

Stories and Demands of HBW members
of
Maldives Authentic Crafts Cooperative



“I am Aishath Nasreena (46 years). I started selling ice lollies from Hulhumale’ where I live on rent. I then started making local snacks and sold them from a small shop which I registered and opened in the ground floor. The Health Protection Agency under Food and Drug Authority did not allow some of the other home-based workers’ snacks to be sold at my shop because their kitchen didn’t meet the required standards. Local retail shops are prohibited to sell homemade snacks however a lot of them do, and are not inspected by the authorities. The unfair competition is hindering our business and I feel those who are violating regulations are at an advantage due to this oversight.”

“I call upon the Food and Drug Authority to do their inspections properly and fairly and promote the products made by home-based workers.”



“I am Aishath Azma (45 years). I learnt tailoring at the age of 13 and earned a living as a seamstress. I also used to take small orders and provided catering services. I now conduct tailoring courses at home. I used to teach at a school and institute, however the mindset was that the skills program was only for the academically weaker students. I feel that the skills program itself was undervalued and as a teacher, underpaid.”

“The government needs to change these policies in order to value skills and in turn change the way in which society views these professions. That it is not just white collar jobs that are useful for the development of the country.”



“I am Fathimath Rasheed (46 years) and I slice and sell roasted areca nuts (betel nuts). I have been working since 16 years of age and currently residing with my aunt in Male’. I also make sweet areca nuts out of the leftover pieces and a product out of Chillie and dry roasted fish. However since I work out of my Aunt’s small kitchen, I am unable to expand my business and continue to work on a small scale due to limited space and high rent. Living expenses are continuously rising and thus I’m unable to save any money or grow my business further.”

“It would be helpful for home-based workers like us if there is a regulation on rent and if the prices of staple foods are not increased so drastically.”