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IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT OF HANDICRAFTS STRATEGY

Final Report

July 2008

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IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT OF HANDICRAFTS STRATEGY

FINAL REPORT

USAID JORDAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION

This is the first implementation phase for the development of crafts for the tourism sector in Jordan in the Irbid and Karak regions. This program began with a review of 6 identified groups in the two regions, designing product collections for those and other potential groups, and hiring two young designer to interface with the groups, and to be mentored virtually in product development.

This report outlines the progress of the young designers, the groups with whom they are working, and goals and plans for the upcoming year. Generally progress was slow in the Irbid region and much better in the Karak region. New groups have been added to each region and product development continues.

The major constraint to progress is the lack of skills in the regions. The second constraint, not nearly as severe, is the lack of raw materials. Therefore the next phase will include skills training and mentoring for the producer groups, and new skills training will focus on techniques that use locally available materials.

This project continues to work with a 3 tiered marketing vision; local tourism markets, local and regional corporate markets and the international market.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Crafts purchases is an integral aspect of the touristic experience. In Jordan tourism is often controlled by the tour operators who closely monitor where the tourists shop, the time spent in shopping venues, and guide these activities in direct relationship to the amount of financial benefit they derive from the sales (which can be as high as 40%). Most items purchased in the tourism circuits are not made in Jordan and the vendors rely on cheap products from China and India.

The existing Jordanian-made items seen in the shops in Amman, though limited in variety, can be quite well made and often are more expensive than their foreign made counterparts in tourist sites. Many Jordanian-made products are textile related, including embroidered (often machine embroidery) textiles. There are also mosaic products, some jewelry, some olive wood products, soaps and bath products and a spattering of other things.

In our two target regions, Irbid and Karak, most of the producers with whom we worked were women who invariably had embroidery skills, often limited to cross stitch embroidery, and some sewing skills. Some of the groups have had minimal training in other areas, such as basketry, candle making and weaving.

Our goal is to create products that will have low cost inputs (locally available materials and reduced labor inputs) and high perceived value (well designed and executed with creative elements that appeal to higher-end sensibilities). This way we hope to have products that are competitively priced and have greater market appeal. We concentrated on textile products because there were few other skills developed enough to respond to direct design inputs.

Secondly, our marketing program is three tiered aimed at local tourism markets, local and regional corporate markets, and the international markets. We began initial market linkage activities by supporting some of the groups to show their products at local fairs, both in Amman and Um Qais.

During this first implementation phase we were able to clearly identify the production constraints, foremost is the lack of technical skills outside of embroidery. Therefore, we are designing a training/mentoring program in skills training in a number of techniques new to the Jordanian crafts sector. We also hired two local young designers and developed a virtual mentoring program with them. We have recognized the opportunities inherent in this program, and the weaknesses and how to move forward to make it even more effective.

REPORT ON CRAFTS SECTOR PROJECT ACTIVITIES

1. YOUNG DESIGNERS VIRTUAL MENTORING PROGRAM

This program began in February 2008 when we hired two young women designers, one from Irbid and one from Karak. The goal was to have these two young designers work directly with the groups in the regions on new product designs and production activities. The young designers would be mentored virtually by Elaine Bellezza. They would send weekly photo updates on products and report on progress and challenges in the field.

The mentoring program worked well in Karak with Rana Al Shaer Masarweh, a young woman trained in architecture with strong design sensibilities and possessing good communication skills. The details of her work with each group will be discussed in the Section 2 on the Karak work. She had challenges as well as success with the different groups, and generally her product development results have been successful.

In Irbid we hired Noor Omari, a recent graduate in industrial design. Though she possess very good computer design skills, we found that she lacks the technical skills to mentor her groups successfully. We have identified another women in Irbid, Buthaina Bandora, who has multiple skills and training experience who could serve as the young designer in Irbid. Her transferable skills include sewing, mosaics, paper making, paper maché, doll making, candle making, mold making, card making and clay work.

2. PROGRESS IN KARAK REGION

The work in Karak has been progressing normally. Technical support has been given to 4 groups in Karak and 2 individuals from the private sector. Women have been trained in relevant skills by the young designer who usually spends 4-5 hours a day with each group training them in relevant skills and working on product development with each group separately. The groups also received training from the Consultant herself during her visits. Product development is always trial and error until the product is perfect, and this usually takes, on average, three generations of trials. Working out the details before going to the groups avoids using their time for trial and error, which has caused frustration with some of the groups. So the designer works out the technical details before going to a group and then trains them on the technique.

Below is a list of all groups the consultant assisted during her stay:

Handicapped Group (Mutah Centre for Rehabilitation and Care of Handicapped)

This is a school and training facility for handicapped adults and children. We have been working with a group of 8 deaf women. The director of the center is highly appreciative and supportive of our work. I recommend that we continue to reinforce this collaboration to the highest degree possible as the clients are truly in need of learning life skills to earn a living and are more than enthusiastic. In the future there should be more skills training and particularly a program for the men as well. Specific recommendations will follow, at the end of this section. The women are intelligent and quick to learn and they, as well as the director, are excited about the prospects of being able to generate income.

The women have received training in fabric and dying techniques, embroidery techniques and sewing. Work commenced with the group on specific textile product collections including

focusing on painted/dyed fabric, which is a technique specific to them within Jordan. We were able to access quality fabric dye colors in Jordan. We experimented with the dyes and different dying techniques on various textile grounds to find the right process. Then the technique was introduced to the women. Below are images of the products they have produced to date.

All product photos are samples and prototypes. The most important thing at this stage is that the women learn the techniques. These designs are springboards for other similar products using this same technique. The skills required for this work is dying/painting fabric, sewing, and embroidery. As the women are off until mid August for their holiday, no new samples will be generated until then. All textiles samples can be made into the full tabletop and bag collections.

Petroglyphs of Petra, dyed fabric and embroidery



Black Iris Motif

Purple Thistle of Jordan (revised motif)



Purple Thistle of Jordan – first effort collection



The greatest challenge to the work is the lack of raw material. To ensure sustainability, only locally available materials have been used. It has been difficult to find cotton fabric, and to find fabric in any variety of colors. Most of the fabric is clothing quality (such as gabardine) and does not lend itself to table top or other targeted usages. Even given these constraints we have been able to come up with products suited to target markets.

Results to Date:

- 8-9 women have received training in the following:
 - Using Stencils
 - Sewing construction of 7-8 different bags and complete tabletop line and pillows
 - Fabric painting and dying using a variety of techniques.
 - Sewing techniques for quantity production
 - Embroidery motifs and designs
- Developed 3 product collections for the group using textile painting.

Future Plans with the Handicapped Group:

Develop further Textile Painting Collections: We will continue to expand these collections and work on new themes, and future work will be informed by market response to what has already been created. As the women become more adept at fabric painting and dying and more used to the concepts we are introducing, I would like to encourage them to do their own designs that we can then translate into products with commercially viable options. We will provide the women with reference books with pictures and mentoring in drawing and design. Not only will this process come up with unique and authentic designs, it will give the women a greater sense of ownership of the designs. This ownership and the personal pride it inspires is one of the best ways to ensure quality control as producers innately want their own designs to be done to the best possible standards.

Inspiring producers to become involved and owners of at least part of the design process will be integral to all of our work with all the groups as their skills increase.

Increased Skills Training: I recommend that the training be done on-site, where their special education teachers are available to offer translation and interpretation for the participants. The training can be negotiated with the individual trainers and can be spread out, such as once a week for four weeks, with practice being done by the group in the interim. The young

designer and their teachers will help mentor the groups during the training sessions. It will be important that the training is followed up with on-going mentoring by the young designer. As per the nature of the technical training, the training may incorporate designs created for the group. The follow-up mentoring will definitely be based on the new designs and using the learned techniques to execute the new designs.

- **Weaving:** They have very rudimentary table looms that were built in their wood workshop. The looms are not quite suitable for professional work, but a few adjustments can improve their production capacity. Weaving is a hand working skill that has not been fully utilized in Jordan. We see woven rugs, and the rug textiles also used in bags, but the loom lends itself to a great variety of other techniques. I recommend finding a weaving master (local or international) that can train them on other weaving techniques and potentialities. This is an activity that will be done by the women at the center.
- **Knitted Toys:** The women have knitting machines and know how to produce simple sweaters and scarves with their machines. Their products are made with polyester yarns, and are aimed at the local market, and the products they already produce have minimal appeal outside of the local market. But these techniques can be used in really cute stuffed animals, such as the camel, and other stuffed products will have a greater market appeal, especially if they used cotton yarn, which is not as pricey as wool and is in vogue for these kinds of products.
- **Silk Screen:** This is a relatively low-tech application. The silk screens can be made in their woodshop. Inks and silk fabric for the screens can be accessed in Amman. There are people in Jordan who know this technique and can be used as trainers. Silk screen can be used on T-Shirts, other clothing, bags and any textile product. The potential is endless for these products, and they lend themselves to the tourist as well as regional markets. This can be an activity done by the handicapped men at the center.
- **Molded Resin:** Resin formed by molds can be another technical skill taught to them, both and/or men and women. Resin products can include a full range of jewelry, home accessories, such as coasters, frames, candle holders, etc. They can be colored in Jordanian like colors, incised with designs (such as petroglyphs), or filled with Jordanian elements such as rings with a piece of Karak stones reminiscent of the castle.
- **Fabric covered wood boxes, frames, and accessory furniture:** The textile designs done by the women can be the basis for collections of jewelry and other gift type boxes. The men can produce the boxes in the woodshop and then use upholstery techniques (they have an upholstery workshop as well) to cover them with the painted fabric done by the women. These products are not hard to produce but do require some exacting skills and specific techniques before they will be able to be presented as marketable professional products.

Shafa Al Khair Association

This is a group on the outskirts of Karak with about 8 women active in the group and with about 30 other women in the community who can do embroidery at home. They have two professional sewing machines and two women trained to use the machines. They also have beaded embroidery skills. Their sewing skills are completely adequate and they are quick to produce embroidery. They are positive and excited about working with us. They have been quick to respond to all of the inputs provided and have been producing embroidery strips quickly and with great enthusiasm.

They mainly have done traditional cross stitched embroidery and Rana translated my designs, and some of her own designs into embroidery patterns. The stitches she uses are much easier and faster than traditional cross stitch. Therefore they are low cost inputs with higher perceived value results. All designs are based on Jordanian themes, mostly flora and fauna of Jordan and used on locally available fabrics.

All motifs can be used on the full line of table top and pillows, as well as the full collection of 8 different bags.

We have 3 different motifs finished and two more that we are working on.
The completed motifs are:

Arabian Oryx – The embroidered Motif



Arabian Oryx, Tabletop products



Olive Branch Motif (Placemats, bags)



Arabian Ostrich Motif (Placemats and Water bag)



Marketing Meetings

We had a meeting with Al Burgan, showing them the work of the Handicapped Group and Shafa. They were particularly interested in the strip embroidery of Al Shafa. Negotiations are still underway at the time of this writing.

In addition I met with Molly Stephans of Younique Boutique in the U.S. She has a small retail business in Santa Fe selling up-scale contemporary jewelry and bags. She was very interested in sampling all the textile designs in bags and the jewelry from Irbid. Before she can do a sample order, she will need pricing details (to include shipping and other related export costs). She understands that this is a fledgling project and is willing to be patient.

Training for both the groups and the young designers in costing and pricing as well as basic business skills would be in order. I recommend Rula Quemi for this training.

Results:

- Developed 3 new embroidery motifs and trained 8 women in developing them
- Training in tabletop and bag patterns
- Training in volume production methodologies
- Minimal training in costing and pricing (a more structured training is needed for this)
- Market linkage meetings both in the US and in Jordan
- Preparation for participation in Souk Jara
- Mini training in booth set-up and merchandising

Abu Hamour

Work has commenced with this group in March. They have sewing and embroidery skills. They have many sewing machines, but they are often occupied with giving sewing classes to women in the community. There are three women with whom we can work, and these women can use the machines after classes are over.

As per the drawings for the “Spirit of the Bedouin” Collection, the young designer developed these new products with them. But this collection did not really work as the choice of base fabrics did not lend themselves to these designs.

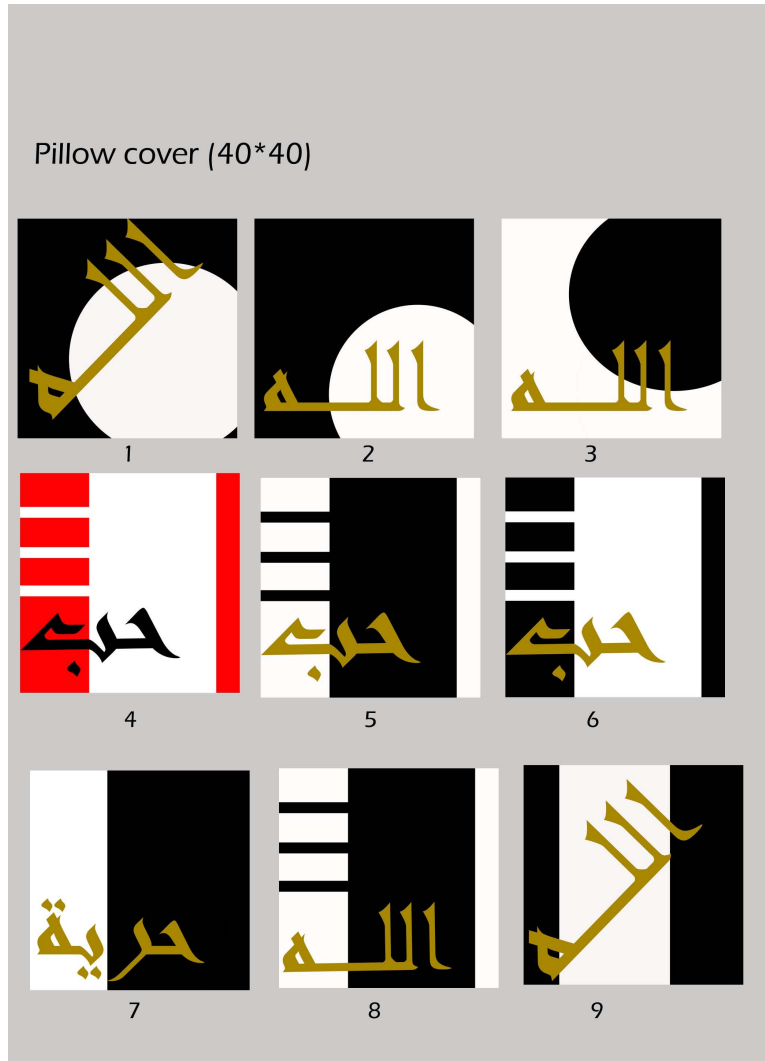
Since the women had already invested enough labor and that they could not continue working without getting compensated, we agreed that the designer would do the experiments on prototypes and once a good result was obtained, she would take the sample and they would simply make the products.

In addition, they were given an order of a few sample products to encourage them, and these products could be put in the office for market testing and sale to consultants.

The group was also supported to participate in JARA souk which is to give them a good marketing experience and expose them to tourists and other potential clients.

We began working on new embroidery designs with them. At the time of this writing they were not finished. Below are the computer generated designs for the new embroidery for them. In an attempt to do designs with a definite Jordanian feel, we did these Arabic designs. They are meant to be done with cross-stitch embroidery, and to be done on strip embroidery as well.

Once we see how they do with this embroidery and incorporating it into products, then we will look at moving onto other designs if they are open to them. The women have strong sewing skills, the main challenge is the ability to access the machines.



Ghor Al Safi

During the consultant's first trip to Jordan, work took place with this group where the skills and techniques they already possess were transformed into very similar products that they were already doing but with an aesthetic a bit more contemporary and upscale.

The consultant wanted to create a second product line that would appeal to a different client base. We changed their product line by introducing articles they had not yet made (such as bibs, water bottle holders, and tee shirts).

The group's leader was resistant to the new designs as they felt the sand dyed fabric is their identity and did not want to create additional designs on non dyed fabric.

The group were also assisted to participate in JARA souq.

Other initiatives with private sector:

Training was also given to individual designers from the private sector in Karak. Rula Tarweh, Jewelry Designer and Zain Madanat, Painter, Ostrich Eggs were part of this initiative.

Planning the Near Future for Karak;

1. Retaining the young designer as the design consultant for the South, and mentoring her as an emerging entrepreneur.
2. Identifying vocational skills training needs and priorities and setting up a training program
3. Identifying more groups or entrepreneurs to work with. The consultant met with Aida Ma'aytah, former Regional Director of Social Development in Karak, who is forming a group of retired professional people in Karak. Their goal is to work with groups in need in their community and we may be able to work with their groups in offering training and product inputs.
4. Identify business skills training and mentoring needs, and set up a training program.
5. Develop a strong market linkage program – Souk Jara has been on solid tool for developing retail marketing linkages. The market linkage program should serve both the North and the South and will be further outlined in the overall strategy.

3. PROGRESS IN IRBID REGION

Generally progress in the Irbid region was much slower. The groups are less skilled and Noor, our young design consultant in the North, lacks many of the needed technical skills, most notably machine sewing. More time was spent in the Irbid region than in Karak. As a designer one designs products and skilled artisans realize them. But in the Irbid region we were trying to show them very basic skills, such as sewing a straight seam, basic embroidery stitches, basketry techniques, and the like. Therefore we had few strong product results because we worked more on skills training than actual design.

Hence it is recommended to do some skills training before we can hope to impact income and production. I recommend hiring someone to fill the young designer position that has these skills and who can fulfill both the role as trainer and as design consultant. I met

Buthaina Dirar Abu Bandora, a designer and experienced trainer and I recommend her to fill this position. Her skills include machine and hand sewing, doll making, mosaics, candle making, clay work, paper maché, paper folding and sculpture, handmade paper making, puppetry, card making, painting, and she possesses a strong design sensibility. She will be a very strong asset to our work.

Work took place with four groups from Irbid and 2 individuals from the private sector. The specific skills training recommended inputs will be discussed per group.

Rahoob Women Society

Rahoob has developed sewing skills, and the experienced sewers in the group were busy working on other products (sheets, bedspreads, flags, for the local market). Basically two women worked with us on new products. These women have basic sewing skills and embroidery skills. The director of Rahoob was happy to work with us and was present during most of our inputs. We did generate some basic products based on the first set of designs, but I don't feel they are truly market ready, but as we were working on technical skills, I could not bring the designs to a higher level.

Results:

- New bag designs to be shown at the Um Qais festival
- Mini training in booth set-up and merchandising
- Training in volume production methodologies
- Training in bag patterns (4 new bag styles)
- Introduction of new embroidery patterns to be used in bags.

Bani Obeid

This is a new group introduced to us for the first time on this trip. The women are already engaged in making soap and have had minimal training in other crafts skills. The group has 5-6 core participants and other members spread throughout the community. They are entrepreneurial, willing to learn, and have a positive and forward looking attitude. During our first meeting they displayed all the products they had been working on. Their skills include knitting (only one woman) embroidery, some sewing, rudimentary basket making, and assemblage. None of the products were close to being market ready. I honed in on their basket making skills, which included woven baskets and banana leaf coil baskets. Their basket making skills are minimal, having received only scant training.

Again, as neither I nor the young designer possess basket making technical skills, we could not do extensive skills training so we used a sample basket I brought from the US as a basis for introducing some simple techniques. Because they have no solid master artisan skills, we could only attempt to do skills inputs, rather than design inputs. The products were more for skills training than actual products designed with the tourism market in mind.

These women definitely need skills training. They showed particular interest in training in candle making and mosaics. This would be a good combination of skills because they could do candles and candle holders with the mosaics. Of course, with mosaics they could do other products as well. Then, in the future, if we are able to find a basket trainer we could train them in basket making as well.

Results:

- Training in two styles of baskets
- Mini Training in booth set-up and merchandising

Farooq

Farooq could have been the most difficult group to work with because they have the fewest skills. Four of the five women have embroidery skills, they have no sewing skills and little else. What they do have, and what made working with them successful, is the willingness to learn new skills, the desire to experiment with what they do know and a general positive attitude about our work with them. These women, all widows with children, were open, receptive and anxious for any inputs we offered.

After struggling to find viable crafts work for them, we began designing embroidered jewelry with beads. We came up with a collection that is marketable. It still needs some refinement, both technically and with the design, but generally it is marketable.

I had a meeting with Molly Stephans of Yunique Boutique in the US and she was most enthusiastic about the jewelry and would like to discuss ordering it.

A collection of embroidered T shirts and caps was also developed with the group.

If the embroidered jewelry does not find enough markets to keep them working, I recommend that they learn the hand-made paper cards embossed with sites from Jordan. This would be a training/mentoring program done by Buthaina. They could use the Farooq association space for this work and it would add a completely new product collection to their repertoire and teach them skills that would be new to Jordan.

In preparation for the Summer Festival organized by the Ministry of Tourism and which the group was going to participate in, display elements were purchased for their booth and they received a half-day workshop in display and merchandising, and some training on organizational issues for selling in shows.

Results:

- Training in embroidered jewelry – resulting in a significant collection
- Training in embroidered T-shirts and caps
- Training in merchandising, booth set up and organization for selling in shows

Bani Kinana

This is a group quite far from Irbid center. It is a group of women with embroidery skills and very limited sewing skills with a few machines. Only one woman knows how to use the machines. I visited them twice and introduced making simple stuffed animals for children using scraps of fabric they had stored away in boxes. The animals would be simple to sew, and have embroidered ornamentation. But, the director was totally against this project and stated that she wanted to do only embroidery. As Jordan is saturated with embroidery workers, and without strong sewing skills, and being far from Irbid, I felt that it was not going to be effective to work with them. The biggest issue being the distance. Noor, or another designer, would have a hard time getting to them on public transportation.

Ala'a Haddad - Woodworker

In follow up to the wood jewelry designs that were generated during the first visit, upon arriving in Jordan and seeing the samples that were generated, it was noticed that the quality of the wood was inferior and would probably not render sales equal to the effort and inputs. We investigated other wood sources. But the result is that we will wait until next year when Ala'a could access dried olive wood. With better quality wood other products that he could produce are salad servers, candle holders, boxes and frames.

Kholoud Al Omari

Kholoud is an incredible artist and crafts person. She was introduced to us as a possible local designer or trainer. Upon meeting her I felt that she (and we) would be better served if she could begin doing crafts for sale, as a business, and we support her by giving her design inputs and possibly linking her to some of our artisan groups that could help with production. Bani Obeid might be a good group for this because they are in the same geographical location and would like to do mosaics, which is her specialty. Her work includes recycled glass mosaics, pottery, glass painting and clay and mold making. She stated that she would like to concentrate her efforts on mosaics. (Below is a sample of one of her glass mosaic pieces, still in process). She could also be employed by SABEQ as a trainer.

Glass Mosaic, made from window pane recycled glass, each piece individually painted



4. OTHER MEETINGS

- **Al Burgan Handicrafts** – Met with Lina and Khalil Burgan, showing them the new samples and discussing their purchasing the products for their business. They were very enthusiastic about the embroidered strips from Karak, both from Shafa Association and the Handicapped group, as well as the dyed textiles from the Handicapped group. In addition they were very positive about the embroidered jewelry, though I don't think they are considering ordering those pieces.

- **Dr. Minwer Al-Meheid, Dean, Al-Balqu Applied University, Amman.** Dr. Al-Meheid is dean of a university that specializes in Islamic art and crafts. It is an applied university where students learn the traditional crafts in depth as well as the philosophical principles underlying them. I thought that perhaps they could be involved with our project as trainers but that will not be possible as all of their students are enrolled full time. There may be collaboration opportunities to work with them and their master students in helping them to promote sales of their products.
- **Aida Ma'aytah,** former Regional Director of Social Development in Karak. She is involved with a group of professional retired people in Karak. Her group helps women's groups throughout the community in various ways. We discussed the possibility of meeting her groups, assessing their skills and potential and perhaps working on crafts development with them.
- **Stellan Lind and Ibrahim al Ahmad, Jerash Heritage Company,** Met with them to discuss their project of creating culturally sensitive and relative crafts, geared towards the tourist market.
- **Rula Quemi, Artisanal Sector Trainer** – We met with Rula to discuss training opportunities with SABEQ. She is a highly experienced trainer with advanced skills and experience in interactive, participatory training methodologies. She is very experienced in the crafts sector in Jordan and training in the sector. She has a good working knowledge of complex issues in the sector, such as costing and pricing, production methodologies and business practices.
- **Buthaina Dirar Abu Bandora, Designer and Trainer** I interviewed Buthaina and then she spent one whole day with me visiting the groups in Irbid (she came as a “friend”) She is multi-talented, and an experienced trainer. Her skills include paper making, paper maché, doll and puppet making, sewing, clay work, embroidery, card making, sculpture, painting, mold making and more. She is positive, upbeat, and I highly recommend her as our next young designer in Irbid and/or trainer and mentor.
- **Ajloun Ministry of Tourism** – We met with the ministry in Ajloun and with a number of local producers, discussing the products they already make and how to improve them to make them more marketable for the tourist markets.
- **Um Qaisais Ministry of Tourism** - We met with the ministry in Um Qaisais and with a number of local producers, discussing the products they already make and how to improve them to make them more marketable for the tourist markets.
- **Jalal Ariqat, Artist and Sculptor, Amman** I had two meetings with him to see his work and assess his capabilities as a trainer for molds and resins.
- **Molly Stephans, Yunique Boutique, USA** – met with Molly to discuss the new products from Jordan with her. She was enthusiastic about the jewelry and the bags made from the embroidered and dyed cloth from Karak. Once we have pricing structures and export costs and shipping details we will negotiate in more direct and serious terms with her. She is interested in starting with a small sample order to test the market.
- **Other marketing options** – I have made initial contact with two potential wholesale buyers in the US for the textiles coming out of Karak. There are no results to report at this time but initial contact has been made. I can discuss with them with photos, and if

interested we will need to have actual samples. I am going very slowly with this because we have no pricing information and little production capacity. But I wanted to begin to get reactions from professional buyers attuned to actual market trends.

5. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Young Designers Virtual Mentoring Program**

I recommend continuing with this program, keeping Rana in the Karak region for the time being, and hiring Buthaina in the Irbid region. The designers will do mentoring and training, and additional vocational trainers can be hired for skills the designers do not possess. The designers should be present at these trainings so that they learn the skills and continue to mentor the groups and oversee their progress.

The mentoring program can be more effective by sending actual samples to me in the US. One of the weaknesses we found was that a product could look good in digital images, but upon seeing the actual product, and for example, touching the fabrics, revealed some of the inherent difficulties in achieving marketability for certain collections.

- **Initiating a Skills Training/Mentoring Program**

A training program with a strong mentoring element will be the most effective. For skills training I do not recommend a general training where there are many participants and they come for a specified period of time and then go back to their home villages. Rather, I recommend targeted training initiatives that are specific for each group. Each group will learn a skill or technique specifically geared to their needs and capabilities. The training will begin with techniques and then move into specific products. The trainer may be the one of our designers, or someone else. The mentoring and follow-up will be handled by the young designer, and the master trainer can be called in again if necessary. I will work with the trainers on product ideas and overall direction for the training.

I have outlined some of the skills training that would be appropriate for each group and some of the possible trainers. This is certainly not an exhaustive list but is a good basis to start.

All of the skills I have recommended are relatively low-cost, in that they don't require expensive tools (such as kilns for pottery) and are relatively low-tech and can be easily managed by the groups. And, they are geared to using locally available raw materials and to produce products appropriate to the tourist market. Following are the recommended skills training inputs, the appropriate target producer group, and the proposed trainer. Many groups are repeated, we are limited by the groups to which we have been introduced. As we get introduced to more groups we can spread around the training to include others.

Skill set	Group	Proposed Trainer
Silkscreen	Handicapped Group (men), Karak	Not identified
Weaving	Handicapped Group (women) Karak	Not identified
Knitted Jordanian Animals	Handicapped Group (women) Karak	Rana Al Shaer Masarweh (they already have knitting skills, it is transforming them into animals)
Fabric covered boxes and home accessories	Handicapped Group (women and men) Karak	In-house wood specialist and Rana Al Shaer
Advanced sewing techniques	Rahoob, Irbid	Buthaina
Doll making	Rahoob, Irbid	Buthaina
Mosaics (glass and stone)	Bani Irbid	Kholoud
Candle Making	Bani Irbid	Buthaina
Paper making, embossed cards	Farooq	Buthaina
Resin Mold making (for jewelry)	Farooq, Irbid	Jalal Ariqat
Resin Mold Making (for home accessories)	Handicapped Group (Men) or Ala'a (Irbid)	Jalal Ariqat

- **Extending Outreach**

As the groups move to having marketable products and access to markets, the young designers will need to spend less time with these established groups and move onto others. We should begin now to identify other groups with whom we can work.

As the work with the handicapped group in Karak has proven to be so successful, an option for searching groups could be to research other such organizations and institutions in targeted regions.

If it is at all possible to extend our outreach outside of Karak and Irbid, I recommend working with Iraq Al Amir in the Amman region. This group possesses multiple skills, including weaving, pottery and paper making. They desperately need design inputs to reach marketability. Also, with guidance and the right inputs, their woven textiles could be purchased by other groups needing good textile bases for their products.

- **Business Skills Training**

The groups need basic training in small business management. Training needs include financial management, costing and pricing, merchandising, packaging and export issues, workshop management and production systems, accessing markets, to name a few.

- **Establishing a Market Linkage Program**

Product Launch – Mini Trade Fair

We can organize and sponsor a mini trade fair inviting buyers of shops from around Jordan. Upscale shops as well as tourists outlets can be invited. The Show would be set up to facilitate the purchase of products by retailers from producers or vendors/entrepreneurs. It will be closed to the public during the daytime hours when buyers will have the time to shop and negotiate terms with sellers. Corporate buyers will also be invited to the trade fair.

It is most fruitful if we do this event twice a year, or at least once a year. This can ultimately become a significant buying event in Jordan. Buyers with retail shops often do not purchase a product the first time they see it, and would rather their peers take the risk of trying the product. This is why multiple trade fairs will be necessary to achieve significant results. It is said that one must show wares at a trade show for at least three seasons before attaining significant sales. We can mentor an organization to sponsor the show in the upcoming years. In the future buyers from the region can also be invited.

Then, in the late afternoon (for example, 4-7pm) there will be a public event where vendors can sell their products at retail to the public. This will be advertised widely and will be similar to a gallery opening or product launch. It will be a festive event to showcase the products.

For this event to be a success there should be enough vendors to make it a memorable event. Therefore we may invite vendors/producers with whom we are not working directly. Outside of our groups other producers can be invited, as well as high-end producers such as the Al Balqa Applied University.

Booth in Mecca Mall

Another possibility is to mentor or sponsor an entrepreneur to set up a booth in the mall, or form a cooperative agreement with some of our groups to set up a booth cooperatively.

Retail Fairs

Like Souk Jara and the Um Qaisais Festival, retail selling opportunities will be encouraged and supported for direct retail selling opportunities.

International Retail Fairs

Fairs, such as the *International Folk Art Market* in Santa Fe, *The Women's Building Christmas Fair*, in San Francisco and others that feature highly attended selling venues and who are open to international vendors will be investigated and supported.

International Wholesale Sales

For the moment, until production capacity is built and strong product collections are being made easily and well, we will investigate only relatively small marketing opportunities in the international market.

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