

KNOWLEDGE GIFT TITLE:

Women empowerment in fragile states

COUNTRY(IES) / REGION:

Afghanistan

LEAD ORGANISATION:

ILO

CHALLENGE / PROBLEM

Insecurity, forced migration and stringent cultural stereotypes have limited economic empowerment options for women refugees, IDPs and returnees living in camps. Carpet weaving has traditionally been their livelihood but limited skills in weaving digital export carpet designs has led to their exclusion from commercial employment.

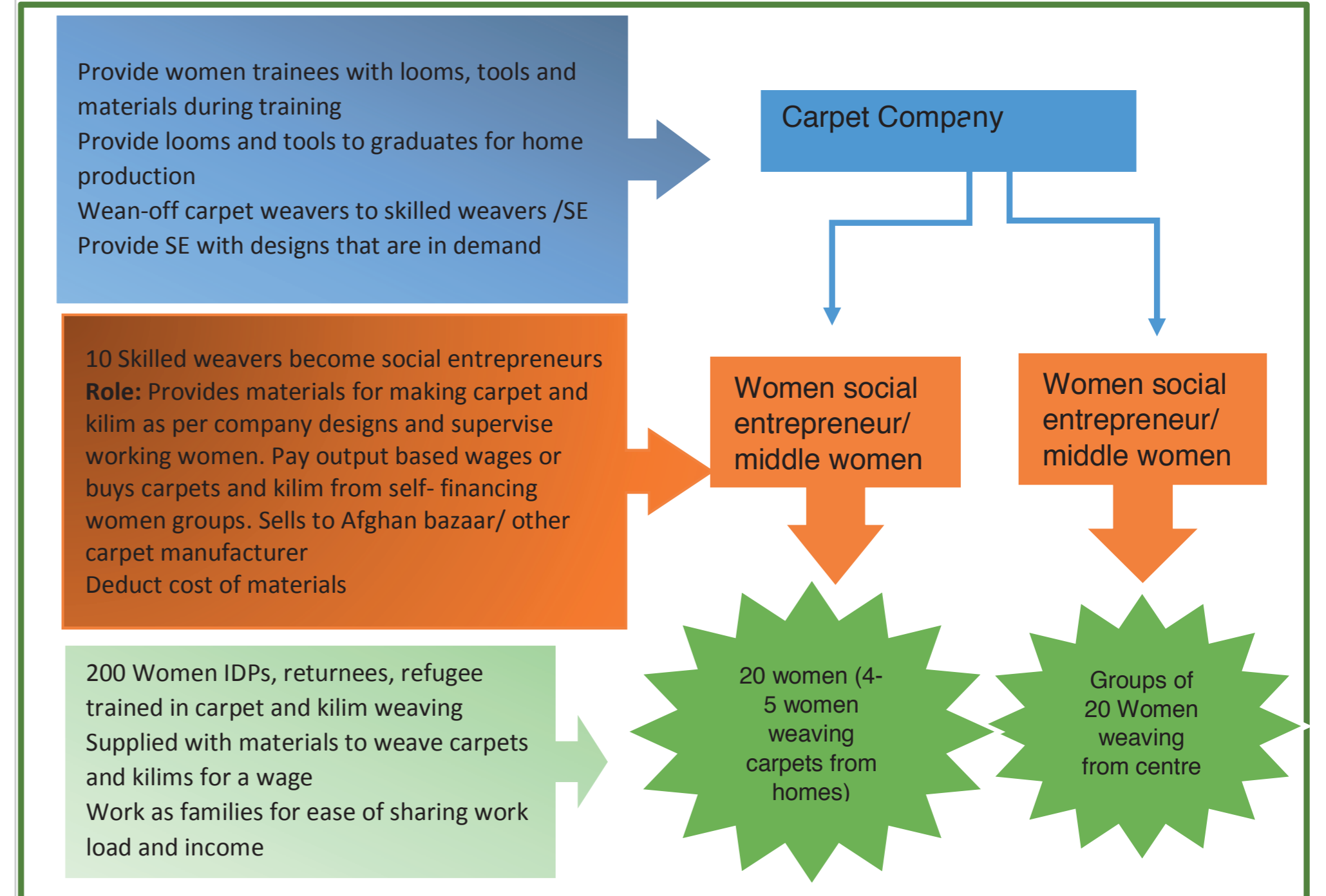
MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS MADE

- Lead firms are interested and willing to collaborate;
- Expansion capacity of lead firms is sufficient to accommodate a good number of target population; and
- Successful value chain business models are replicated by others.

SOLUTION OFFERED

- Private sector led demand driven technical and vocational skills training leading to job creation through wage earning employment and entrepreneurial self-employment. Trainees were producing marketable products and hence were earning while being trained;
- Provision of equipment, tools and materials to produce carpets for the company or on loan with option to own;
- Option of entrepreneurial skill training for women interested in running own carpet weaving centres/ companies;
- Output-based wage provided flexibility to work from the weaving centre or from home; and
- Provision of guaranteed market for carpets and kilims for entrepreneurs.
- The training was done in-situ to cater for restrictive cultural norms and insecurity while flexible and sensitive to their reproductive roles.

ILLUSTRATION / VISUAL



OUTPUTS CREATED

- 300 women were trained in identified in-demand skills gap: 180 trained in carpet weaving, 76 in shaggy rugs weaving and 40 in kilim weaving;
- 15 Mt of wool bought and used
- 1,200m2 of kilim, 855m2 shaggy carpets and 1,080m2 carpets woven.
- Training manual and standard operating procedures for the company

INDICATORS / SCALE / IMPACT

- 314 FTE jobs created and \$75-100 net income/weaver/month
- US\$187,560 additional income for the company
- 732 indirect jobs created along the value chain from wool production, wool washing, yarn production, through finishing touches of woven carpet to consumer.
- Model contributed to intergration of IDPs with hosting community and helped bridged the humanitarian-development nexus.

PARTNERS

- Afghan Bazaar Carpet manufacturing Company Pvt. Ltd: conducting skills training, provision of inputs, equipment and tools for carpet weaving.
- Balkh Chamber of Commerce and Industries advocating of favourable policies.
- Carpet Union contribute in reducing potential of child labour in the carpet industry.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS / UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE

- Technical skills development should be demand-driven
- Combining training with other support services such as finance, mentoring and coaching would improve success rate of start-ups and MSME to improve and grow their businesses

REPLICATION POTENTIAL / SUSTAINABILITY

The model is replicable in any country context: 1) is market driven due to the active participation of private sector players interested in opening up their supply chains; 2) is financial sustainable as private sector provides inputs to on credit contract basis and a buy-back the products; 3) can link producers to financial service providers but provide guaranteed market for the products and 4) can shift producers from being 'employees' to being entrepreneurs.

TOPICAL FOCUS

- MSME segmentation & entrepreneur-centred approaches
- Interplay between financial & non-financial services
- MSME support in digital era
- Entrepreneurial eco-systems & local advisory service providers
- New trends in MSME development

SUB-TOPIC SELECTED

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES IN SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MSME:
Entrepreneurship promotion to bridge the humatiraian-development nexus

- Green
- Gender
- Fragility

Facilitated by:

