promotional and educational matters and any representation pertaining to handicrafts.

(j) Generally to do all such things as may be deemed incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above.

The group now meets quarterly, unless a special meeting is required. They do recognize the need to support one another in the production and promotion of their handicrafts. They know that their coordinated action has more power to get things accomplished than their individual action. At this time they will remain a group of mohair producers tied together through LHA. However, they do see the group in the future growing to include other handicrafts producers. While they do recognize the need for coordinated action, there seems to be a certain apathy in the group. There can be

enthusiasm during meetings, but when it comes to doing necessary outside work toward a goal, there is the element of waiting for someone else to do it for them. In the two years of meetings before WTP, the FRIDA representives were actively coordinating efforts to establish the WTP, as well as bearing all the costs of this effort. Many of the LHA participants seem to resent the FRIDA participation, yet still were waiting for them to continue doing the majority of work to see the WTP continue, or the establishment of a training centre. Because WTP was funded, while LHA has no assets to work with, LHA often expected things to just happen. The necessity of a training centre is a legitimate goal of all LHA members. Yet they never pulled together their forces while WTP was there, to use us as a stepping stone toward this goal, again, waiting for someone else to do it for them. FRIDA gave LHA ample warning that the FRIDA office would be closing in Maseru and would not be seeking funds to continue the programme without the coordinated efforts of LHA. The LHA membership did not coordinate efforts toward this end while both FRIDA and WTP were here to help.

Another problem with efforts for a training centre in Lesotho has been no clear idea of what is needed. Many individual workshops have ideas to what would suit them, but there has been no agreement of a common idea of what would be good for Lesotho. Until they come up with a common goal, they cannot possibly coordinate efforts. The WTP took their individual preferences for training and wrote up a Statement of Intent Regarding Teaching for them. However, that is as far as it went. There was no effort by LHA to take it any farther or do anything with the statement.

Since this time, one LHA member has tired of waiting for a unified training effort and has chosen to go ahead and do something on her own. Although close inspection of this persons'idea for this training makes its success doubtful, it illustrates the lack of coordinated effort by the group. This training effort was not presented to the group, it was just started. This teaching effort will again not have a teaching staff with a thorough knowledge of Lesotho, or technical competence to draw from, so it is doubtful that much can be gained.

Another LHA member also tired of waiting and took the WTP follow-up in her own hands and arranged for the Carters to come back and do an individual follow-up in her workshop.

Some positive results of LHA have been:

- sharing of raw materials
- sharing of ideas

HANDICRAFTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HAC)

The formation of the Handicrafts Advisory Committee came about after an evaluation meeting between the FRIDA Weaving Training Programme and USAID when it became apparent that there is a lack of any written mandate covering the handicrafts sector. Meetings were held and it was during one of these that Mr. Manyeli, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry suggested an Advisory Committee be formed. The committee's responsibility would be to advise government on policy making. A draft proposal was written up by WTP and LCH, which was later approved by Commerce and Industry and also the Ministry of Coops and Rural Development. Mr. S.T. 'Moca, Permanent Secretary of Coops and Rural Development, accepted the position as chairman of this committee. Present membership shall remain open to any representatives of any organizations directly or indirectly involved in the development of handicrafts in Lesotho. The current membership includes:

Central Planning Office (CPO)
Ministry of Commerce & Industry (COMMIN)
Ministry of Coops & Rural Development (MINRUDEV)
Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC)
CARE
Lesotho National Tourist Office (LNTO)
Lesotho Handicrafts Association (LHA)
Fund for Research and Investment for the Development of Africa (FRIDA)
Lesotho Cooperative Handicrafts (LCH)

The objectives of HAC are:

(a) To act in an advisory capacity to Government in formulating policy for the handicraft sector.
(b) To advise on the implementaion and execution of training programmes for the development of handicrafts in Lesotho.
(c) To disseminate information to all handicrafts associations on Government plans and strategies concerning handicrafts development.

(d) To promote cooperation among the producers by developing an interchange of information.

(e) To focus attention on specific issues and needs within the handicraft sector.

The committee has continued to meet once a month in the office of the Permanent Secretary of Coops & Rural Development. As WTP was coming to an end, Ms. Williams has stepped down as HAC secreatry and given that responsibility to another committee member. One noted concern about HAC, is that participation generally seems to come from the ex-patriates involved, not the Basotho. While Basotho committee members do appear for the meetings they do not actively participate, which is essential for the long-term objectives of the group.

RESOURCE MANUAL

Preparations had initially been made by Gerald Carter for materials to be included in the Resource Manual to be printed in Sesotho. This manual is meant to be a resource for Lesotho's experienced weavers, not a "how-to" book for beginners. It is meant to be used by the weavers as a means of checking their information or refreshing themselves in areas of the craft that they perhaps do not practice daily, or to help them when they are assisting others who are learning.

Much of the material presented by Carter was similar to another manual being produced by Bjørg Kristiansen White, Weaving Expert for the International Labour Organization (ILO), who was then at Thabana-Li-'Mele Handicraft Centre. Her manual WEAVING GUIDE-LESOTHO, was to provide similar material to what we had intended to cover, for the same audience of experienced Basotho weavers. It was being published in English by ILO in Geneva. ILO was considering a Sesotho version if there was interest in it. They asked Ms. White to look for someone in Lesotho to administrate the work involved. Ms. White approached WTP coordinator, Lynn Williams, to see if she would consider it. In view of the circumstances it seemed pointless to produce 2 versions of a manual that was being produced for the

same audience. ILO/Geneva, Ms. White and the FRIDA - WIP came to an agreement that WIP would take the WEAVING GUIDE - LESOTHO manuscript and have it translated and printed in Sesotho in Lesotho.

This collaboration has provided the WIP with a very professional manual. The 200 page book, with 300 illustrations, is presently being printed for us at Morija Printers. All of the work involved in translation, typing the translation, corrections, editing, and some rewriting have been very laborious. As a result the book could not be ready by the end of the original programme. An extension was granted from USAID until March 31, 1981 to complete this project.

WEAVING GUIDE - LESOTHO covers these areas:

Introduction to Textiles and Weaving
Spinning
Dyeing
Shaft Loom Weaving
Tapestry Frame Weaving
Finishing Techniques
Workshop Administration
Glossary
Recommended Reading

As the illustrations were drawn in Lesotho, they show Basotho workers using equipment and materials familiar to them. It will become their own book, in their own language. One thousand copies are being printed and it will be distributed free so each weaver in Lesotho has her or his own copy.

There has also been interest from weavers in Botswana, Swaziland, Kwazulu and Mozambique in obtaining the manual for their own use.

CONTACT WITH RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

WTP has established contact with related organizations outside Lesotho, including other weaving workshops in surrounding southern African countries.

The World Craft Council (WCC) is an international organization established in 1964, representing 84 member countries, including Lesotho. Its major activity is an international conference held every two years to provide more than a thousand participants with a meeting ground to exchange information and ideas, and to discuss problems and projects of mutual interest. The Council also provides exhibitions and publications, and is involved in assisting exchange of craftspeople between member countries for study and work. In July 1980 the WTP was featured in the WCC Bulletin. The article described the goals of the programme and included a photograph of Pearl Sunrise and several Basotho weavers during the March 1980 seminar.

Local coordinator, Lisebo Mc Carthy, (along with Thaba Mautsoa, sculptor, funded by Barclay's Development Fund), attended the 1980 WCC Biennial meeting in Vienna. Although Ms. Mc Carthy attended as a representative of Lesotho's handicraft sector, she was asked by Mr. Daniel Cobblah, President for Africa - WCC, to act as Chief Delegate for Lesotho, in the absence of Mr. Sam Montsi, LNDC.

The Conference provided Ms. Mc Carthy with a better perspective on how Lesotho's crafts fit into the world market. She also gained respect for the importance of the future development of liason with other African nations.

WTP used this international meeting to expose other crafts-related people to Lesotho. A copy of the WTP promotional film LILOHI TSA LESOTHO or LESOTHO TAPESTRY was sent to Vienna, with great help from WCC - New York. Ms. Mc Carthy showed it on two different occassions and received very good response to it.

Mr. Jon Jensen of the Danish Consulate, Maseru, was also helpful in making arrangements and accommodation for Ms. Mc Carthy when she attended the UN Decade for Women Forum in Copenhagen. (She made this part of the trip at her own expense).

There is interest by other countries in what is being produced in Lesotho. Likewise, there is also interest by Lesotho weavers in what is being done around them. Most of the weaving workshops in southern Africa share the common background that weaving is an introduced craft in their environment. Because weaving is not an indigenous craft there is no background or another generation to draw from. Each is trying to build with this craft to gain meaningful employment for a segment of their population. By sharing and exchanging people and ideas these weavers are working toward this goal.

WTP has been in contact with/ or visited with Mantenga Crafts in Swaziland, Tiro Ya Diatla in Botswana., Roarkes Drift in the Transvaal, ARTESENATO in Mozambique, and small, independent weavers in Kwazulu.

WTP has had visits from representatives of Tiro Ya Diatla, ARTESENATO, ILO, FRIDA - Paris, FRIDA - London, IVS - London. There was interest in our project and the involvement of women in Lesotho in handicrafts and small industry to support themselves.

The visitors from both Botswana and Mozambique visited most of the workshops and have an interest in having a weaver exchange set up. This exchange would enable weavers to learn techniques in other workshops and to experience how others work. The Mozambique visitors included two young male weavers who went to RLTW for several days to work on frame looms. We visited many of the workshops locally and they showed Basotho weavers an example of their work from Mozambique. It surprised many local weavers who did not believe that men could or would weave. The only male weavers in Lesotho are at Thabana-Li-'Mele which is isolated from the other workshops.

The representatives from Botswana are also building a spinning factory to utilize Botswana's abundance of wool. Their factory will wash, card and spin the wool. They came to Lesotho to find out if any workshops would be interested in importing this product when it is available.

ARTESENATO and Tiro Ya Diatla have both invited Ms. Williams, WTP coordinator to come look at their handicrafts toward a future exchange.

CONSTRAINTS

Training film

The concept of producing a training film was not researched properly before including it in the proposal. There was not enough money in the budget to do an adequate video production. Video equipment in Lesotho is not readily available, except from one of the few projects that use it here. The equipment is delicate and needs constant maintenance during its use. According to our video consultant, the rented Thaba Tseka equipment she used was missing essential pieces, and had not been handled and maintained well. This would have left her wide open to blame had something gone wrong with the equipment. The proposal states that LNDC had offered to loan its video and other audio visual equipment, along with skilled operators, for the duration of the program. However, when work began on organizing what was needed for the consultant after she arrived to do the film, WTP was unable to get even a straight answer about whether the equipment even existed, much less an arrangement for us to use it.

The idea of producing a film as a training device is also questionable. Few of the weavers have enough background to learn much from a single, short training film. The concept of actually learning a weaving technique from watching details of that technique on film is questionable. I think it could be useful under different circumstances, but not in the short seminar arrangement unless an instructor was there to spend a considerable amount of time demonstrating the technique.

Another constraint to doing a video training tape in Lesotho is the lack of electricity in many of the workshops. Also, hauling delicate, borrowed or rented equipment to workshops over rough roads would be difficult.

It was apparent from the disruption caused by trying to video tape and film during the March seminar that the idea was not good. A training film needs to be staged and the people involved should be cooperative. Our consultants were hired to be weaving advisors/teachers, not actors in a training film. The disruptions needed to film were

resented by the two consultants, and caused considerable confusion among the participants. There were also personality struggles among the consultants, and with the Thaba Tseka personnel. There was the added problem that Ms. Sunrise did not want herself photographed because she was very worried that the film would be used to exploit her as a Navajo Indian.

Small Follow-up Seminars

The proposal called for the organization of at least three more short seminars or equivalent expert missions during 1980 to consolidate progress and to introduce Basotho weavers and spinners to other techniques and new design ideas. It stated that local and international experts, especially African experts, would be required. This is an excellent idea, but no funds were allotted for these seminars.

Participants and Observers—March Seminar

The proposal stated that seminar participants would include approximately fifteen supervisors representing the active spinning and weaving centres, and one to three observers from each centre. The supervisors were to have a thorough knowledge of all stages of production of the finished goods. In theory this is fine. But in reality, when the consultants actually started teaching, despite explicit explanations from WTP, the participants and observers had not been told their different roles by their workshops, and all felt they were participants. Observers and participants all became the same. There was obvious jealousy when we tried to divide the group and it was apparent this would do more harm than good.

It was gratifying to have so many people wanting to participate, but it caused problems for the weaving consultants, because many of the observers were trying to do things for which they were novices. As a result the consultants spent a lot of time on basics, when they could and should have gone on to more difficult areas for the actual participants.

Bringing Weaving/Video Consultants at the same time

In retrospect, I would not bring the consultants here simultaneously. Each was used to being the centre of attention when sharing their work with students. Each felt their part and their methods best. The resultant personality conflicts were not only difficult, but counterproductive. As artists each deserved their own stage, and none like sharing it with the others.

It would have been far more productive to have brought them out to work individually.

General Apathy

The audience we were trying to reach was the five hundred women weavers/spinners in the workshops. However, to reach them it was necessary to go through the management level of the individual workshops. This differed from workshop to workshop, but generally we received lip service instead of their support, and had to work very hard to persuade the management to let their personnel participate.

In working with the LHA and the appropriate government departments to prepare for establishing a future training programme or training centre, there is a lack of clear, unified goals from the producers or the government for the future of handicrafts in Lesotho. It became obvious that both would prefer someone else to do the work, make the decisions, and come back with a project ready to go for them.

Use of South African Mohair

South African imported tops are a perfectly clean and carded mohair, processed in a continuous soft rope of fiber that can be spun into yarn with no waste. It is much cheaper for the Lesotho producers to buy tops than to buy raw, Lesotho mohair and wash, pick, card, comb and then spin it into yarn. Raw Lesotho mohair, including processing labour and about 35% waste (grass, burrs, etc.) costs the producer $\pm$ R12.

The clean tops are subsidized by the South African Mohair Board and are available to the Lesotho workshops for about R8/kilo.

The Lesotho mohair is often difficult to obtain, because it is illegal for the workshops to buy directly from farmers. To buy Lesotho mohair directly and legally, the workshop is supposed to tell the Livestock Products Marketing Service (LPMS) exactly what its needs will be for the coming year's production, and then that much mohair is set aside for the workshop. However, workshops do not always know their needs a year in advance, and smaller workshops have difficulty raising that much money at one time to buy mohair for an entire year's production. Natural colours, which are in great demand by customers, are difficult to obtain. Coloured goats were supposed to be culled from the herds a few years ago according to agriculture policy at that time. With these existing conditions it is impossible to lessen dependence on South Africa. There is also no existing depot where workshops can buy other materials they need such as dyes and linen for warp in small quantities. There is a South African firm which will provide small quantities of these things.

Offers of Assistance

LNDC had offered the full assistance of its training component for the March seminar, along with required materials and aids. It was also to assist in accounting and secretarial services, provide transportation when needed and loan its video and other audio visual equipment along with skilled operators for the duration of the programme. However, none of these offers of assistance ever materialized. After many attempts to get LNDC to assist us with these things, time ran out and it became counterproductive waiting for LNDC to sort out their internal problems. The WTP coordinators were forced to just go ahead and plan the programme without this assistance from LNDC.

Time Limit Factors

Fourteen months is too short a time to produce long term effects from a programme of this sort. It takes some time to become familiar with the sector and them with you. By the time the programme was closing down, the needs and directions of the sector were making themselves known. It is also very complex and needs long-term assistance. Even though this programme had a limited amount of time, the LHA members did not use the Weaving Training Programme as a stepping stone to future training schemes.

WTP Name

The name Weaving Training Programme caused some problems because many people, including some in the government, expected WTP to be something other than what it was intended to be. Many people thought we were a workshop, others thought we could/would take anyone and teach them to weave. It did not cause a lot of difficulties, but there were a few problems. An example: a Minister arrived the first day of the March seminar with his wife, whom he wanted to attend the Weaving Training Programme. One of the qualifications of the participants was experience. But this woman had no weaving experience at all. As an observer, she participated anyway, and was one of several people there with whom Mr. Carter and Ms. Sunrise spent a considerable amount of time going over fundamentals; time that should have been spent on the goal of the seminar: to upgrade the existing weavers' skills.

OTHER SUPPORT

The BRITISH COUNCIL sponsored the visit of Gerald Carter, UK weaving consultant, by paying his return air fare to Maseru from UK, and his per diem while he was working for the Weaving Training Programme.

BARCLAY'S BANK INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND also sponsored this visit by paying Mr. Carter's professional fee, and the return air fare of Joan Carter. Ms. Carter is also a professional weaver and contributed her own expertise during the seminar.

The ANGLO AMERICAN DE BEERS CHAIRMAN'S FUND provided WTP with a small grant which enabled us to produce the promotional film, LILOHI TSA LESOTHO or LESOTHO TAPESTRY. While the USAID grant provided for Ms. Simon's fee, return air fare and per diem, there were not adequate resources provided for the actual work. When this became apparent, ANGLO AMERICAN - LESOTHO added to our original amount. Later in our programme ANGLO AMERICAN - LESOTHO provided the art materials to the Lesotho students who participated in the "My Lesotho" art competition, coordinated by the WTP. The LESOTHO NATIONAL TOURIST OFFICE and the MINISTRY OF EDUCATION were also actively involved in assisting WTP with the art competition.

Mr. Sam Montsi, managing director of LNDC, arranged for the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Mooki Malopo to make a short speech at the evening celebration following the final day of the March seminar. He also presented the completion certificates to the seminar participants at this time. LNDC also provided the Sherra premises for use during the seminar and many of the Sherra staff were very helpful in assisting us in our preparations there for the seminar.

A Nutrition Officer from the MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE presented a seminar relevant to the weaving and spinning participants during the March seminar. They also showed a film and handed out literature.

The TRADE PROMOTION UNIT of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry delivered a one day session during the March seminar covering specific areas relevant to the handspun and woven products of Lesotho. They worked in collaboration with KINGDOM OF LESOTHO HANDICRAFTS on this presentation. Two US PEACE CORPS volunteers, who worked with KLH as sales personnel, also talked with participants about what their customers want and look for in Lesotho products.

SETSOTO DESIGN, TY - Mrs. Gillian Gage kindly offered WIP the use of her home and staff for the celebration/ awards ceremony on the final evening of the WIP March seminar. Her daughter, Sally Ann Gage, catered the event.

Mr. Jen Jensen of the DANISH CONSULATE, Maseru was very helpful in setting up appointment(s) for the Local Coordinator, with the Section Head of the Bilateral Aid for Lesotho in the DANIDA Offices in Copenhagen. He was also responsible for getting her accomodation at no cost while she was there.

Ms. Molly Little of the WORLD CRAFT COUNCIL office in New York, was extremely helpful in assisting Arabella Simon in transporting the WIP film LILOHI TSA LESOTHO to Vienna at the last moment, so the Local Coordinator could present it at the WCC Biennial Conference in July 1980.

The NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN (NCNW) in Washington, D.C., and Patsy Graves in particular, provided consultants Sunrise and Simon with a two-day orientaion on Lesotho before their departure for the seminar.

The WIP was provided logistical, as well as moral support by the FRIDA - Maseru staff. WIP had access to many things which would not have been available or known to us without this support. There was also interest and support by the whole of the FRIDA organization. Before the March seminar the FRIDA - London staff was in contact with Gerald and Joan Carter and made all the necessary arrangements for their Maseru arrival. FRIDA - London also provided an orientation for Sunrise and Simon. In November 1980, Mr. Diego Hidalgo, Chairman of FRIDA, graciously opened the NEROC Seminar in Maseru with a short speech. The FRIDA support was an integral part in the development of the programme.

WEAVING TRAINING PROGRAMME GOALS AND CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult to talk about WTP goals without emphasizing that the weaving workshops are all different, not only in size, but in experience, potential, and goals. Some actively sought help in one particular area while others wanted help with anything and everything. An example would be Thabong Weavers, a small, flailing cooperative, which sought our help in everything from spinning and dyeing, to size and design specifications, to marketing and workshop administration. On the other hand, Moteng Weavers, a privately run and more successful workshop, did not actively seek our assistance in any area. Therefore, in reaching goals, no generalizations can be made that as a group, all weavers involved in the sector benefited.

As stated in the proposal, the WTP goals were:

1. An upgrading of both technical and creative skills leading to an improvement in quality and design.
2. An improvement in productivity and efficiency by the weavers and spinners.
3. An improvement in the status and self-conception of the weavers as artisans and skilled workers.
4. An increase in the income of the rural household which ultimately serves as a base for this proposal.
5. A lessening of dependence upon South Africa in the mohair sector.

The programme was moderately successful in meeting the first three goals - - - those that are attainable in a short time. The last two goals are not attainable in such a short programme, particularly when one considers the millions of dollars in donor aid being pumped into Lesotho to reach similar goals.

Women in the weaving sector are trained by individual workshops, in individual ways. Most do not have the basic fundamental knowledge of the entire craft from which to expand. It is an introduced craft/occupation, and there is no tradition to draw from. There are few weavers in Lesotho who have a thorough knowledge of the mohair industry from the animal

fibre through the finished product, including the marketing of the product. Because each workshop trains in its own manner, there is no set standard for what a weaver must/does learn. Most are trained in only a few weeks and learn only how to dress their particular looms, a few basic weaves used by that workshop, and how to do some specific designs. Often the finishing is done by another worker, as is the dyeing, the ordering, the selling, and the managing.
By being involved in only one particular part of the workshop, without a comprehensive knowledge to draw upon, it is difficult for the individual weaver to have a perspective to grow. Without a comprehensive knowledge of the craft, she does not understand the potential or the limitations of her craft.

Today the weavers in Lesotho are technicians. There is little or no room for experimentation and development. There is some pride in their work, but there is more pride in being able to earn a living. It is now a job with little incentive toward advancement or growth. At this time the formation of a guild for weavers in Lesotho is not possible.

There is a great need for the development of a training school, and the development of skilled Basotho professionals. This cadre is essential for the future of an independent industry/ craft of handweaving within Lesotho. With only the trial-and-error method of training currently used, few skilled persons will be available for either technical weaving or production management. In order to be effective, there needs to be a mechanism to develop new and better weavers, and to closely follow production needs and marketing channels. A training centre in Lesotho could provide a nucleus for these things to continue to happen in Lesotho. Students could obtain a solid foundation in their chosen craft.

Prior to establishment of this centre, it is necessary for producers to determine their explicit needs. It is also necessary to determine whether people trained at such a centre would be used to replace personnel lost through attrition, to expand existing workshops, or to start new workshops.

Work by our marketing specialist in 1980 has shown that there is continued need for the workshops to be aware of market demands and be able to adjust and change with the market. Without a thorough background this becomes difficult, if not impossible, without continuing expert help from outside the country. There is a need for pressure to be put on the government as well as the producers to see that this end is met. Perhaps this could happen through the Handicrafts Advisory Committee (HAC), if producers could agree on a plan. It will be necessary to determine when a trainee actually becomes a weaver and exactly what skills are necessary for this. Without this a guild would serve no purpose. In 1981, the Industrial and Commercial Training Act was amended and gazetted to include spinning and weaving as a trade which can use a training apprenticeship programme. This act establishes a framework to begin a trainee programme. Workshops can now run formal training schemes, taking on trainees rather than employees. At the end of their training period, they will be tested for proficiency. If successful they then become a weaver proper and can be employed as such.

The most tangible result of WTP has been the marketing information and research done on Lesotho's tapestries and rugs, with resultant orders. There has been a thorough investigation of the international marketplace and its potential. The market(s) are now known, not speculative. The ground work has been laid for future sales in the United States, and it is now up to the producers as well as Kingdom of Lesotho Handicrafts to follow through and be responsible in their international transactions. The results of the market research will be short-lived if the producers do not meet delivery dates promptly and quality standards are not maintained. They must also be ready and able to change their products to meet the market. To do this it is critical that a weaver have the necessary skills to use other techniques and other equipment to experiment and to grow in the development of new products.

During the March seminar at Sherra, Gerald Carter introduced some new concepts in weaving for Lesotho. One of these was use of the shed loom, which enables the production of a thinner carpet, with much finer detail in the design. There is no need for Lesotho tapestries and rugs to be as

thick and heavy as they are. An expensive raw material is being wasted, as well as adding weight to an extremely heavy article for overseas shipping. Also, by spinning a finer yarn, using a single instead of a double thread, much more detailed designs are possible and the weight is decreased. While these ideas were introduced at the seminar, there has not been enough time for these to become standard practices. However, some workshops tried to follow up on this later, and some of these new ideas are being tried now.

Both Carter and Pearl Sunrise, the other weaving consultant teaching in March, showed varying ways of doing the same thing. One benefit of the seminar has been that it brought together a lot of weavers. Many had never visited another workshop. Some did not even know other people in Lesotho were weaving. There was a beginning awareness by weavers that weaving can be more than a job; that it can be an expression of their feelings and their culture.

There is a new awareness of other Basotho workshops doing similar things, with possible similar problems. This is a step toward future cooperation among the groups. Since the seminar many visits have been made from one workshop to another. Some visits were made with the assistance of WIP and other workshops have visited on their own. This sharing is very important for future cooperation. It also helps them to see what and how the competition is doing, and to make comparisons to their own progress and goals. By sharing, the workers also become involved in workshop activities instead of just going to the loom in the morning, passively weaving, then leaving at the end of the day.

Weaving was introduced into Lesotho by Europeans as a means of using one of the few raw materials available here, mohair. Today's industry relies heavily on mohair which has been processed in South Africa and returned here as tops, at a lower cost than Lesotho raw mohair. However, this may be the best way possible for the maximum people in Lesotho to make a living by exploiting mohair.

There are workshops which would prefer to buy their mohair from local farmers, if it were economically feasible for their workshop, but

current laws make this difficult. There is a high demand for natural mohair colors. They are difficult to obtain, because of Lesotho's laws and distribution system. There is a need for the government to change the laws regarding mohair marketing here.

The producers need to be less disorganized in their own attempts to coordinate efforts toward future training goals. The government needs to be more organized in its response to the needs of the handicrafts sector. They must be ready to do what is necessary to meeting these needs.

The surface was scratched by Phase I of the Weaving Training Programme. If it had been followed by a Phase II, many of these important steps forward could have been pursued. However, there has been some private follow-up prompted by this programme.