

# GoodWeave Interim Progress Report to Dining for Women

July 31, 2015

## 1. Please provide the following information:

- a. **Organization Name:** GoodWeave International
- a. **Program Title:** *Weaving Educational Opportunities for Afghan Girls*
- b. **Grant Amount:** \$45,000
- c. **Contact Person:** Beth Huber
- d. **Address:** 2001 S Street NW Ste. 510, Washington DC 20009

## 2. Recap briefly what outcomes the program was designed to achieve.

Through the development of an early childhood education initiative in a weaving community in rural Afghanistan where children are likely to get pulled into child labor, GoodWeave is working towards two outcomes: (1) 50 preschool-aged children receive an educational foundation and are less vulnerable to being prematurely pulled into the workforce, and (2) their mothers have time and opportunity to concentrate on their handiwork, thus earning more income to be reinvested in their family.

## 3. Has funding changed for this program? For example, have you received unexpected funding from another source?

No, funding has not changed for this program. But there has been another form of unexpected support. During a visit to the community in early June, our social program manager learned that the families were so pleased by the GoodWeave center that they wanted to contribute something. They decided to provide lunch for all the children once a week. Starting in May, the children enjoy a potluck lunch every Thursday during which they share with each other. This is one way that the community has taken pride and ownership of the program, which gives us hope that it will be an enduring part of the community and not always dependent on outside charitable funding.

## 4. Is your organization or program situation different than presented in the approved proposal? For example, new executive director, significant program staffing changes or NGO affiliation, loss of large funding, or other significant changes?

Since establishing the early childhood program in Shahrak-e-Qalinbafan in 2012, demand by local parents has been overwhelming. After parents actively urged GoodWeave to add additional classes when the current center was already full to capacity, a new space was added just across the road in a location known as Camp-e-Sakhi. The two spaces combined now serve a total of 152 girls, 59 of whom are preschool age, and 93 who are older and participating in “preparatory classes” designed to provide extra study time for girls to support their performance in government school. Twenty-one boys are also attending the early childhood program; their participation is being funded by a private donor.

**5. What challenges are you facing as you move forward with this project? How are you approaching these challenges?**

We have not faced any major challenge in implementing this project. The only challenge is the weather. There is oppressive heat in Mazar this time of the year and therefore some children are not able to attend regularly because it is difficult to walk to class under the burning sun. GoodWeave installed a cooling system last summer and the weather will improve in August, so this won't be a challenge much longer. It's common in Afghanistan for schools to break for the summer months, but GoodWeave is trying to operate this program year-round to support working mothers.

**6. Have you revised your original objectives since the project began? If so, why? What are your new objectives?**

Our original objective remain the same; however, we are pleased to report that we have been able to reach even more preschool-aged girls than anticipated and have been able to make use of existing facilities and teachers to reach older girls as well. Below is a snapshot during one of the "prep" classes for older girls.



**7. What progress have you made toward achieving your objectives? Please address each stated objective.**

The *Weaving Educational Opportunities* program supported by Dining for Women has an objective of sponsoring schooling for 50 isolated and illiterate Afghan girls – among the most vulnerable in the world – while bolstering economic opportunities for their weaving mothers.

*(1) 50 preschool-aged children receive an educational foundation and are less vulnerable to being prematurely pulled into the workforce:* GoodWeave is supporting early childhood education for 59 preschool-aged girls. They have a hot daily meal and follow a curriculum of math and Dari in the morning and dance and sports in the afternoon. They learn to write their names, sing their national anthem, practice basic hygiene, and recite poetry.

While the Center cares for the immediate needs of these children, there has always been a bigger picture and intention here: to set a precedent for educating rather than employing children, especially girls. And we are thrilled to share that this is proving true – in March 2015, ten girls “graduated” from the Center to join public school where they are thriving and continuing in their education.

One teacher of girls who graduated to elementary school spoke enthusiastically about their school work: **“The girls are really intelligent students. They are with a courage and can speak well [in] front of others... Overall, I’m happy from them and I really appreciate GoodWeave for their service.”**

*(2) Their mothers have time and opportunity to concentrate on their handiwork, thus earning more income to be reinvested in their family:* Many of the women in this village are carpet weavers who work from home and are paid based on the number of square meters they complete, so more focused time equates to more money. When we visit to check on the center, we always make time to meet with families to hear the full story of how they doing with their jobs and inquire about their changing attitudes toward daughters going to school.



This July, we sat down with the parents of five-year-old Mahdia who enrolled their daughter this past March. Even though they knew she was bright and wanted her to be educated, Tajwar and her husband couldn’t afford daycare or private school. Now, they say: **“We are extremely grateful to GoodWeave for its remarkable help toward educating our future generation, our kids. No other help can match this.”** And Tajwar added how it impacts her income and professional focus: “Now that my little girl is in the daycare, I am relieved and know that the teachers take good care of her. So I have more time do other work.”

As for Mahdia, she loves reading and writing. Her father showed incredible pride as he told us: “She loves her books.” He too expressed appreciation for GoodWeave and the funders who make this



possible. “We know that this is a very good opportunity for our daughter and we understand that not many people in Afghanistan are as lucky to have their children enrolled at daycares or private schools.”

We also spoke with Sonia’s mother, who is pictured here in a modest pose beside her young daughter who wanted to be photographed with her backpack. Sonia is five years old and the youngest of 12 children. Her father works as a day laborer in the local market and her mother weaves carpets at home. With such a big family to support, Sonia’s parents had to focus almost exclusively on work in order to feed their family. As soon as they heard about the center opening in 2013, they immediately enrolled Sonia. Sonia is very fond of her teacher, passionate about her studies and “always busy with reading or writing something.”

When asked what she wants to be when she grows up, Sonia has a clear answer: “I want to be a daycare teacher in the future and share my daycare stories with as many children as I can.” Below she is pictured in the center of the circle with a huge grin on her face.



**8. Do you anticipate any difficulties in completing your project in the timeframe outlined in your proposal?**

No, we do not anticipate any difficulties in completing the project in the timeframe outlined in our proposal. Our support for the community is on-going and we are raising funds to provide continued education for these children beyond the life of the Dining for Women grant.

**With the report also include:**

- **Several high-resolution JPG photographs of the program depicting the women/girls who have benefitted from the grant funds. Photos should be submitted with the right to use in all forms and media in DFW documents and website. Include confirmation of grantee's right and consent to use photos/videos per local law.**

GoodWeave confirms it has secured grantee's consent for use of all photos provided.

- **Any message you would like us to convey to our membership and donors about the impact our grant is having on those being served and/or your organization and its mission.**

When our Washington office received the latest field update from our local team in Kabul, several of us gathered around to look at the pictures on a single screen. This project brings all of us – from the village parents to the young children to the global GoodWeave staff – such pure joy. We confess to laughing as we scroll through the images and find the perfect one to share only to discover a little boy picking his nose in the background. And then there is the picture of a father with a stern expression, as is customary when being photographed, but with a gentle hand on his daughter's head because he is proud that she is learning. Or a picture with a mother biting her shawl, also a common cultural pose for women, but nearby her daughter sits tall and spends her days reading, singing, giggling and finding her voice. While this is a single program in a small, poor village in Afghanistan, it is altering entire families' dynamics and impacting multiple generations at once. And what started as a single center serving 30 children has blossomed within a few years to serve five times that number. Dining for Women's support is a vital part of this project and we are so grateful to each and every person who has donated.

- **Detailed list of all expenses incurred during the reporting period which have been paid for with the Dining for Women grant.**

Please attached expense report.