

Interim preparation

We always recommend that you possibly use the time in the interim to build capacity around entrepreneurship and business principles. In our experience, those areas are where most of the challenges lie. Some skills are universal and can be applied across many products so they are worth focusing on regardless of what type of enterprise/s you end up starting:

- Verify whether your country already has a standard for washable pads.
- Explore your market to find what types of things are selling and what are the financial priorities for the people there.
 - Are there ways that you may need to communicate about your product to help people decide that buying washable pads is within their priorities?
- Consider marketing strategies
- Partnership building with potential partners who may be interested in supporting your work
 - What are their priorities?
 - How do you help them to see that what you have to offer is in alignment with THEIR priorities. (It seldom works to just convince them that *your* priority is what they should be focused on.)
- Some basic bookkeeping skills are *always* helpful
- If they do smaller projects to prepare for running a business, the process of planning stock levels and inventory tracking is extremely important in the long run (Something like running a tuck shop, for example, would give you excellent experience)
- And with regards to specifically preparing for a DfG enterprise:
 - Identify and invest in your sewer.
 - Explore the type of sewing machines that work best to make washable pads and are suitable for your circumstances. We find that a combination or any of the following work well:
 - Industrial Sewing machine and Overlocker
 - OR heavy duty domestic machines that are strong but don't need lots of stitches and functions
 - OR treadle machines (These actually work remarkably well and are an excellent option in areas where electricity is unpredictable or unavailable.
 - Procure one or two sewing machines and let your team start sewing other stuff. This shall enhance their sewing skills.
 - To make kit making easier when they start, draw straight and curved lines on paper and have the participants practice cutting **exactly** on the line over and over and over. You can print multiples of the last page of this

document for each participant, or you can draw it with a marker on scrap paper. One should be able to see some of the line on **both** of the cut edges. That is how accurate they need to be.

- Purchase some inexpensive Kitenge (or decent quality poly cotton) and then draw similar straight and curvy lines on pieces of fabric and have the team sew along those lines.
- Try having them make some simple products. Shopping bags with French seams works well and could be part of your business practice above.
- They need to be able to do the following with excellence:
 - Sew exactly along a straight and a curved line
 - Sew at an exact margin of $\frac{1}{4}$ (5mm) and $\frac{1}{8}$ th (2.5mm) of an inch, around the edge of an object with straight and curved edges

Wishing you the best!

