



CASE STORY

Achieving Independence through Skill Development



Kamla is a resident of Surto Oad village in District Umerkot. Being the sole breadwinner of his family, Kamla's father Mr. Mukesh Kumar was not able to make enough to support his household of eight people. Women living in the villages of rural Sindh are largely dependent on male family members for financial and social support. Living with a physical disability due to polio, these barriers are particularly

difficult for Kamla. "As a physically disabled woman, I can't go out for labor in agricultural fields as most of the women do."

Despite these difficulties, Kamla is resolved to help her family build a future free of any financial worries. "I know the art of embroidery and can do embroidery work from home as well. This way, I can help reduce the financial burdens of my family."

She believes that lack of education, ignorance of health issues and gender discrimination are the major obstacles to women's empowerment in her community. Kamla states that when she was informed that an NGO (Community World Service Asia) was establishing an embroidery center at her village, she felt that a door had been opened for her. Although she already knew how to embroider, her work had never been acknowledged and she had not been compensated well for her laborious job.

Despite having no formal vocational training, Kamla's embroidery skills were good and she was able to produce high quality work. However, she remained underpaid as she had been unable to properly market her products. "After taking the artisans' skill test, I was informed that I have qualified and the team has selected me for the embroidery learning center. I was really glad to hear this

news and was very excited to know that my skill would improve and my work would be recognized with fair wages."

Kamla feels that participating in the project would enable her to earn a real income. "After a three-month embroidery course with an additional three months for production, I will get an idea about marketing those products as well as their market rates. I would then be able to assist my father in contributing to the household income."

Kamla's father also plans to be involved in the project activities as a gender activist. She mentions that her father is working to promote gender equality in the community after participating in Community World Service Asia's TOT workshop for gender activists.

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"Since the training, he has been delivering lectures on a regular basis with my neighbors and my relatives and motivates them to educate their daughters as well," says Kamla. She is hopeful that these efforts will help reduce the discrimination faced by women in society. The project has relieved her of the tension that she previously felt at not being able to contribute to the household expenses. "Despite my disability, I can also be independent and can contribute my due share for the betterment of both my family and my community as well."

