



ABSTRACT

Zardozi's gender and human rights training has enabled women to:

- integrate a rights framework into their self-concept;
- critically examine their own lives;
- recognize and develop desires for more rights and freedoms;
- better assess their personal and professional development needs;
- speak up on women's rights issues among families and neighbours;
- resolve to speak up on women's rights issues in future;
- believe that it is up to women to initiate change on rights issues within their families;
- view their daughters as change agents, especially through education; and,
- understand how the hostile social environment holds women back;

In summary, the training has been instrumental in the conscientisation of women in the programme—women are beginning to identify root causes such as lack of education, a hostile social environment and the triple load of unpaid housework and childcare and paid work. Their key strategies for action are education, negotiating “affectionately” with family members and developing male and female role models in the community. Given the prevalence and extremity of gender-based violence, women in this study overall demonstrate tremendous courage and moral authority in engaging with and applying a rights framework in their own lives and as advocates within their families and neighbourhoods.

GENDER & RIGHTS

Training Impact Study of *The Markets For Afghan Artisans Programme*

Barbara Everdene
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Introduction

Zardozi is a national non-profit organisation in Afghanistan with a mission to help low income and low literate Afghan women become successful micro entrepreneurs. Through the *Markets for Afghan Artisans programme*, supported by DFID from 2012 to 2015, Zardozi has facilitated access to skills and business training and provided linkages to market opportunities for many thousands of women, and promoted membership in Nisfe Jahan, a registered civil society organization representing member women micro entrepreneurs. In addition to business support, Zardozi provides training in gender and human rights to selected women in the programme.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this study is to explore the impact of two training modules delivered through the *Markets for Afghan Artisans programme*: Gender Awareness and Human Rights. The study leads to recommendations on the content and delivery of these training modules. As such, this report is a deliverable of the *Markets for Afghan Artisans programme*. A secondary purpose of the report is to contribute to Zardozi's understanding of women's progress towards social and economic empowerment, and to identify interest in, and levers for encouraging women to collaborate on community-based rights and protections initiatives.

Approach and Methodology

To understand the impact of training, the study focused on how women had integrated concepts of gender roles and responsibilities in their beliefs about what was possible for them now and in their desires and hopes for their future. This aligned with the core learning objectives of the training:

Figure 1: Learning Objectives of Training Modules

1. Understand gender roles
2. Understand the key influences that shape gender roles
3. Recognise the challenges faced by women because of their gender roles
4. What are rights and what are responsibilities

The consultant developed a standard questionnaire (see Annex 1), which was administered by Zardozi staff through in-depth interviews and translated in December 2015. A second dataset of 26 interviews were conducted and translated in March 2016, to ensure that the sample as a whole was balanced in terms of respondents' age and stage of life.

Fifty-two female programme participants were selected by Zardozi staff to form two distinct sample groups: 26 who had participated in gender and rights training, and 26 who had not. This is a relatively small sample size given the reach of the programme, and results from the study should be interpreted as suggestive of potential trends rather than conclusive. Respondents are from Kabul (32 or 62% of the sample) and Herat (20, or 38% of the sample) balanced equally among the trained and untrained respondent groups; results should not be taken to apply to other areas of Afghanistan.

Care was taken to ensure that the samples were not representatively balanced in terms of the age and marriage status of women in each group (see figure 2 over the page). The untrained sample is slightly more representative of young unmarried women, due to availability of respondents for

interviews. Age and marriage status may be as significant in influencing the results as exposure to and integration of gender and rights training.

Figure 2: Representative Age/Marriage Status of Sample Groups

TRAINED SAMPLE		UNTRAINED SAMPLE	
Unmarried	50%	Unmarried	27%
<24 years	54%	<24 years	65%
29-52	46%	30's-50's	35%

1. Views on Equality, Barriers, and Responsibility for Change

1.1 Do you believe that women can work and lead others as men do? Why or why not?

Women in both sample groups unanimously affirmed this question in principle. However, their discussion of the significant gender challenges they faced revealed that negotiating some level of control over their own opportunities and future, and influencing decisions in the home, were their central concerns. For younger respondents, attending the community design centre (manbeh) to gain access to independent paid work, and turning down unwanted marriage proposals, were emphasized as ways that women could lead in their own lives. Respondents viewed negotiating their microbusiness activities with their responsibilities at home and influencing family decisions at home as the primary arenas for leadership. With regard to the latter, in the words of Shamila, 20 (Kabul), “women have the right to lead at home and get decisions at home”.

Narratives of leading in the home included contributing to financial decisions, choosing home décor or other household items, purchasing children’s clothing and school supplies, or deciding what to cook for guests. Seven (13%) of the full sample of respondents expressed their leadership in more substantive terms such as real estate investment decisions, advising husbands on their career, or preventing a family member from migrating to Iran.

One-third of respondents mentioned leading by working outside the home. Neither receiving the gender and rights training nor business category appear to be factors. Age does appear to be a significant factor; 81% of the women who mentioned leading outside of the home were 29 or older, with an average age of 33. This suggests that young women in this study were less likely to be concerned with leadership outside the home. City of origin may also be an influence—two-thirds of this group were from Herat, but the Herat sample is on average 11 years older than the Kabul sample. Half of this group mentioned non-traditional roles for women—mentioning roles such as business executives, engineers, doctors, teachers and police officers.

1.2 Do women face different expectations and challenges than men? What are some of these challenges?

1.2.1 Permission from the family

Women unanimously reported living under the authority of family members from whom they needed permission for many aspects of their life, so negotiating for choice in their own life was seen as a more immediate issue than leading others. Permission to engage in work activities was related to a hostile social environment, where (in the words of one woman) “nervous husbands and

brothers” needed reassurance about possible gossip and backbiting and how this would be managed. Other factors mentioned were family concerns about women taking care of their primary responsibilities in the home—housework, caregiving and entertaining guests; a few alluded to family beliefs in women’s traditional roles.

Nonetheless, respondents viewed themselves as having influence in sharing opinions and values around women’s rights to their actual or future children, siblings, extended family members and neighbours. The critical importance of role modelling was well recognized (see section 3.3 for discussion). Nevertheless, as discussed in section 2.1 below, the majority of respondents reflected a limited view of what was possible for them in the economic sphere—mentioning standard professions of tailor and garment worker, beautician, and office worker.

1.2.2 House work and care work

Sixty percent of respondents, 50% trained and 50% untrained, listed responsibility for house work and care work as a significant challenge for women. One woman expressed the inferred consensus most frankly: “I believe that women can work and lead, but less than men, because they have to do chores and care about their children” (20 years old, Kabul). With one noteworthy exception, all respondents seem to have internalized the expectation that they are solely responsible for housework and that they can and should work harder. In the words of 20-year old Nasrin:

“If [women] do their chores on time they can find time to work outside. Women face different challenges like they have work at home and it’s a challenge that they should do, and women should do their [house] work on time to find free time to work.”

Neither a reduction in housework, nor men and boys stepping up to share in the workload at home were mentioned. The exceptional respondent, a 50-year old woman from Kabul from the non-trained sample, said: “I believe that women that work outside cannot work at home, and women that work at home cannot work outside” but did not give further explanation. Two additional women noted the possibility of obtaining a paid housekeeper to free up time for work.

Urgency of housework was frequently emphasized, with women expressing the expectation that they complete chores on time, and thus the importance of scheduling their time. They held themselves responsible for managing both house/care work and paid work efficiently; moreover, they felt that demonstrating their ability to manage both was key to obtaining family permission to engage in paid work. This implicitly suggests that most if not all respondents may view unpaid housework and care work as women’s work.

1.2.3 Reputation, Gossip, and Street Harassment

Overall almost a third (29%) of respondents mentioned that gossip and criticism – whether behind their back or to their face - holds women back. The trained sample was twice as likely to mention this as the untrained sample (19% compared to 10%, suggesting that the training may have sensitized women to this issue. Most respondents that raised this issue expressed that women must ignore gossipers and harassers and work proactively to gain the support of their families. Twenty-year old Shamila shares: “if a woman works, people say many things such as ‘where is she going?’, or ‘should we follow her to see whether she is going to work or somewhere else?’. That is a big challenge. To overcome this, women should talk with their families and gain their trust.” Street harassment and personal safety was also mentioned. As 24-year old Shazia says, “outside [in the street], women are worried that they are in danger and that maybe a bad person will disturb them”.

1.2.4 Women with other life challenges

A range of other challenges emerged from the study, from lack of literacy to poor mental and physical health to disabilities such as blindness. At least two widows were identifiable in the sample, and one mentioned the importance of having an elder available at home. Two others mentioned that their husbands were disabled and unable to work.

In addition, two respondents mentioned that family abuse holds women back. It is likely that fear of abuse is a more significant problem, related to fulfilling expectations, such as completing housework on time, and living within permissions. See section 4.1 for women's comments on gender-based violence, which primarily emerged from the last open-ended question in the interview.

1.3 Do you believe that if women have difficulty developing the ability to work and lead, it is their fault? What do women need to overcome this?

Almost all respondents held families primarily responsible for enabling women to work and lead (a small number mentioned men in particular), highlighting the reality that women are subject to the authority of individuals in the family. In one woman's words: "women have the problem that anything their husbands say, they have to accept".

A significant 40% of respondents specifically mentioned that they felt it was up to the woman to initiate negotiations about what she could do with her family; a small number framed this in terms of the importance of building family support. There appeared a slight difference between trained and untrained respondents (44% to 38%), with trained respondents slightly more likely to have this view.

Three respondents emphasized that women need the active support of their families to cope with challenges and be successful. Twenty-nine year old Zahra says:

"Some families don't allow [women] to work, but women can talk with their family to be affectionate to them and let them work and lead. Women face with different challenges in their work. If women work, they need the support of men in their work. If women work outside, they face different challenges and bad behaviour of some people. They should discuss with their family and get their help to overcome these problems."

In all cases, women suggested a non-confrontational approach, using terms such as speaking affectionately and getting the trust of the family. This suggests that women desire to preserve their family relationships, emphasizing patient persistence and positive communication over strategies that looked for intervention from those outside the family, which might detract from family trust and even put them at risk of violence (see section 4).

Seventeen percent of respondents mentioned that some women were unwilling to take on paid work—whether due to their own belief in traditional work roles or workload—or "lacked the courage". The rest of the dataset suggests that this may mean the courage to negotiate with families or to deal with hostilities in the community and marketplace.

2. Transformation of Self-Concept and Self Confidence

2.1 Has participating in the programme changed your ideas about what you can do as a woman? Do you feel the same or differently about your own abilities since you started this programme?

Women respondents that received Zardozi's gender and rights training were almost 10 times more likely (38% compared to 4%) to mention a better understanding of their rights as women than untrained women, suggesting that the training was very successful in raising women's awareness about their rights and enabling them to integrate the ideas into their self-concept.

Trained women were also more likely to raise other business achievements and a variety of other dimensions of empowerment than women who had not received the gender and rights training. For example, twelve percent of trained women mentioned more customers or students, compared to 4% untrained. Trained women also mentioned improved decision-making at home, increased financial independence, the ability to be mobile and way find in the city, and an enhanced ability to communicate at home and in the market. This indicates that a rights framework may have given women an improved ability to assess various aspects of their experience and personal and professional development.

Although untrained respondents unanimously reported that their ideas had changed about what they could do, they answered this question in concrete terms around the acquisition of skills and knowledge rather than more broadly around their rights or roles. Untrained women were almost twice as likely (62% compared to 35%) to answer the question in tailoring terms as were trained women. Overall, half of the women respondents reported that they now had enhanced tailoring ability, mentioning specific skills such as choosing fabric, measuring, cutting and designing.

Overall, a third of respondents emphasized their new and better understanding of business—including how to start and maintain a small business and find work in the marketplace. Nineteen percent also said they now believed they could earn an income. The trained and untrained sample groups were balanced in their mention of increased business knowledge.

A significant minority mentioned their growth in psychological resources – 17% felt they had gained more confidence or courage.

2.2 Do you feel able to speak up within your family about your rights or the rights of other family members?

Eighty-eight percent of respondents said they felt able to speak up within their family about their rights. There was no significant difference between respondents from the trained compared to the untrained sample. Women spoke in terms of their achievements:

- 19% negotiated their ability to participate in the programme and attend a manbeh
- 17% were able to keep a family member (including themselves) in school
- 13% work to make space for the voice and opinion of other family members in family decisions, including their

"I am able to speak up about my rights within my family. When I joined this programme, people said lots of things behind my back to my father and he told me to stop working. So I explained to him about the tailoring course and told him I want to learn how to tailor. I asked him to please ignore people's words, and now he doesn't care about what anyone says and he lets me attend manbeh."

-Anaita, 20, Gender and Rights trainee, Kabul

own

- 12% mentioned standing up against the abuse of a family member
- 4% promoted consultation with a child to be engaged

A 30-year old woman from Herat, who completed the training, shared: “I am now able to speak up about my rights in the family but before not—before, I apologized to my husband even when I didn't make mistakes.”

Four of the women asserted themselves as the leaders of their home. All had completed the gender and rights training, and all were older respondents, ranging from 37 to 52 years of age.

Of those that did not affirm, half said they were able to speak up about their rights some of the time. One attributed her silence to living in a village “where men don't allow women to speak up on important issues”. Another felt that if she talked too much about rights, her family would not let her go to the manbeh.

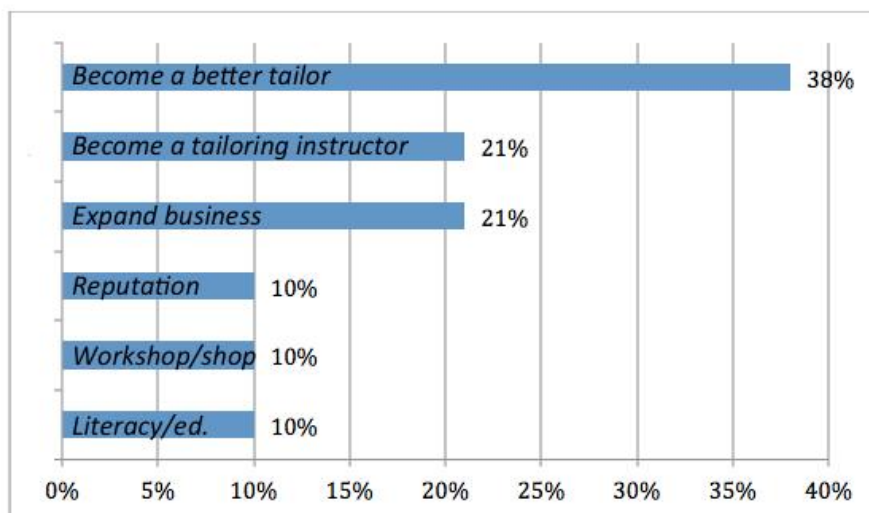
3. Visions for Change and Growth

3.1 What would you like to see yourself do or become?

As with other questions, respondents primarily gave concrete and practical answers to this question. Thirty-eight percent of respondents said their vision was to become a better tailor. In addition:

- 21% wanted to expand their business and production;
- 21% desired to become a tailoring instructor;
- 10% wanted to set up a workshop or shop;
- 10% wanted to develop status or a reputation in the community; and,
- 10% aspired to greater literacy and/or formal education.

Figure 3: Personal and Professional Vision



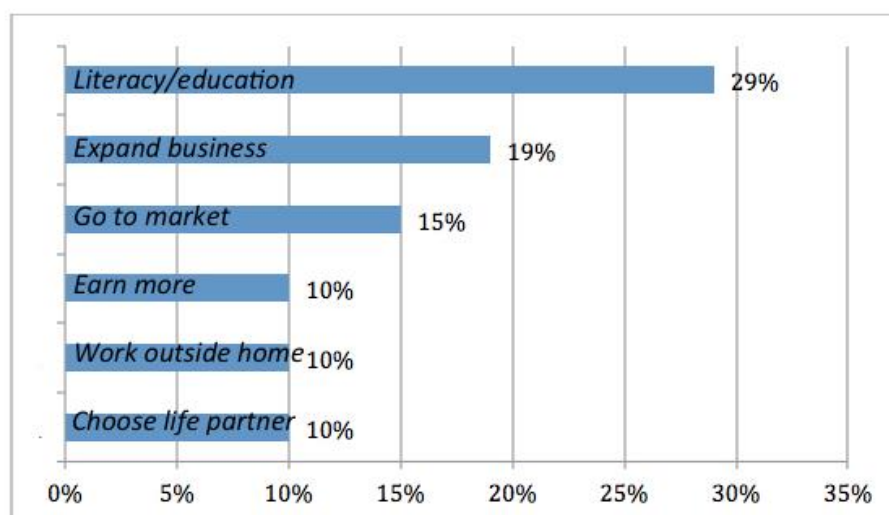
Two distinct narratives can be seen in the interviews— women mention ‘helping the family’ as well as ‘becoming a personality’. The latter is more frequently mentioned as a response to this question as well as a desire for their current or future daughters. Without more nuanced translation, it is hard to be sure what exactly is meant by this phrase, but perhaps it expresses a desire for individuality, stature and influence.

3.2 What rights and freedoms do you wish you had?

About 17% of women in the study reported that they were already able to enjoy all their rights and freedoms—and 78% of these were from the untrained sample. The majority of women desired more rights and freedoms, representing a slightly higher proportion of trained women (43% to 37%). The breakdown of their priorities is as follows:

- 29% desired literacy or further education;
- 19% mentioned building or expanding their business;
- 15% mentioned going to market in particular (with one additional mention of safe transportation);
- 10% mentioned earning more income;
- 10% wanted to work outside the home; and,
- 10% expressed the desire to choose their own life partner (representing the needs of the younger women in the sample group).

Figure 4: Desired Rights and Freedoms



Two women shared that they wanted to be able to wear the veil instead of the burkha. Another two stated specifically that they wished women were respected like men are, and that women had the same rights and freedoms as men.

3.3 What rights and opportunities would you like for your daughter(s)? Do you see a role for your son(s) in promoting women's rights and opportunities?

Among those with actual children, the question was mostly answered at a general level; respondents who answered the question theoretically about their future children were included in this analysis. Among the respondents, there was a consensus desire that sons would respect the rights of their sisters, wives and daughters. One respondent mentioned that she wanted her sons to refrain from violence against women; three other women pointed out that their husbands were not respectful of women's rights and this was a source of grief and a poor example to their children. Sixty percent mentioned they wanted their sons to be role models for how to relate to women with respect for their rights and to advocate on women's rights issues to other men. One woman said that she wanted her son to complete school then publicly support women's rights at the masjid. Seventy-seven percent said they wanted their sons to give permission to their sisters and wives study and work. The priority for daughters was to allow them to finish their education—72% of respondents

mentioned this. Finally, 20% mentioned they wanted their daughters to be role models among women for realizing their rights and freedoms. The narrative in the interview dataset suggests that respondents see education, open-mindedness and recognition of the rights of women as linked. Furthermore, education is seen as an important quality—for both men and women—in terms of earning respectful treatment from the family and the community. Twenty-one percent of respondents pointed out that they wanted their sons to finish their education and linked this to learning about rights and having more influence as role models in the community. In terms of realizing their rights, women again raised issues of participating in family decision-making, choosing their own clothing—especially wearing the veil instead of the burkha, making their own life choices, and choosing their own marriage partner or choosing not to marry at all.

An analysis of the most dominant themes by trained vs. untrained respondents reveals some interesting results, see table below:

Figure 5: Desired Roles for Daughters and Sons

	TRAINED SAMPLE	UNTRAINED SAMPLE
Son: role model	50%	70%
Son: permission study/work	83%	70%
Son: education	17%	29%
Daughter: role model	12%	29%
Daughter: education	88%	54%

The trained sample put relatively more emphasis on the education of daughters and the need for their sons to permit sisters and wives to study and work. The untrained sample gave more relative emphasis to sons—their need to be educated and to serve as role models. Interestingly, the untrained sample was more likely to see a role for daughters as role models.

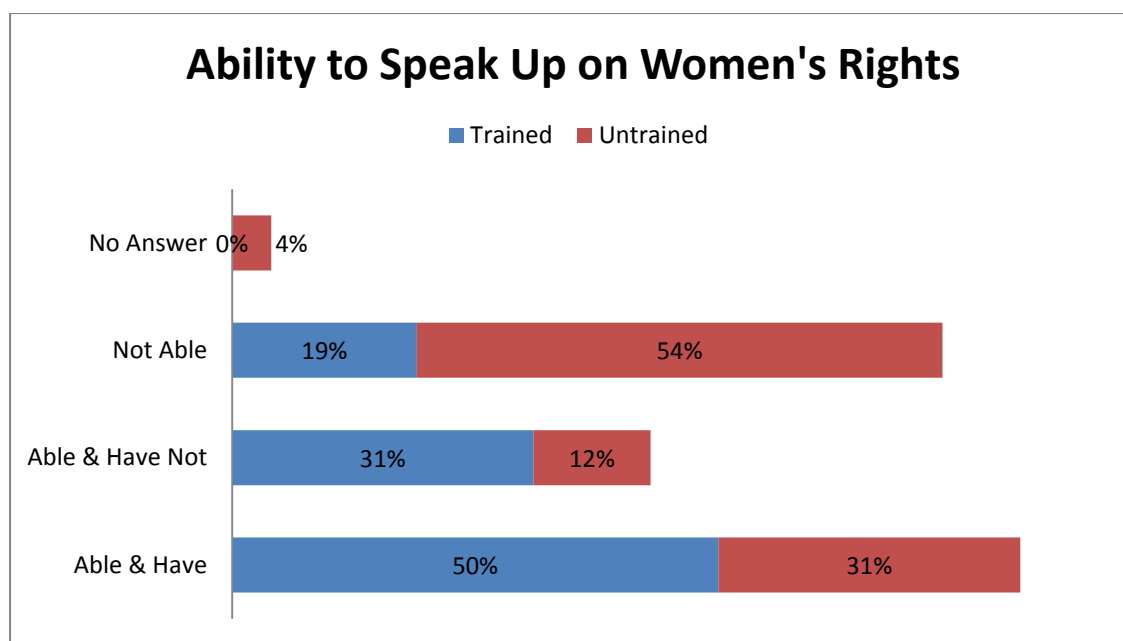
4. Experience With, and Interest in Leading Change

4.1 Do you feel able to speak up among your neighbours about the rights of girls and women? Have you ever done so? Have you ever participated in a broader community meeting about the rights of girls and women or other issues affecting women?

Training in gender and human rights has had a very significant impact on whether women have spoken up on issues of women's rights and on their perceived ability to do so should the need arise in future. While overall, 40% of the women shared that they had spoken up on rights issues, 50% of the trained sample had done so. Overall, 1/5 of women said they were able but had not spoken up on rights, compared to 31% of the trained sample; 15% of these attributed the training specifically for haven given them the courage to do so. Untrained women were almost three times as likely to say they were not able to speak up as trained women. See the graph below for details.

Women revealed that their sphere of influence and comfort in discussing rights issues was among their female neighbours—25% of the overall sample reported they had discussed rights issues with their neighbours, and 15% had intervened in the family situations of their neighbours as advocates. In order of frequency of mention, the topics were peace-making and permissions, violence against women, staying in school, and ability to work. A few women mentioned discussing rights issues with their families or peers in the Zardozi program.

Figure 5: Respondent Self-Assessment on Ability to Speak Up



Within the trained sample, half of the respondents expressed a resolution to stand up for women's rights in future, and these women were unmarried.

At the end of the interview, women were given the opportunity to make open comments related to speaking up for women's rights. Forty women, or 77% of the sample, chose to respond. Their stories reflected the following themes:

As a result of training, half of young women made resolutions to stand up for women's rights.

- 60% mentioned gender-based violence; of this group, 8% reported having experienced violence at home, 25% reported witnessing violence, and 67% reported hearing about violence (1/4 of these involved murder of the woman);
- 28% shared stories of forced marriage or engagement, including their own;
- 18% shared stories about remaining in or returning to school; and,
- 8% shared stories about women who had self-immolated.

The prevalence and extremity of gender-based violence in women's lives makes their willingness to—in their own words—*have the courage* to stand up for their own rights and the rights of other women, absolutely remarkable. Respondents expressed fear, empathy, and sadness where their negotiations had not been successful in changing the situation. Only two of the respondents reported having participated in a formal meeting dedicated to a rights issue. One of these was a women's party where the respondent told women that they have rights beyond dowry (mahar) rights.

Conclusions

Zardozi's training on gender and human rights has had a significant impact in the lives of participating women. Key findings were that:

- Trained women were almost 10 times more likely (38% compared to 4%) to mention a better understanding of their rights as part of how they think about themselves than untrained women, suggesting that the training was very successful in helping many women

integrate a rights framework into their self-concept, and an improved ability to assess various aspects of their experience and personal and professional development;

- Training in gender and human rights has had a very significant impact on whether women have spoken up on issues of women's rights and on their perceived ability to do so should the need arise in future. Trained women had spoken up more, and were more willing to speak up in future than the untrained sample. Untrained women were almost three times as likely to say they were not able to speak up as trained women;
- As a result of the training, half of the young women in the study made resolutions to stand up for women's rights;
- Training has sensitized women to how a hostile social environment of backbiting and harassment within the community holds women back—trainees were twice as likely to mention this as untrained women;
- Trained women (44% compared to 38% of untrained) were somewhat more likely to say that it was up to women to initiate change on rights issues within their families;
- Training has encouraged women to more critically examine their own lives and to cultivate their desires for more rights and freedoms. Trained women were more likely to say they desired more rights and freedoms than untrained women (43% compared to 37%);
- Training influenced women to see their daughters as change agents; trainees put relatively more focus on educating their daughters (88% compared to 54%) and the need for their sons to permit sisters and wives to study and work (83% compared to 70%) than untrained participants.

To connect this with a theoretical framework on empowerment, training has played an important role towards conscientisation among women. Sara Hlupekile Longwe¹ (2002) defines conscientisation as the process by which women realise that their lack of status and welfare, relative to men, is not due to their own lack of ability, organisation or effort. It involves the realisation that women's relative lack of access to resources actually arises from the discriminatory practices and rules that give priority access and control to men. Further, the process of conscientisation drives women's own need to understand the underlying causes of their problems, and to identify strategies for action. In consideration of this analytical framework, the training has been instrumental in the conscientisation of women in the programme—women are beginning to identify root causes such as lack of education, a hostile social environment and the triple load of unpaid housework and childcare and paid work. Their key strategies for action are education, negotiating “affectionately” with family members and developing male and female role models in the community. Given the prevalence and extremity of gender-based violence, women in this study overall demonstrate tremendous courage and moral authority in engaging with and applying a rights framework in their own lives and as advocates within their families and neighbourhoods.

This study is significant both as an assessment of the impact of Zardozi's gender and rights training module but also as a contributing study on the issues most salient to women in the Markets for Afghan Artisans programme. Beyond the right to work and visit the market, women hunger for the opportunity to learn to read and go to school, to remain connected with their families of origin once they marry, to live in freedom from violence, and to choose their own life partners. These issues would form excellent case study material for these training sessions, and could form the basis for a greater emphasis on identifying and discussing root problems of inequality and potential solutions. The recommendations below provide further detail on a range of options for expanding and enhancing content of the gender and rights training in the programme.

¹ Hlupekile Longwe, Sara. [Spectacles for Seeing Gender in Project Evaluation](#). 2002.

Recommendations

1. Use the Neighborhood as the Scope for Action

Women's stories suggest that they are most comfortable as advocates among women in their neighbourhoods, and this seems to be the best unit of action for any peer-based work on rights issues. It would be useful to find out how women define their social network within their neighbourhoods before using this in program design.

2. Continue to Include Islamic Rights in Discussions of Human Rights

Dowry rights (mahar) were mentioned by several women in the study, suggesting that this may be a common reference point among women, and a good foundation on which to build further knowledge of rights within the Islamic context as well as the UN human rights framework. This may also be a good entry point for trained women to begin sharing their knowledge beyond programme participants to their neighbours and families. Many resources are available in this area, such as:

- [Musawah - For Equality in the Moslem Family](#)
- [Women living under Moslem laws](#) (see Violence is not our Culture campaign)
- [Women's Empowerment in Muslim Contexts](#) [Women and Children Legal Research Foundation](#) (Afghanistan)

2. Include Strategies for Negotiating with Families

The training could benefit from a specific discussion of equality within the family (discussed in this study in terms of leadership in the home), providing a framework for moving from obtaining permission, to building trust, to gaining the active support of families, to ultimately achieving equality and partnership within the family structure. Potential topics for case studies include sharing housework, help with business activities, dealing with gossip, or protection from street harassment. Such a framework could help women further develop vision of what is possible, recognizing the centrality of their family to their lives. This could be followed by a practical component where women dialogue on their own experience, and share and reflect on how they have approached negotiations with their families – what has worked well and what has backfired and their sense of why. An intergenerational peer group would provide a very stimulating opportunity to role-play new ways of communicating on rights issues. Women may be interested in giving talks to their peers on their achievements in these areas, building an atmosphere of support and mentorship in this area.

3. Address Inequality in Housework and Care work

Consider adding to the gender training module content on the gendering of work roles with an emphasis on gendering of housework, deconstructing the notion that housework and care work is women's work. Facilitating dialogue may be the best place to start, as well as peer talks from women whose husbands help them with housework and their paid work (there are a number of these from the 2015 Empowerment Study conducted by Sippi Azarbaijani). Oxfam has developed a good methodology ([Oxfam's Rapid Care Analysis approach](#)) and training resources ([Gender Action Learning System](#)) that could be adapted by Zardozi. Zardozi might also consider consulting women on whether a separate training/dialogue session for male members of their family (e.g. husbands, brothers, sons) on greater collaboration in household maintenance and care work would be appropriate. This would be a very significant step towards building men as role models. This could go as far as inviting men to take a pledge. There are other good resources available, such as:

- [MenCARE](#) – campaigns around the world, including in Islamic contexts (Turkey)
- [World State of Fatherhood](#) report

4. Present a Framework for Understanding and Taking Action on Gossip and Harassment

Consider adapting gender and rights training to discuss the issues of gossip and harassment from a rights perspective (i.e. placing it on the spectrum of gender-based violence, addressing the issue of victim blaming and internalized shame, placing the responsibility back on perpetrators), and offer space for peer sharing and learning on practical ways to address it individually, collectively, and within families. Consider exploring case studies (or inviting speakers) of action on this issue in Afghanistan ([Young Women for Change](#)) and in other Moslem contexts (e.g. [HarassMap](#) in Egypt). This seems like a good entry point for addressing violence against women, and could certainly evolve into broader discussions of other forms of violence against women on the spectrum. Zardozi might also consider consulting women on whether a separate training/dialogue session for male members of their family (e.g. husbands, brothers, sons) on understanding and addressing this issue would be appropriate. This could go as far as inviting men to take a pledge on existing global platforms. This would be a very significant step towards building men as role models. Some other resources on this topic:

- [Muslims for White Ribbon](#) (campaign against violence against women)
- [Take Back the Tech](#) (addresses the issue of GBV on the internet)
- [He for She](#) (Afghanistan has commitments on this campaign)
- [MenEngage](#) (resources on working with men)
- [AREU Report: The Other Side of Gender Inequality: Men and Masculinities in Afghanistan](#)

5. Discuss the gendering of work roles

Consider developing content in the gender training module on the gendering of work roles in the economy, to deconstruct the notion that women can only do specific types of work. Connect women to the range of jobs women do within and outside of Afghanistan. Engage women in discussions of what they believe is or is not possible within Afghanistan and why.

6. Recognize Sensitivities and Create a Language around Psychological Resources

There is a strong probability that many women have experienced primary or secondary trauma in the area of gender based violence and/or violations of their rights. They may be sensitive to these discussions and possibly triggered. Include mention of resources to women (e.g. within the programme, or referrals to women-serving organizations) as part of presentation of this material. Consider presenting a basic framework around working with feelings of fear and hopelessness, and developing psychological resources of empathy, courage and confidence. [Hagar International](#) has extensive experience providing both psychosocial and market support in Afghanistan and may have good resources, in addition to many wellness frameworks available in the west. Consider discussing healthy forms of advocacy, that allow for speaking up while recognizing boundaries of personal responsibility, e.g. introducing a translated version of the serenity prayer (“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference”). Consider making peer and/or programme support on this an ongoing resource within the programme.

Annex 1: Questionnaire

1. Has participating in Zardozi's programme changed your ideas about what you can do as a woman? Please describe.
2. Do you believe that women can work and lead others as men do? Why or why not?
3. Do you believe that if women have difficulty developing the ability to work and lead, it is their fault? [Prompts: Do women face different expectations and challenges than men? What are some of these challenges? What do women need to overcome them?]
4. Do you feel the same or differently about your own abilities since you started this programme?
 - a. What would you like to see yourself do or become?
5. Do you feel able to speak up within your family about your rights or the rights of other family members?
 - a. What rights and freedoms do you wish you had? Please provide an example.
6. [For respondents with children] What rights and opportunities would you like for your daughter(s)?
 - a. Do you see a role for your son(s) in promoting women's rights and opportunities?
 - b. How would you like to see him/them grow or change in this area?
7. Do you feel able to speak up among your neighbors about the rights of girls and women? Have you ever done so? If so, please describe.
 - a. Have you ever participated in a broader community meeting about the rights of girls and women or other issues affecting women? If so, please describe.