



Driving Development through Entrepreneurship

Considering the scope for market linkage and fund availability under One District One Product (ODOP) scheme of the Government of Uttar Pradesh, and Jhansi being the selected city for soft toy under the same scheme, training on soft toy making was conducted for 16 potential women entrepreneurs under HSBC funded Entrepreneurship for Empowerment project of Development Alternatives (DA). The 15-days training took place from 11th to 26th February 2019 at TARAgam Pahuj, Jhansi (Uttar Pradesh). These women were part of the infotainment and knowledge building sessions conducted as part of the project, post which they wanted to start an enterprise of their own. Though these women knew the basics of stitching and embroidery, none of them wanted to go the conventional route of tailoring. Therefore, leveraging upon the opportunity provided by ODOP scheme, these women were provided specialised training on toy making. During the course of 15 days these women were not only provided with skill training, but were also given insights on marketing and sales. A certification event was organised at the end of training wherein stakeholders from bank, market and community were present.

Moving forward, three women lead group enterprises have been established as part of which they will be producing soft toys and will currently be marketing to a local aggregator. This will not only act as a source of income generation but also will also play a critical role in shifting women from Bidi making activity which is both health hazardous as well as poorly paid. The event and the training was booster for the whole community. TARAgam Pahuj will act as the hub in future for soft toy making units where more number of people can participate for their income generation.