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Empowering women through Education
“We want to teach them to fish for themselves”

Objective:

Prevention of crime and prostitution due to illiteracy and lack of skills among women

Background:

Most of the poor families in India face an extreme degree of poverty. This condition becomes even worse if the people have no skills to be able to make money. Moreover, these people do not have any money to pay for their training or to join any learning programs. Indian culture is a male-dominated society; males of the families are considered superior. Even in their childhood, they are given priority over the females in the family. Therefore, if fortunate enough, Indian males get the opportunity to learn some skills and at the very least have the opportunity to a primary education.

Where/Who:

It was recently found in Saharanpur, a small city in northern India, that young and middle-aged women are getting into prostitution because they cannot find any other forms of income. Many of these unfortunate women are widowed, divorced, abandoned or even orphans, and refugees who do not have any male to take the responsibility of the living and survival. These women are uneducated and have no skills that they could use to earn money. They bear the responsibility of taking care of all the expenses of their children.

What/How:

In the effort to help reduce the number of women who turn to prostitution as a last resort, which also leads to crime and disease, I am proposing to open a small center called The Vocational Center where they can learn crafts and other skills. Handicraft is in demand in the local small-scale businesses like garments and handicraft shops, etc. If these women can be taught these skills, they will be able to make some money by doing this kind of work, which will keep them and the society safe.

A hall room will be rented where we can put the basic sewing machines and other handicraft related products. Women will be able to learn and practice the skills, which will be taught to them by the teachers, hired initially with the help of KWD funding.

One term course will run for 2 months. About 35-40 unskilled and poor women will be admitted initially, and as they finish the course at the end of two months, the next group of women will be admitted. This cycle can be repeated every two months providing women with basic skills and contacts of people/companies who will give them work.

Once these women are able to produce the handicrafts in sufficient quantities, we will help them advertise and sell these products. Any profit made by these sales will only benefit these women and their families.

Money management:

KWD funds will be directly deposited in the local bank account to benefit The Vocational Center. This money will be used for payments of rents, machines, bills, raw material, salaries, etc. For detailed expense report, please refer to the budget page.

Other supporters and contributors:

Letters of support are available upon request.

1) Supporter

- International Rotary Club, Stephen J. Pederson, MSgt, USAF, 43 SFS Unit Training Manager, DSN 494-4550, +1(910) 394-4550.

2) Building owners willing to rent a place to us, we will choose one of them.

- Shamim Shaukat, C/o Shaukat Ali Engg, Aatish Bazaan, Saharanpur – 247001, U.P. INDIA. (+91) 132-264-0097.
- Qaiser Naseer, Naseer Ahamad, Anand Nagar, Saharanpur – 247001, U.P. INDIA. (+91) 935-878-9682.
- Jamal Sabri, Aatish Bazaan, Saharanpur – 247001, U.P. INDIA. (+91) 132-264-2730.

3) Teacher liaison

- Kishwar Sultana, Gali Chaman Wali, Pacca Bagh, Saharanpur – 247001, U.P. INDIA. (+91) 931-950-6585. Holds a certified diploma from Pearl International Polytechnic for Women, South Ex, New Delhi, in fashion designing and now runs her own small garment handicrafts school. She is willing to provide teachers.
- Naazeen Zaki, C/o Zaki Anwar, Sabri Bagh, Saharanpur – 247001, U.P. INDIA. (+91) 941- 206-3211. She is a beautician who is willing to provide training classes in future.

Prospects for future impacts:

This project will give a chance to the targeted population to learn some sort of skills, which they can use to support themselves and their families financially. These women will be able to find local jobs.

In the future, if the circumstances allow we may also be able to expand the program to teach additional skills such as cosmetology and child care.

How this project promotes peace:

I strongly feel that this project promotes peace by providing these women; this socially depressed sector of their society, with the life skills necessary to better themselves and their families. I also feel that the success of this project will help to better balance the nature of this society and to provide better opportunities for growth and prosperity.