



## Strengthening Women's Ability for Productive New Opportunities SWAPNO

### Progress Report on Livelihood Skills Training 2018



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## 1. SWAPNO Context and Approach

Income poverty in Bangladesh has been reduced from 59% in 1991 to 24.8% in 2015 and extreme poverty reduced from 42.7% in 1991 to 12.9% in 2015, indicating that the country achieved MDG 1 of halving poverty. However, there are still around 20 million people living in abject poverty. Bangladesh aspires to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030. Drawing on the encouraging poverty reduction experiences of the earlier REOPA project jointly implemented by UNDP and Local Government Division (LGD); LGD with support from UNDP is presently implementing SWAPNO –A tripartite agreement was signed on 23 February 2014 among UNDP, Local Government Division and Economic Relations Division to facilitate the project implementation. The DPP of the project was approved in 26 May 2015 and field implementation was started in August 2015.

Strengthening Women’s Ability for Productive New Opportunities, also known as SWAPNO, is a project aimed at ensuring sustainable livelihood and food security for extreme poor and vulnerable rural women. The overall objective of SWAPNO is “Economic growth is achieved in a more inclusive manner, with economic opportunities reaching rural poor women, and vulnerable groups are protected against shocks”. Four major interventions of the project include:

- i) Fixed wage contract for 18 months under public asset maintenance component
- ii) Encourage responsible attitude and behavior as related to saving and spending by facilitating formal and informal savings
- iii) Need-based life skills and livelihoods trainings and formal apprenticeship training
- iv) Formal financial inclusion

The first intervention generates employment for ultra-poor and vulnerable women in community identified public assets, part of Social Security Programs (SSP) for a fixed tenure of 18 months and facilitates their wage transfer digitally through bKash, Rocket and Bank Asia.

The second intervention attempts to encourage responsible saving and spending behavior by facilitating formal savings and participation in informal saving groups known as ROSCA (Rotating Savings and Credit Associations).

In order to ensure livelihood sustainability post project intervention, the third intervention involves training on need based life skills and livelihoods; and establishing linkages with private sector to facilitate formal sector employment through formal apprenticeship training.

The fourth is the most recent component, which encompasses financial literacy training and developing micro-merchants as Digital Financial Service agents (DFS).

The third and fourth intervention facilitates access to markets by linking community initiatives to private sector and financial institutions.

The diagram below summarizes SWAPNO approach:



Under the third component, livelihood training has been provided to 3028 women beneficiaries in 6 different livelihood training- small business management and development, livestock rearing, poultry, duck and pigeon rearing, vegetable cultivation, fish and crab culture, tailoring and dress making. Another 1000 and more are scheduled to be receiving the trainings in the first quarter of 2019. With regards to formal apprenticeship training, SWAPNO has made progress in the RMG sector with Ecofab and Fakir Apparels. Under the agreement with Ecofab, 20 SWAPNO beneficiaries have received a two-month long skill training on RMG sewing machine operation, and were subsequently employed. 200 more are scheduled to receive further training. The partnership with Fakir Apparels Limited is underway to facilitate the training and employment of 300 women during 2018-19.

The report elaborates more on the third SWAPNO project components on livelihood trainings and formal apprenticeship training.

## 2. Livelihood skill development training

### a. Introduction

Livelihood and life skill training is an important SWAPNO project component to ensure livelihood sustainability post project intervention and empower women as decision makers in their own lives. To ensure and enhance the livelihoods of the SWAPNO women after an 18-month employment, the SWAPNO strategy is to build the capacities of women beneficiaries on self-employment and wage employment for sustainable livelihoods.

SWAPNO's approach is crafted from ILO and its experience with Community Based Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (CB-TREE) and practical experience from Rural Employment Opportunities for Public Assets (REOPA). Thus, the trainings are specially designed for disadvantaged, vulnerable and low literacy women. The trainings are delivered to groups of 12 to 20 women by skilled resource persons in sessions of 1 to 2 hours per day during their 18-month employment. The trainings are delivered through an interactive and participatory training methodology which involves simulation and energizing games, small and large group discussions, presentations and visual demonstrations.

### b. Training Needs Assessment (TNA) and Market Opportunity Survey (MOS)

In 2016, a Market Opportunity Survey (MOS) was conducted following the Community Based Technical Training (CBTREE) method in order to explore local viable income generating businesses and potential job market for SWAPNO beneficiaries. Project staff interviewed traders, buyers, local elites and Upazila Parishad representatives regarding sustainability and viability of trade opportunities in respective Unions. The outcome was a market driven trade list upon which the categories of livelihood trainings to be delivered were developed.

Based on this market driven trade list, a Training Needs Assessment was conducted in 2018 to verify if the training needs of SWAPNO beneficiaries had changed, and if it had to what extent. This was done in order to re-orient and adapt the training modules to the new needs and context.

For this purpose, the SWAPNO project organized a one day orientation session for the field staff to enable them to conduct a Training Needs Analysis (TNA). The field staff administered questionnaires on a one to one basis with the beneficiaries. The data collected was analyzed to identify the following trades:

Sector	Trade
Livestock/ Poultry	Cow rearing
	Beef fattening
	Goat rearing
	Sheep rearing
	Chicken/Hen rearing
	Bird rearing

<b>Agriculture</b>	Vegetable cultivation
	Nursery
	Vermi Compost
<b>Fisheries</b>	Fish Culture
	Crab Fattening
<b>Small Business</b>	Grocery Shop
	Tea stall
	Cosmetics business
	Betel Leaf & Nut Business
	Dried fish
	Spices Business
	Stock business
	Vegetable Business
	Carton business
	Cloth business
<b>Handicraft and Cottage industry</b>	Tooth pick maker & Agar bati maker
	Papos maker
	Block /Batik and Curchupi work
<b>Food processing</b>	Chana chur maker,
	Popped rice
<b>Carpentry</b>	Helper / Carpenter
	Painter / Banisher
<b>Tailoring and Dress Making</b>	Tailoring and Dress Making
	Boutique & Batik, Embroidery.
<b>Oven/Knitting (RMG)</b>	Oven/Knitting operator
	Cutter Master & Sewing machine operation

	Helper
<b>Rice production</b>	Helper
	Rice maker
<b>Hotel management</b>	Cooking helper
<b>Brick field (Construction)</b>	Helper

### c. Curricula and Curricula Development Process

Livelihood skill development training is provided based on the need and initial skill level of the beneficiary in the respective trades. The training is given with an objective to enhance livelihoods by building human capacity and ensure future employability.

After conducting the TNA, six major livelihood skill needs were identified upon which the curricula development of the following six modules was based. These were:

- Small business management and development
- Livestock rearing (cow, goat and sheep rearing)
- Poultry, duck and pigeon rearing
- Vegetable cultivation
- Fish and crab culture
- Tailoring and dress making.

Local resource persons and SWAPNO staff were involved in developing these modules. Accordingly, SWAPNO organized a two-day workshop with technical experts from the six respective trades to validate and finalize the modules for printing. 20 subject/trade experts from different public organizations and NGOs reviewed, revised and recommended additional materials, moderated by consultant from Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) Bangladesh. The modules were then finalized for print. These final modules can be used by SWAPNO and other organizations.

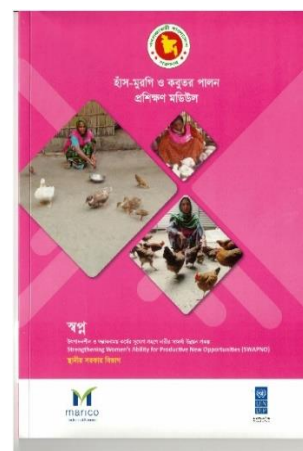
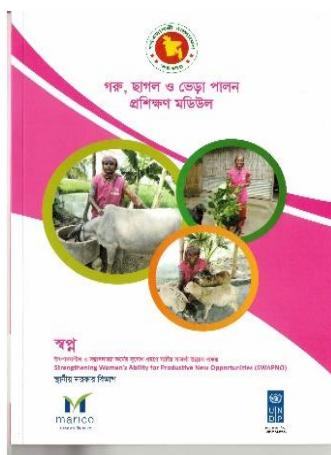
The key contents of each respective modules are as follows:

<b>Livelihood Course</b>	<b>Key Content</b>
<b>Small Business Management and Development</b>	Strategies of small business management; Competencies & characteristics of entrepreneurs; Techniques of marketing; Loss and profit calculation; Costing of product; Preparation of business plan

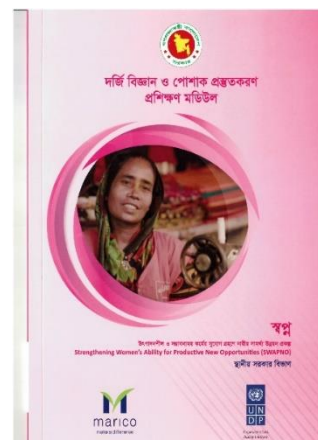
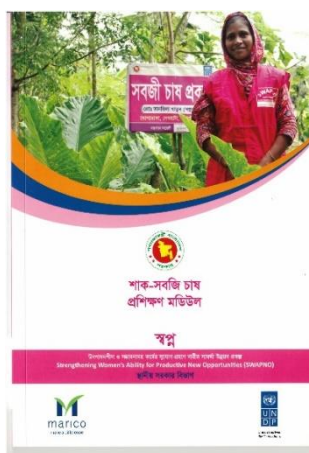


<b>Livestock rearing</b>	Introduction of different types of livestock and poultry; Food and housing management and store; Disease identification and management; Loss and profit calculation; Selling techniques; Business plan preparation
<b>Poultry, duck and pigeon rearing</b>	Food and housing management and store; Diseases identification and management; Loss and profit calculation; Selling technics; Business plan preparation
<b>Fish culture and crab fattening</b>	Importance of fish culture; Identification of profitable fish for culture; Opportunity of fish culture; Fish storage and management techniques; Techniques of mix fish culture; Importance of crab culture; Sources of crab for culture & preparation for culture; Grading methods of crab; Marketing and loss and profit calculation techniques; Packaging & marketing
<b>Vegetable cultivation</b>	Selections of vegetable considering the nutrition value; Considering factors of homestead gardening; Seedbed preparation; Land and bed preparation; Soil, Fertilizer application; Marketing; Price calculation; Business plan preparation
<b>Tailoring and dress making</b>	General idea on sewing machine, sewing machine mechanics and its use, preparation for sewing; Maintenance of sewing machine; Trouble shootings of sewing machine; Cutting stitching and sewing; How to take measurement; Sewing of petticoat, vest, baby frock, salwar and kamiz

1800 copies of the following training modules in six major livelihood skills were published:







#### d. Delivery of Training Process

The delivery of the livelihood skill training followed these key steps:

- i. Designing and planning
- ii. Resource persons identification
- iii. Training of trainers (TOT)
- iv. Orientation of Master Craft Persons (MCPs) on Apprenticeship and Competency Skills Logbook (CSLB)
- v. Implementation of training at field level
- vi. Follow up and support of Training

The next section provides details of these processes,

##### i. Designing and planning

The SWAPNO project organized a day long coordination meeting at the Dhaka office where District Managers, Finance & Monitoring Associates and SWAPNO head office staff participated. Following agenda was set in the meeting.

- Implementation of Livelihoods Skills Training (September- December 2018)
- Modalities of involvement of resource person.
- Monitoring Training for quality assurance

The outcomes were:

- Developed a detail training plan with budget for September – December 2018
- Customized informal apprenticeship/ Traineeship model of Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB).
- District offices will explore and hired individual resource persons to facilitate the skills training

- A monitoring tool developed.

## **ii. Resource persons identification**

SWAPNO district offices had the responsibility of identifying resource persons to facilitate the six respective livelihood skills. Districts offices asked for expressions of interest from local facilitators and communicated with Districts offices. Selected resource persons sat with SWAPNO district offices and discussed the modalities and Terms of Reference (TORs). A total of 54 resource persons were selected for facilitating training in the districts of Kurigram and Satkhira. The facilitators were experienced in specific trade/subject matter, facilitations and working with disadvantaged groups.

## **iii. Training of Trainers (TOT)**

SWAPNO project organized a TOT for resource persons to facilitate livelihoods skills training. The District Managers of both districts facilitated the TOT supported by F&M associate. TOT was facilitated through group work and individual presentations.

The objectives of the TOT were to:

- Understand the process of SWAPNO Livelihoods Skills Training
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of a facilitators to impart skills training to women beneficiaries.
- Develop knowledge and skills on participatory training approach & facilitation

The content of the TOT was

- Process of livelihoods skills training under SWAPNO project
- Roles and responsibility of selected facilitator
- Dos and Don'ts in conducting skills training
- Introduction of participatory training methods
- Introduction of training curriculum
- Presentation on selected sessions

## **iv. Orientation of Master Craft Persons (MCPs) on Informal Apprenticeship training on Tailoring**

A Master Craft Person in the context of SWAPNO project is a skilled expert in tailoring and dress making under whose guidance beneficiaries learn through informal apprenticeship for a period of three months. Informal apprenticeship is where beneficiaries learn skills of the trade on the job by way of observation, imitation and repetition while working with the MCP. SWAPNO provides a monthly stipend and counselling support to its beneficiaries and provides regular monitoring support to MCPs.

An orientation session was organized for 89 selected MCPs (36 in Kurigram and 56 in Satkhira) in which the following key areas were emphasized:

1. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)
2. Work Place environment.
3. Working Hour
4. Unit of Competency.

In 2018, a total of 316 beneficiaries received training under Master Craft Persons on tailoring and dress making. Each MCP has 2 to 5 beneficiaries working under him/her.



Women receive training under Master Crafts Person

#### v. Implementation of Training at Field Level

In reference to table 1.1, livelihoods skills training was provided to 3028 beneficiary women on six trades. Majority of the beneficiaries received training on small business management and development (1932), followed by livestock and poultry management (447) and fish culture and crab fattening (342).

All trainings are conducted by skilled professionals in the respective trades in batches of 12 to 20 women. The trainings are scheduled during the 18 month work tenure of the beneficiaries, and are given according to their needs and initial skill level.

**Table 1.1: Livelihoods Skill Development Training**

Course	Duration	Participants		
		Kurigram	Satkhira	Total
Small Business Management and Development	5 days	1295 (60 batches)	637 (28 batches)	<b>1932</b>
Livestock and Poultry Management	5 days	221 (10 batches)	226 (10 batches)	<b>447</b>
Fish Culture and Crab Fattening	5 days	42 (2 batches)	152 (7 batches)	<b>342</b>

Vegetable Cultivation	5 days	32 (1 batch)	47 (3 batches)	<b>79</b>
Tailoring and Dress Making	2 months	40 (5 batches)	0	<b>40</b>
Informal Apprenticeship (Tailoring and dress making) From 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct – 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec	3 months	87 (36 MCPs)	229 (56 MCPs)	<b>316</b>
RMG Sewing Machine Operation Training From 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	2 months	174	20	<b>194</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1717</b>	<b>1311</b>	<b>3028</b>



Some of the trainings beings conducted in the field by skilled resource persons



### 3. Formal Apprenticeship Training

SWAPNO aligns with the needs of national labour market through its initiative on formal apprenticeship trainings. The apprenticeship trainings are based on private sector linkages to provide market driven livelihoods to beneficiaries in the formal sector. SWAPNO has made progress in the RMG sector with Ecofab and Fakir Apparels.



1<sup>st</sup> December 2018, first batch of women to receive ECOFAB training

Under the agreement with Ecofab Ltd, 20 SWAPNO beneficiaries received a two-month long skill training on RMG sewing machine operation in 2018, and were subsequently employed (first batch). 180 more beneficiaries are scheduled to receive this training with Ecofab Ltd from 2018-2019. SWAPNO's professional and personal guidance helped the women with the process of moving from

their own village to where the factories were located. Relocation fees, orientation workshop and accommodation costs were a part of this support. SWAPNO further helped the women to acquire basic literacy so that they could sign their names and pass the required skill tests to qualify for job placement.



ECOFAB and SWAPNO staff jointly pose for a photo before orientation of beneficiaries

SWAPNO covered beneficiaries' costs during the first months of basic training, while Ecofab Ltd paid wages after the two-month on the job training.

SWAPNO maintained regular follow-up with the beneficiaries to ensure safe- work environment and entitlements, and made them adhere to rules and regulations of the factory. SWAPNO officials regularly visited Ecofab Ltd and discussed with management and SWAPNO women regarding safety, security and workplace

environment. Ecofab Ltd management is highly pleased with the SWAPNO women and they are now more confident and skilled in their respective

The partnership with Fakir Apparels Limited is underway to facilitate the training and employment of 300 women during 2018-19. Simultaneously, new partnerships will be established with the leather and packaging sectors. More sectors will be identified through a market opportunity survey.

### Planned Trainings

Remaining 1,114 beneficiaries are to receive livelihood training in the 5 respective trades in the first of quarter of 2019. In Kurigram, 701 beneficiaries will be trained in Livestock and Poultry Management and 174 in Ready-Made Garments. In Satkhira, 249 beneficiaries will be trained in Small Business Management and Development, 744 in Livestock and Poultry Management, 18 in Vegetable Cultivation, 231 in Fish Culture and Crab Fattening and 20 in RMG Sewing Machine Operation.

A specialized training on business development for micro-merchants developed by MARICO is also scheduled to be delivered through SWAPNO to SWAPNO beneficiaries who are operating small businesses and grocery stores. The training may be extended to micro-merchants beyond SWAPNO beneficiary pool as well. For this, an initial market survey will be carried out in Kurigram to map the profiles of potential beneficiaries for this training.

Follow up and regular monthly monitoring of all activities is scheduled from March through June, concluding with a final evaluation in December.

<b>Table 1.2: Plan for forthcoming activities under MARICO sponsorship</b>						
<b>Activities</b>	<b>January -June 2019</b>					
	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>
<b>Livelihood skills training</b>						
Small Business Management and Development (12 batches)						
Livestock and Poultry Management (32 batches)						
Fish Culture and Crab Fattening (10 batches)						
RMG Sewing Machine Operation (9 batches)						
Micro Merchant Development						
Micro Merchant Business Development Training (MARICO Model)						
Follow-up on livelihoods skill training and job-placement						

## 4. Challenges and Lessons Learnt

### **Livelihood Skills Training:**

1. SWAPNO beneficiaries live in different Unions. It is a challenge to bring them in batches of 20-22 to a particular training place (Union parishad) from different locations.
2. It is difficult for beneficiaries above 32 years of age to retain knowledge from trainings
3. There is an understanding gap between local skilled resource persons and illiterate women. They have to give more time and effort to bring trainings to the level of understanding.
4. Maintaining quality of training is a challenge due to involvement of new resource persons
5. Difficult to monitor all types of training within the timeframe because multiple training is conducted in the field simultaneously.

### **Formal Apprenticeship and Employment:**

1. SWAPNO women are head of their families, so migration to a different location causes household disruption, hence they are less interested to work in formal sector.
2. For formal sector employment, the productive age group for workers falls between 18-28 years. It is difficult to get beneficiaries who are from this age group and after the age of 28 years they are no longer viable to work.
3. It is difficult for SWAPNO beneficiaries to fulfil literacy requirement for formal sector

### **Informal Apprenticeship Training:**

1. Those who rely on informal structures for their livelihoods are at a comparative disadvantage when it comes to accessing tools and resources that would make their businesses and enterprises more economically viable and sustainable through relevant and competitive skills training.
2. As per definition of apprenticeship by GOB, age of the apprentice should be 18- 28 years old but in some cases SWAPNO beneficiaries are older than 28, so it becomes difficult for them to retain the learnings of skills training.
3. It was found that most of MCPs have lack of skills in marketing, designing of products and apprenticeship modalities. So it is difficult to find skilled qualified MCPs for training.

### **Overall Recommendations**

- a. Livestock and poultry management training should be organized for all target women as a regular training program.
- b. Training Needs Assessment (TNA) should start immediate after life skills training.
- c. Market demand survey should be conducted by a renowned research organization



- d. More linkages should be established with formal sector to engage beneficiaries in formal sector from informal sector.
- e. Extensive follow-up and marketing linkage support should be given to SWAPNO women for successful establishment of their businesses.