



INNOVATIONS FOR
WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT
IN THE GAP REGION
PROJECT
ACTIVITY REPORT
(January-June 2009)

2009



SUPPORTED BY SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION AGENCY

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN PRODUCTION DURING ECONOMIC CRISIS AND TURKISH EXAMPLE.....	3
OVERALL FRAMEWORK.....	4
INNOVATIONS FOR WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN THE GAP REGION	4
I. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 1	5
II. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 2	6
2.1. Strengthening of Existing Ateliers and Establishing New Ones	6
2.1.1. Design and Production Ateliers	6
2.1.2. Technical Equipment Support.....	7
2.1.3. Companies and Cooperatives for Setting-Up of Infrastructure.....	7
2.1.4. Raw Material Support	7
2.1.5. Atelier Work.....	7
III. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 3	10
3.1. Sales and Marketing.....	10
3.1.1. Direct Marketing.....	10
3.1.2. Café and Restaurant Sales	10
3.1.3. Fair and Exhibition Sales	11
3.2. Training Activities	11
3.2.1. Training of Trainers	11
3.2.2. Cooperative System Training.....	12
IV. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 4	12
4.1. 9 Fashion Designers for 9 Provinces	12
V. ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 5	15
5.1. Project Oversight	15
VI. CONCLUSION	15

INTRODUCTION:

THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PRODUCTION DURING ECONOMIC CRISIS AND TURKISH EXAMPLE

Record-breaking unemployment rate of %15.5 in Turkey is the clearest indicator of the crisis' effects on developing countries.

Activities for women's economic empowerment in the GAP Region, where people tend to consent to very low-paid jobs, once again proved the significance of the Project.

When we reached to the first half of the year 2009, we have seen that companies' financial structures were damaged, their growth decelerated and debt increased. As we experienced one of the biggest crises of the world, national economies have faced serious losses. However, the ones who have managed to turn the crisis into an opportunity could survive with minor harm.

In countries such as Turkey, the crisis showed its effects strongly, especially in the service sector. Powerful and large companies were less affected by the crisis because they could manage their costs effectively. However, sectors with high debt levels such as health, culture/arts, kitchenware, private education, computer software, fresh and dry vegetables/fruits have gone beyond the dangerous 3 percent limit of debt/capital ratio. While escalation of debts causes companies to check their investments, it also increases unemployment.

In such an environment, cooperation between the GAP Regional Development Administration (GAP RDA) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) raised hopes for the people of the region. Activation of women's inactive labor force created an environment where women's social and economic situation became an advantage. Women who traditionally spend their time ineffectively at home, now work in ateliers, build their skills, and become a part of the system that they created themselves.

Women became involved in an actively working mechanism. Such that, through joining strategic products and expert hands, women in the GAP Region could achieve professional production in a short period of time. By improving skills of women, who cannot progress due to difficulties of current circumstances, they were enabled to produce.

The project, which has become an important step towards women's social and economic development, showed its effects more during the crisis. In such an environment where people can hardly find job or even lose jobs, this initiative of women of GAP region, once again proved the significance of the Project. The activities implemented under the Project between January-June 2009 have been summarized below.

The project aims at establishing market connections for products manufactured by women of the region and providing women with training programmes in many areas.

OVERALL FRAMEWORK

The Project “Innovations for Women’s Empowerment: A Workable Model for Women in Turkey’s Southeast Anatolia Region” (to be hereinafter referred to as the “Innovations for Women’s Empowerment in the GAP Region”) with cooperation between GAP Regional Development Administration (GAP RDA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) became effective upon signing by GAP RDA, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNDP on 25 March 2008.

This project aims at women’s empowerment in Southeast Anatolia in social and economic life through innovative production-marketing related strategies. Through the Project, it is intended to support women’s labor market participation, branding of the Southeast Anatolia and developing new sales and marketing opportunities.

The Project is being implemented in the 9 provinces that comprise the GAP Region, with financial support provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

INNOVATIONS FOR WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN THE GAP REGION

The project aims to empower women in the region socially and economically. The implementation strategy is premised on women’s empowerment and institutional capacity development targeting women’s own capacity to associate and network for income generation purposes. The financial support will be in the form of supply of small machinery and material for women-managed ateliers to produce goods for national and local markets. The technical assistance will focus on design elements that will add to the marketability of the goods and will aim to provide market connections.

The project aims at establishing market connections for products manufactured by women of the region and providing women with training programmes in many areas. In the region, work is being done with Multi-Purpose Community Centers (ÇATOMs) and other non-governmental organizations active in issues of concern to women (MOKİD, Batman Association for the Social Development of Women, Mardin Women’s Multi-Purpose Enterprise Cooperative, Besni Active Women’s Mutual Assistance, Solidarity and Enterprise Cooperative, Gaziantep Woman University Graduates Cooperative etc.)

OUTPUT 1

Local authorities and commercial actors will have enhanced capacity and knowledge to design local employment programs that favor women's participation in the labor force.

In order to monitor the production process, provide the necessary technical support and coordination, and develop the regional, national and international marketing network, the Project Manager locates in the project office in Şanlıurfa, while the Project Assistant works both in the GAP RDA liaison office and UNDP office in Ankara, in order to provide coordination between partners, and assist administrative and financial processes.

The steps taken in the implementation of the project include establishing professional production facilities especially through strengthening the existing ateliers and opening new ones. Production facilities are being strengthened with design support for the manufacturing of professional products to be put on the markets through strong marketing and sale networks. There is continuous training and education support for the adoption and eventual achievement of the expected socio-economic transformation for the recognition of the economic development to be achieved and for making it sustainable.

I- ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 1

The aim is for the local authorities and commercial actors to have greater capacity and knowledge to design local employment programs that favor women's participation in the labor force.

In this context, within the cooperation established with the Diyarbakır Governorate, feasibility work has been done to set up a small scale textile factory and enable women to benefit from the vocational training courses of the Turkish Employment Agency with the aim of increasing women's participation in the labor force and reducing poverty.

The textile workshop established in Diyarbakır through such partnership aims at developing women's employment and entrepreneurship, carrying out high-quality production and establishing market connections while meeting the needs of poor children for clothing. The protocol envisages that the necessary materials for production, and the rent and operational **costs of the atelier will be met by the Diyarbakır Governorate for one year**. Besides, it is planned that Governorate will cover wages of women working in the atelier for 6 months. In return, equipment and machinery for the atelier will be provided by the Project. This protocol with the Governorate has come to signing stage; however it is suspended for a period of time due to brand creating activities and production processes in Batman and Mardin.

OUTPUT 2

Women's production capacity will be advanced through increased market links.

Two new ateliers were established in Mardin and Batman.

II- ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 2

As a result of increasing connections with the market, support has been greater than before for women's production capacity. In this framework, it is ensured that long-term production workshops manufacturing products with high value-added are established and existing ones strengthened.

2.1. Strengthening of Existing Ateliers and Establishing New Ones

Initially, it is important, on the one hand, to strengthen existing production ateliers connected with non-governmental organizations in the region and, on the other, to establish and extend new production facilities. The aim is to turn existing ateliers into units that are managed in a more professional manner.

In this context, **two new design and production ateliers** have been established during the period of January-March 2009.

2.1.1 Design and Production Ateliers:

Mardin:

Ömerli Fruit Pulp Production and Packaging Atelier:

Fruit Pulp Production and Packaging Atelier has been established in February 2009 in Mardin's Ömerli district. It aims to provide employment for disabled and unemployed poor women in Ömerli district. As the traditional way of producing fruit pulp products do not include packaging, these products have a small chance in exporting. Through this new establishment, especially export market is targeted.

Sub-project is implemented in cooperation with Mardin Joint Women Cooperation Association (MOKID), which is a women's platform that unites Mardin Central ÇATOM, Evren ÇATOM, Latifiye ÇATOM and Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (KEDV). The building for this establishment was rented from the Union of Village Headmen, and through the Governorate, the Administrative District of Ömerli undertook reparation of the building. Ömerli Municipality has carried out the landscaping of atelier. Initially **5 women have been employed** in the atelier, where it is aimed to provide employment for 5 more women.

Batman:

Fashion Textile Atelier:

Under the "9 Fashion Designers for 9 Provinces" sub-project, which is the fourth output of the Project, a fully-equipped fashion production atelier was established in

Technical equipment support was provided to some workshops.

Batman. Experts from Istanbul Textile and Apparel Exporter Associations (ITKIB) supported setting up of the atelier.

2.1.2 Technical Equipment Support

Technical equipment support was provided to two existing ateliers to raise their production capacity and to improve their market competitiveness.

Şırnak:

On February 2009, **3 new and 3 second-hand knitwear machines** were bought for the knitting atelier in Cizre, Şırnak. This purchase was planned according to Cizre district's needs.

Mardin:

On March 2009, reparation cost of a knitting machine which is used in Mardin Dargeçit ÇATOM was undertaken by the Project. Additionally, women working in this knitting atelier were sent to the repairing company for a **training session** on knitting machine usage.

2.1.3 Companies and Cooperatives for Setting-Up of Infrastructure

Ateliers become institutional in the form of companies and cooperatives. Companies and cooperatives will also be provided with technical support to strengthen their internal governance structures.

Batman:

The company "Yeşeren Düşler Ltd", launched to create institutional infrastructure for Batman Café Airport, is **officially established on January 2009**.

2.1.4 Raw Material Support:

Yeğın Triko Ltd. Company has donated **500 kg.** high-quality hand-knitting wool to the Project to be distributed among women in the region.

2.1.5 Atelier Work

Under Output 2, atelier work is being conducted very often in order to strengthen existing ateliers through providing technical support on design and production. In this context, following atelier work has been realized during the period of January-June 2009:

Mardin:

Takı Atölyesi:

Atelier work was conducted in accordance with the needs identified during the field visit on 16-19 February 2009 and various jewellery items such as brooches, necklaces and bracelets were produced.

Field visits and atelier work were carried out and 162 women in total have participated.

Giftware Atelier:

9 women participated in the giftware production workshop organized on 4-6 April 2009 in Mardin Central ÇATOM by designer Bige Irmak.

Batik Atelier:

Again on 4-6 April 2009 by Bige Irmak, an atelier work on applying batik technique on bags, cosmetic bags and pencil boxes was organized in Mardin Central ÇATOM, with the participation of **17 women**.

Bag Atelier:

On 11-12 April 2009, Bihter Aida Pekin, one of the well-known fashion designers of Turkey, visited Mardin Central ÇATOM and conducted a workshop on bag production. During the atelier work, where **11 women** participated, it was taught how to produce high value-added and marketable bags by using batik technique.

Midyat Shawl Atelier:

Again on 11-12 April, fashion designer Bihter Aida Pekin conducted another workshop in Midyat ÇATOM this time, on shawl production by using traditional beaded needle-work. In order to generate income as soon as possible for participant women, the designer purchased all shawls produced during the atelier work by paying needle-work labor cost and she later sold these products in Galata Fashion Fest. **8 women** attended this atelier work.

Dargeçit Toy and Needle-work Atelier:

A workshop was organized on hand-woven toy production (monkeys, dolls etc.) by famous fashion designer Deniz Yeğın on 9-10 May 2009 in Mardin Dargeçit ÇATOM. During the workshop, the designer also produced needle-work in various forms to create modern printed clothes with needle-work details. Work has been continuing to create market connections for these products, and results are awaited in a short period of time. **15 women** participated in the workshop.

Ömerli Giftware Atelier:

On 9 June 2009 in Mardin Ömerli ÇATOM, Hatice Gökçe, one of the leading fashion designers of Turkey, conducted a workshop on giftware production. During the workshop, various bags, giftware and accessorize were produced. **10 women** participated in this workshop.

Giftware Atelier:

A workshop was organized on giftware production by prominent fashion designer Bige Irmak on 27-28 June 2009 in Mardin Central ÇATOM. In this atelier work, modern bags, cosmetics bags, pencil boxes were produced. These

A sales point was created in Diyarbakır for these products.

products are planned to be marketed to an outstanding venue in İstanbul. This workshop received **18 women** participants.

Nusaybin Giftware and Home Textile Atelier: During atelier work that was carried out on 14 February 2009 at the Nusaybin ÇATOM various key-holders, kitchen aprons, table napkins and wall-hung pockets were produced using shahmeran motifs unique to the district. This workshop was attended by **19 women**.

Diyarbakır:

Diyarbakır Giftware and Home Textile Atelier:

Atelier work that aims to manufacture high value-added products was conducted on 16-19 February 2009 in Diyarbakır ÇATOM. This activity was organized in two stages, where first of all, a preparatory observation of ateliers was made with the designers, who were newly assigned for the Project, to identify potential products to create. Later, on the second stage, current products that have been produced for a period of time were quality checked.

20 participants attended to this workshop, where small cushions, table napkins, small and large bags, needlework necklaces, lavender bags and tray covers were brought out. The follow-up of this atelier work was implemented on 16-19 March 2009 with the participation of **17 women**.

Diyarbakır Doll Atelier:

Doll production, which has been continuing since previous workshops dated 16-20 February and 16-19 March 2009, was quality checked, and some products were chosen to offer for sale. **5 participants** of Diyarbakır ÇATOM attended to this atelier work.

While conducting field and atelier work in Diyarbakır, meetings were held with the Governorate and the Chamber of Trade for the local marketing of these products, and it was decided that a sales point would be established for these products at the Diyarbakır Chamber of Trade. The **official opening of the sales point** was held on January 2009 in the Chamber of Trade and Industry.

Sanlıurfa:

Giftware Atelier (Felt):

Felt giftware products, of which production has been carried on for some time, were quality checked during the atelier work conducted on 21 February 2009. Additionally, jewellery production has been started. **6 women** participated to this atelier work.

OUTPUT 3

The targeted beneficiary women will have strengthened capacity to enter labor markets and the social lives of their communities.

Siirt:

Giftware Atelier:

At the atelier work on 17 February 2009, quality check of the products that have been produced since previous atelier work was done, and some products were chosen to offer for sale. **7 women** participated to this atelier work.

III- ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 3

The targeted beneficiary women will have strengthened capacity to enter labor markets and the social lives of their communities.

3.1 Sales and Marketing

The existence of sales channels for high value-added products manufactured in ateliers is one of the most important elements to ensure the sustainability of the project. For this reason, sales and marketing have a very significant place and will play a very important role in the project. The sales process begins after the storage and distribution logistic capabilities are arranged for the product network.

3.1.1 Direct Marketing:

Various products (lavender bags, embroidered guest towels, dolls, felt products, needlework jewellery) manufactured during the workshop activities carried out in Mardin, Batman, Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa and Siirt have been offered for sale in various places in Ankara.

3.1.2 Café and Restaurant Sales:

3.1.2.1 Besni Yufka ve Unlu Mamuller Atölyesi

Equipment support was provided to increase the capacity of the atelier which was established under the former project. The sales by the Besni Filo Dough and Bakery Products Atelier during the period of January-March 2009 were **TL1.537** in total, and during April-June 2009 the sales were realized at **TL2.487**.

3.1.2.2 Batman Cafe Airport

Airport Café, for the strengthening of which support has been provided under this Project, realized sales numbers of **TL2.820 in January, TL2.640 in February and TL2.410 in March, TL2.905 in April, TL4.535 in May and TL4.132 in June.**

As women gain experience on sales and marketing, sales numbers also increase day by day.

The aim of this project is for women in Southeast Anatolia to receive training and reach an economic level where they can provide their own maintenance.

3.1.3 Fair and Exhibition Sales:

3.1.3.1 Diyarbakır Giftware Fair

Products manufactured by women to whom design support was provided under the project were displayed and offered for sale, **for the second time**, on 24 January-10 February 2009 at the Babil Shopping Centre in Diyarbakır. The exhibition of women's hand-made products was displayed in the exhibition area allocated by the Babil Shopping Centre to support the project. Realized sales were approximately **TL3.536** during this period.

3.1.3.2 İstanbul Fair

A tradition since 2005, İstanbul Taksim Fair, is organized by İstanbul Municipality. ÇATOMs from 9 provinces of GAP Region and their districts participate in this fair, which is held in tents provided by İstanbul Municipality at Taksim Square. The latest fair was organized in 25-31 May 2009 with the participation of **42 women** from **25 ÇATOMs of 9 provinces** and a total sales figure of **TL105.000** was realized, the highest amount generated by CATOMs through these fairs.

3.2. Training Activities

Increased knowledge is an important element to achieve human development. For this reason, training and education activities form an integral part of the project and its goals. Training will be provided under the project on sales and marketing, communication, gender equality, design, human and woman's rights, cooperatives and management. The project helps to build an integrated capacity by combining production-related technical skills training with awareness-raising education on subjects concerning woman's rights.

3.2.1 Training of Trainers (Ready-to-wear)

On February-March 2009, in the aim of increasing the quality in textile sector, training of trainers activities were conducted in Şanlıurfa and Mardin by experts from İstanbul Textile and Apparel Exporter Associations (İTKİB) in order to improve the teaching capacity of sewing trainers who serve in different institutions. Training activities included basic subjects such as design, cutting techniques, basic working methods in sewing techniques, and transformation of individual development to group work, besides technical subjects like effective training in ready-to-wear sector, machinery and spare parts, and fabrics and fabric groups.

Şanlıurfa:

Under the cooperation established to train sewing trainers in Public Education Centers, ÇATOMs and other related institutions, İTKİB representative conducted a trainers training on 16 March-3 April 2009 in Şanlıurfa. 6 women

Training activities received 71 women's participation totally.

OUTPUT 4

The commercial image of the region will be improved strongly towards women's productivity through the innovative sub-project "Nine Fashion Designers for Nine Provinces".

from Bozova Public Education Center and Bozova ÇATOM and 3 women from Şanlıurfa Central ÇATOM, **a total of 9 women**, attended the training.

Mardin:

Simultaneous with the Şanlıurfa training, another expert from İTKİB conducted a training for trainers in Mardin on 16 March-3 April with the participation of **15 women sewing trainers** from ÇATOMs of central Mardin and its peripheries (Kızıltepe, Ömerli, Midyat, Dargeçit, Nusaybin). Other trainers from Mardin and its districts, who came to realize the importance of such training, decided to attend to the training as well. Moreover, **2 women trainers** from Kızıltepe and Ömerli ÇATOM were supported to go to İstanbul for a **10-day design training** in a designer's atelier.

3.2.2 Cooperative System Training

Kilis:

A training activity on cooperative system was conducted on 18-19 April 2009 in Kilis Women Cooperative, which was established by Kilis Governorate. The training received **27 women** participants and included a wide range of topics such as definition, importance, history and principles of cooperative system, difference between cooperatives and other type of establishments, foundation stages of a cooperative, cooperative management and organization, types of cooperatives, advantages of cooperative system, main problems of cooperative system in Turkey, and success criteria for cooperatives.

3.2.3 Kitchen Training and Atelier Work

Mardin:

A teorical and also hands-on training on cooking and restaurant management was conducted on 10-12 April 2009 in Mardin kitchen, which was established under the former project. **18 women** participated in this activity.

IV - ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 4

The aim is the creation of new fashion and embroidery designs for each of the nine provinces by nine well-known fashion designers in Turkey and the establishment of market connections.

4.1 9 Fashion Designers for 9 Provinces

The sub-project "9 Fashion Designers for 9 Provinces" with field visits carried out by fashion designers in the framework of the protocol signed under the "Reducing Socio-economic

Women's products produced within the Project were gathered under a new brand, Argande.

Disparities in the Southeast Anatolia Region Project" is continuing under the new project from where it was left.

Under this component, Turkey's most recognized fashion designers work in close cooperation with women in the region and prepare products to be sold in big stores. In addition, by making the cultural heritage visible, the project helps the perception of the region to grow in a more positive way based on local cultural treasures, diversity and women's productivity.

The project also has a branding externality with emphasis on strong regional features such as the regional people and human diversity and the efforts of women to integrate their cultural and moral values into global knowledge and commercial markets. The products coming out of women's atelier are now being marketed with a visibility program that combines the creativity of Southeast women with fashion designers and their activities in Istanbul and other places in Turkey.

Consequently, 8 leading fashion designers of Turkey, under the coordination of fashion designer Hatice Gökçe, identified a concept for the Project and **created a brand** called "**ARGANDE**" for products prepared under this concept. Within sub-project a story of the Project was created by using the fashion jargon in order to establish the visual integrity for print and visual media; a fashion collection was prepared in accordance with the Project concept; and the products were documented. Accomplishments during January-June 2009 are as follows:

The project, which aims at social and economic empowerment of women in Southeast Anatolia through innovative production-marketing related strategies and re-branding of the region, will fulfill its goal with support from fashion designers while enabling women to join labor force market. In this context, the sub-project's main title was set with graphic designer Yeşim Demir's slogan of "Talesma Under the Same Sun" which embraces projects both social and design aspects.

In order to achieve project's goals of institutional capacity development of women, branding of Southeastern Anatolia, and most importantly creating sales-marketing opportunities for women, it is very important to provide design support to women. Therefore, invitations were sent to a number of fashion designers, to cooperate in this initiative. Deniz Yeğin, Ezra Çetin, Tuba Çetin, Berna Canok Özay, Rana Canok, Simay Bülbül, Mehtap Elaidi and Gamze Saraçoğlu were the 8 fashion designers volunteered to provide this support. A meeting was organized with the volunteer

The Argande line which was prepared through joint efforts of 8 famous fashion designers and Southeastern women will be put on sales in Mudo stores.

designers, who accepted to be a part of the sub-project, and they were presented a plan and concept including thorough information about the project's content and what was expected from them.

Same presentation and meetings were also held with Yeşim Demir Consultancy and Advertisement Design Company, who was selected to create the Argande brand's corporate identity. As a result of consultations with production companies for visual documentation of and organizing the most important step for the sub-project -the press launch-, YOYO Production Company also joined the team.

At the next step, products from GAP Region were presented to the designers, who accepted to be a part of the project, and they were asked to create one design each according to the project concept. All sample designs, which have been received from designers on 30 March 2009, were shared with the marketing team of **Mudo, one of the biggest ready-wear companies of Turkey**. Finally, products have been accepted with great interest and without any request for design changes by Mudo, and nearly **7000 pieces** of all products in total were ordered.

A field visit was conducted on 6-9 April 2009 in Mardin and Batman in order to select producer women and conduct feasibility work. 140 women were interviewed during this field visit and **35 women** with machinery user skills were chosen. A group of women was also chosen for the knitting atelier in Mardin. Tasks of producer women for both ateliers were distributed according to the production stages. Machinery park was set up in Batman atelier with the technical support of an expert from İstanbul Textile and Apparel Exporters' Association (İTKİB).

The sub-project was documented by Yoyo Production company's photo shoots, in addition to video shooting conducted to collect material for documentary film. Catalogue shooting for Argande products was held on 8-9 June in Mardin.

A field visit was conducted on 28-29 June 2009 to control final Argande products. Producer women were informed on final quality checks of designs, and packaging. Products will be put on sales in August at Mudo's biggest 16 stores.

Press launch of Argande brand will be held on 9 July 2009 in Kuruçeşme Sortie which is one of the most important entertainment venues in İstanbul. Over one thousand invitations were sent and it is expected to receive at least **500 participants**.

OUTPUT 5
Management

V - ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER OUTPUT 5

5.1 Project Oversight

Project Steering Committee Meeting was held on 19 January 2009 with the participation of representatives from GAP Regional Development Agency, United Nations Development Programme, Embassy of Sweden, State Planning Organization, Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection and The General Directorate of Women's Status.

It was stated during the meeting that the Project is an important example, not only for Southeast but also for Eastern Anatolia Region and Black Sea Region for future initiatives, and also is very essential for women to gain confidence and economic independence. The significance of the Project was highlighted especially on gender equality, in supporting Turkish Government's efforts to achieve MDGs and fulfill its obligations under the Beijing Platform for Action.

IV. CONCLUSION

As we completed the first half of the year, it can be seen that key achievements have been realized under the project's output 1, output 2, output 3 and output 4. Significant implementation steps have been taken for women's social and economic empowerment. Project made progress during January-June 2009.

It has been a noteworthy development for the project's main purpose that women in the region collected the results of their labour and atelier work produced successful outcomes. When the first results came, project beneficiary women were content that their work has been a part of a major organization.

Today, women's too little participation in labour force in Turkey and this ratio being at the lowest levels in total production rates, especially in the GAP region, shows the importance of the work done towards women's advancement.

It is sometimes more challenging to introduce new developments to people of the GAP Region due to Region's traditional structure and low rates of literacy. However, the Project successfully grew beyond the traditional standpoint of the people with the help of significant improvements that have been achieved, while taking regional sensitivities into consideration.

**Women in the Region
grow more self-
confident day by day
through participating in
major production
activities.**

It has been well received by the neighboring communities that women are both been given training and also able to contribute to family budget in an economic crisis environment where others are in difficulty of finding jobs. . When the Project is completed, it is envisaged that beneficiary women will easily take part in labor force market in Southeast Anatolia Region.

During the period of January-June, active work forces in ateliers have been triggered, women have been enabled to participate in production process, and first results have been yielded. Women's voice has been heard through large-scale organizations.