

Vocational training & literacy for those with disabilities

Afghanistan



Project Goal: *To improve literacy and provide livelihood opportunities to extremely vulnerable individuals with physical disabilities.*

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LOCATION

Jalalabad, Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan

DURATION

3.5 months (15 September – 31 December, 2008)

IMPLEMENTING

PARTNER

Afghanistan Association of the Blind (AAB)

BUDGET

US\$ 9,255

OVERVIEW

Due to decades of conflict, absence of proper health care and other predisposing factors, a significant percentage of the Afghan population (including returnees) are suffering various forms of disabilities. Most people with disabilities depend on family or community support because the lack of employable skills, suitable working opportunities, and the weak state social welfare system in Afghanistan are not able to cater to the needs of the disabled. The situation is especially difficult for returnee households with disabled family member. Returnee families generally face a lack of livelihood opportunities and find it difficult to give family members even basic support. Therefore, in these conditions, the ability to support the livelihoods of disabled people is very limited.

AIM OF PROJECT

UNHCR recognized the need to provide specific assistance to improve the socio-economic condition of this particular returnee group, and they consequently piloted a basket/broom making and literacy project in Nangarhar in 2006. The project provided vocational training and literary classes to over 30 participants with physical disability.

- To provide basket and broom making skills for home-based production to 20 persons with physical disabilities.
- To improve the literacy level of 10 participants with physical disabilities.
- To improve the literacy level of 10 visually impaired participants through Braille system.
- To support the trainees and their families with WFP food assistance during the duration of the training.
- To contribute to the empowerment of people with disabilities and reduce their dependency on external assistance.

RESULTS/OUTPUTS

- Basket/broom making training is provided six days a week for three hours every training day - in two groups.
- Literacy/braille class is provided six days a week for one hour every training day in two groups.
- Provided minimum amount of raw materials to the trainees to start home-based production.
- Provided follow up and guidance by the IP including marketing skills and contacts.
- 20 vulnerable people with disabilities acquired basic literacy and skills on basket and broom-making.

- The trainees earned an income from the basket/broom production at home after the completion of the training. Target income to be generated is \$30 – 40 per month.
- Increased self-sufficiency of the trainees and improved self-confidence as active members of the society.
- Improved status in the family of trainees by reducing their dependency and contributors to family income.

IMPACTS

To date, the beneficiaries of the 2006 project are still producing brooms and baskets at home and selling them in the local market. They are able to earn a monthly income of 30-45 USD, which is an important contribution to their families.

Based on the positive experience and considering the continued needs, UNHCR expanded the project in 2008 involving a new set of beneficiaries who returned from Pakistan in 2007 and 2008 and residing in Jalalabad, Behsud and Surkhrod districts. The project is supported by WFP through its Food-for-Work programme.