Skills Training And Rehabilitation Society (STARS)

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



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List of Acronyms

ADRRN	Asian Disaster Risk Reduction and Response Network
CAID	Christian aid
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CEN	Civil Society Empowerment Network
CPAN	Child Protection Action Network
GoA	Government of Afghanistan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ICT	Information, Communication, Technology
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NAGC	National Action Coordination Group
SAIEVAC	South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children
SCF	Small Challenge Fund
WFP	World Food Program

Message From The Director



Year 2017 was full of challenges and adventures for NGOs working in Afghanistan for humanity. Security situation of the country was not favorable for the humanitarian workers even in settled areas of the country. Humanitarian workers, besides other civilians, have been targeted in different parts of the country.

It was a difficult year to serve the needy people due to several reasons, including suicide and IED attacks, kidnapping of the aid workers and political motivations, decrease in funding from the international community, poor networking, poor communication with stake holders, limitation in fund raising and political interferences at different levels. However, besides all these difficulties STARS management, employees, workers and related personal worked hard to serve the needy people to the highest possible extent.

STARS implemented several projects in close coordination with different donors and other stakeholders to serve marginalized and needy people especially women in order to include them in the main stream and to make them a responsible citizen of the country. The projects implemented in 2017, were for both men and women to make them important alike for each other and to make women empowered.

The projects implemented in 2017 mainly focused on women trainings, vocational and others, with the objectives to make them empowered and to have a visible part in the decision-making process especially the decision effecting their own life. Vocational trainings were provided to a number of women and girls, which help those women and girls to have a reputable source of income that can be used to help their families. A considerable number of women and girls got able to read and write after receiving trainings under Basic Education projects implemented by STARS.

The economic empowerment projects helps many individuals, especially women, and household to find new opportunities of employment. Hygiene promotion projects have also been implemented in 2017 to spread awareness in women regarding personal hygiene, sanitation and health, benefits of drinking clean water, adverse effects of animals living close to their living rooms and of not having proper kitchen.

In shorts, year 2017 was full of challenges and tremendous opportunities. STARS team learn a lot of new things in projects implementation as the conditions of Afghanistan, in every aspects, are changing day by day and every day bring a new challenge and new opportunity side by side. For NGOs like STARS, working for the women rights and women empowerments, every new day is a new horizon and require more hard work to step forward to the accomplishment of the organizational goals and objectives.

At the end, I would also like to place on the record our sincere thanks to all including our donors, partners, workers, volunteers, government authorities at all levels and the people of Afghanistan for being with us in our journey toward our vision and mission to make the people of Afghanistan a prosperous and economically empowered nation.

Suhaila Noori
Executive Director

About Us

A group of intellectual Afghans established Skills Training and Rehabilitation Society (STARS) in 1997 to offer helping hand to the needy country people, particularly women and children. STARS has been working in Afghanistan since 1997, helping to tackle the country's nutritional problems along with provision of other DRR and development services, and supporting vulnerable people to improve their livelihoods. STARS helped food insecure individual through local markets with the help of donors. STARS support emergency nutrition programs, providing ready-to-use foods in response to severe malnutrition in Afghanistan.

STARS is registered with the Ministry of Economy, DAIL, and MOLSAMD and has close coordination and project agreements with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Public Health, Agriculture, Rural Rehabilitation Development and some government provincial departments. STARS has close coordination with Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and one of the active member of Child Protection Action Network (CPAN) in Afghanistan. STARS is the co-chair of National Action Coordination Group (NAGC) in Afghanistan since 2011.

STARS is the member of Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR), Afghan Women Network (AWN), and Civil Society Empowerment Network (CEN) at the national level. It is mentionable that STARS is the only women focused organization in Afghanistan, working in DRR sector. STARS is the member of Asian Disaster Risk Reduction And Response Network (ADRRN) since 2006. In addition, STARS attended many South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC) meetings, which is Apex body of SAARC at the international level.

A Brief of 2017

The economic, social and political environment of Afghanistan has not been changed from the previous years to mentionable extent. Security conditions were not good and most of the rural areas were not approachable yet, and therefore residents of those areas were deprived of the basic needs of life.

The economy of the country is in poor condition and hence the individuals and households face difficulties in their economic abilities. As the security and economy of the country is not good therefore, many children especially girls are deprived of formal education and vocational training.

STARS helped such deprived and marginalized people especially women by implementing projects in different sectors of the country. Education, vocational training to women, kitchen gardening, personal hygiene was the targeted sectors for STARS in 2017. STARS implemented emergency relief and development project for returnees, refuges and host communities. The detail information regarding each sector is included in this document at latter stage.

Achievements of 2017

In following the mission and vision of STARS and providing support to deprived and poor people, STARS achieved the following results,

- 1,200 women received vocational trainings, proposal writing and basic accounting training
- 140 women trained on sanitary napkins production
- 14 women groups (each co-operative with 10 female members) established
- 14 women groups linked with local markets
- About 3,544 poor people have been provided with food and NFI Wardak and Laghman provinces respectively

Donor in 2017

Following donors provide funds to STARS in 2017,

Targeted Sectors During the Year

Vocational and Small business training

STARS implemented a project to build the capacity of women's organizations and local authorities in Laghman and Urozgan provinces and create an enabling environment for initiating and building local structures and networking to support and sustain flourishing communities. The project was implemented with the funds provided by European Union and coordinated by Cordaid for a total period of 36 months. Furthermore, STARS work in close partnership with APPRO and AWRC.

In total, 1,200 Women from local communities have been received training of vocational and small business that contributed to their economic empowerment throughout the past three years and will produce fruitful results in their future life. Each year, 400 women were targeted within the five districts - two in Urozgan and three in Laghman; these women have been trained as mentors to work in their own communities.

The women in the targeted districts received nine months literacy course that enabled them to read and write Dari and Pashto words and sentences. They are now able to read sign boards and solve routine problems they encounter in their daily lives by knowing how to read and using numbers. In addition, health-training sessions were held that helped women to improve their family's hygiene and sanitation. The women are moreover introduced to the basics of peace building concepts, which they are able to apply daily at household or community level.

Under the project as **Small Challenge fund (SCF)** has been created to support the establishment of small projects particularly agriculture related projects. According to the results of rapid assessment in three districts of Laghman province the families who received the animal through small challenge fund, they had already develop animal production and the family income has been increased to a considerable extent. Women groups, implementing animal husbandry projects, have increased their household income more than the expected percentage.



Training Session on investment in small businesses

Social impact of the project

The project has very positive impact on the targeted communities. Women take more and more interest in the education and trainings provided to them for the improvement of the life standards. Most importantly, men in the society are allowing their women to participate in the educational and training projects. Following is the summary of the positive impact of the project,

- The people took interest, allowed women to participate, and received education and skill trainings.
- The women groups are promoted/capacitated and could prepared project proposals and they can easily plan and implement any agriculture project in the area.
- Networking system created in the targeted communities which helps in solving problem of communities,
- Women groups received trainings are now actively providing training on the same techniques in the communities to the women who could not receive trainings during the project life.

An Opportunity to Life

Miss Anar Gula is a resident of treenkot in Urozgan province. She was one of the beneficiaries of the STARS project. She spent a hard days and live a difficult life before she introduced to the STARS project as a beneficiary. She tell the story as how educational/vocational training project change her life.

She mentioned that, I am Anar Gula, daughter of Dilbar khan residence of Treenkot capital of Urozgan province, district Surkhab. When I was married to Mohammad Kabir, government opposition (Taliban) ruled the district, and my husband was one of village leader in the district. We witnessed lots of war in the district in our life.

Due to war and conflict, we decided to leave the village and then we shifted to capital in search of a better and peaceful life. After shifting to capital, our life become harder than it was before. One of our sons injured seriously in the war. Another become drugs addicted. While our three other sons joined police force who were killed by Taliban shortly after joining police force. We become helpless after such an irreparable loss.

We did not had enough food for the family, as my husband was uneducated and did not had any vocational skills. He worked on daily wages but most of the time he remained jobless. We spent many days without any food.

I saw many women in our neighborhood who were participating in the education and vocational training projects implemented by the humanitarian organizations. I also wanted to learn a useful skill to help my family in such hard times. Therefore, I went to my husband and asked for his permission to allow me to join educational and vocational training program of STARS. At first, he refused to allow me because he thought that he will lost respect in the society.

Once our neighbor named Bakht bibi came to our home and told me about the project activities of STARS. She informed me about the education and training activities of the project especially the trainings on investment in small businesses. Bakht bibi mentioned that such trainings have been changed our lives and we are planning to give such trainings to all our family women.

Anar Gula mentioned that I went to my husband again and told completely the life-changing story of Bakht bibi. He listened to me but say noting. After that, my husband went to Bakh bibi husband to confirm the story of Bakht bibi. After bakht bibi husband confirm the words of Bakht

bibi, my husband permitted me to join the project and learn new things. I registered myself with the organization in project and take active part in all project activities. I wrote a proposal along with my other colleagues and got animals from STARS through SCF. She further mentioned that, now my husband and other family members are very happy and are taking active part with me in livelihood activities. We are moving forward in our life with prosperity and success. She also says that other project beneficiaries have such life changing stories.

At the end, she added that we are thankful to STARS, donors and other NGOs who helped people like us and give us a hope to a prosperous life.



Livestock distribution to Women

Health/personal hygiene

A healthy woman can produce a healthy society. If we want a clean and health society we must educated our women in this regard. It is of great importance that the women should know about their personal health as well as about the importance of cleanliness of the environment. It is their right to have knowledge and facilities for a clean and healthy life.

STARS help women to have knowledge of their basic rights through its education projects and help them in getting their required freedom and equal share in decision-making process of their household through its vocational and livelihood projects to improve their earnings and make them empowered.

STARS implemented a project in Ghor province with the objective to increase women's awareness and capacity building to increase their knowledge about their bitterness of life /health,

and issues of sanitation and personal hygiene. Awareness and vocational trainings were provided to the targeted beneficiaries. A considerable number of women attend the training programs regularly and show their interest in the project activities.

In order to make the project more effective, male were also included in the targeted beneficiaries. 140 women and 20 men received the trainings. A number of training workshops were conducted to spread awareness and train the targeted beneficiaries regarding hygiene, REFLECT (basic education & skills training/ Tailoring method of making Napkins) and support women with a sanitary napkin and hygiene kit.



Hygiene Kits distribution

Social impact of the project

Women shows good interest in the health activities. They received knowledge about their personal cleanness in specific and about the cleanness of the surrounding in general. The overall impact can be enlisted as follows,

- Women took interest in the educational training programs regarding sanitation and personal hygiene
- They start keeping themselves clean by using sanitary napkins instead of old dirty cloths
- Sanitary napkins production machines (toolkits) distributed to 14 co-operatives
- Targeted beneficiaries produce sanitary napkins not only for their personal use but for the sale in the local market




A safe and healthy life

Hajira was one of the beneficiaries who received awareness training on personal hygiene from STARS project. She expressed her views and experience as follows,

I have attended the trainings classes conducted by STARS. In those Trainings, we were informed about the important issues about our personal health that we did not know before. That was interesting training for me. In the past, my family and I have faced with a lot of illness because our livestock place was close to our living rooms and our kids were playing close to our livestock, our drinking water was not in a clean and safe place and I personally used old clothes for my periods. However, this personal hygiene training has make me to learned a lot about my personal hygiene and family hygiene that helped me to work on and make sanitary Napkin for my family and relatives. I also sell it in the local market and earn a good income. Now my family members and I are conscious about the health threatening elements in our environment, which were unknown to us before, and we try our best to control such elements.



Training on Personal Hygiene

Emergency Relief Services

STARS with the initial objective work for the poor people to give them knowledge and skills in order to make them to earn a good income for their families and live a standard life. During its 19 years of journey, STARS implemented many project for the Afghans with the monetary and technical support from different donor organizations.

STARS implemented emergency relief projects to help the people in need for food and other services including NFI on emergency basis. STARS provided services on emergency basis to the refugees and returnees from Pakistan. Although, the number of refugees and returnees were more than the capacity of STARS, however, STARS provided support to a huge extent. STARS served 250 returnee families with NFI in Gamberi and Nahr-e- Karim returnee's camps in Qarghaiee district of Laghman province. Besides this, STARS provided mix food items to poor families in Wardak province under two of its project. About 3,544 poor people have been provided with food and NFI in Wardak and Laghman provinces respectively.



NFI in the warehouse



NFI ready for distribution

Social impact of the projects

These projects improve the food security of the targeted beneficiaries. The impact of the project can be summarized as follow,

- 3,544 individual have been served with mixed food items
- 250 returnees families were served with NFI
- Jobs created for 3,544 persons for three months



NFI distributed to Beneficiaries



Food distribution in Wardak province



NFI ready for Distribution

Financial Information and Accountability to Stakeholders

Transparency and accountability is as important in the humanitarian work as the work itself. STARS always consider itself accountable to its donors, government, communities and other stakeholders. Therefore, STARS prepare it financial statements on annual basis and get it audited by a reputable independent audit firm.

Audited Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2017 give complete information regarding the financial aspects of the organization. STARS recognized income for 2017 is amounting to USD 205,890 out of which USD 175,893 has been spent for direct projects activities while USD 29,907 has been utilized for indirect cost of the projects.

The audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2017 along with the audit report has been presented on the following page.

PKF F.R.A.N.T.S.
Chartered Accountants

PKF

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of **"Skills Training and Rehabilitation Society (STARS)"** (the Organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as at **December 31, 2017**, and the statement of income and expenditure, statement of changes in fund balance and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Organization as at December 31, 2017, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting policies mentioned in note 3 to the financial statements.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements** section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (IESBA Code), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the IESBA Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting policies described in note 3 to the financial statements, and for such internal control as the management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Management is responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatements, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the management, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

PKF F.R.A.N.T.S.,
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
Kabul, Afghanistan
Date: 07 April 2018

SKILLS TRAINING AND REHABILITATION SOCIETY (STARS)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2017

	Note	2017 USD	2016 USD
FIXED ASSETS			
Fixed assets-operating	4	-	-
CURRENT ASSETS			
Receivable from donors	5	50,294	35,361
Cash and cash equivalents	6	61,721	12,902
		112,015	48,263
TOTAL ASSETS		**112,015**	**48,263**
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	7	37,096	17,346
Un-spent grant	8	63,792	27,783
TOTAL LIABILITIES		**100,888**	**45,129**
NET ASSETS		**11,127**	**3,134**
REPRESENTED BY			
Fund Balance		**11,127**	**3,134**

Auditor's report annexed.
The annexed notes from 1 to 15 form an integral part of these financial statements.

MANAGING DIRECTOR

FINANCE MANAGER

SKILLS TRAINING AND REHABILITATION SOCIETY (STARS)
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017

	Note	January 01, 2017 to December 31, 2017			2016
INCOME		Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	Total
		USD	USD	USD	USD
Donor funds	9	205,890		205,890	241,829
Other income	10		29,566	29,566	31,000
Exchange gain / (loss)		-	(139)	(139)	(36)
Total income		**205,890**	**29,427**	**235,317**	**272,792**
EXPENDITURE					
Program expense	11	175,983	18,713	194,696	227,281
Administrative expense	11	29,907	2,720	32,627	45,254
Total expenditure		**205,890**	**21,434**	**227,324**	**272,534**
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		-	**7,993**	7,993	258
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS BROUGHT FORWARD		-	3,134	3,134	2,876
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS CARRIED FORWARD		-	**11,127**	**11,127**	**3,134**

The annexed notes from 1 to 15 form an integral part of these financial statements.

MANAGING DIRECTOR

FINANCE MANAGER



Annual General Assembly meeting of ADRRN (2017)

ADD: Pul-e-Surkh Square, First Street to Left Opposite to Muhibzada Center, House # 1676, 3rd District, Kabul-Afghanistan.

Web Site: www.stars.org.af