

Insha Crafts Center

Set up under the Humayun's Tomb-Sunder Nursery-Nizamuddin Basti Urban Renewal Initiative

Supported by Australian High Commission under the Direct Aid Programme

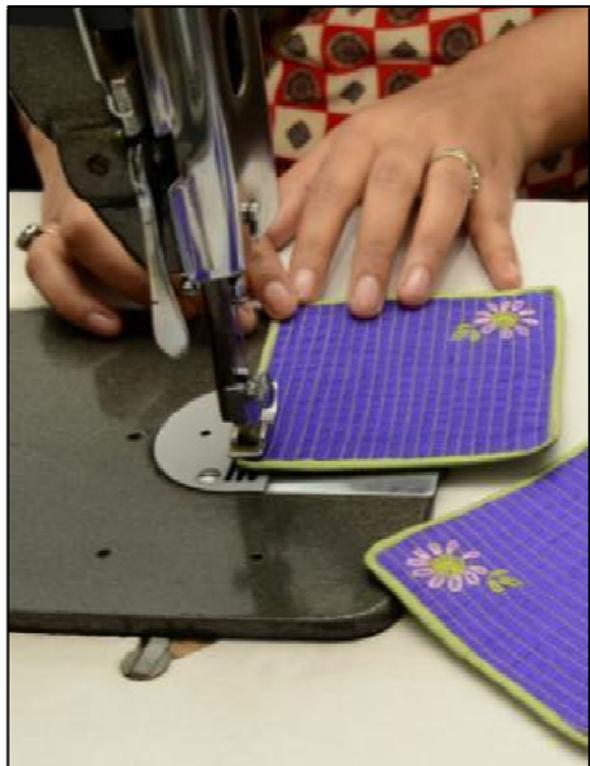


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Progress Report – October 2014 to September 2015

Introduction

When in the year 2007 the P-P-P (public private partnership) agreement was signed between AKTC (Aga Khan Trust for Culture), AKF (Aga Khan Foundation), MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi), ASI (Archaeological Survey of India) and CPWD (Central Public Works Department), it was envisaged by His Highness the Aga Khan that heritage conservation should be a stepping stone for socioeconomic development. It was then that the “Nizamudin Basti” (a 700 year old living heritage situated in the centre of the capital) formed an important part of the *Humayun’s Tomb-Sunder Nursery-Nizamudin Basti Urban Renewal Initiative* with an overall objective of improving the quality of life of the residents of the basti. A series of initiatives was started in the areas of health, education, urban improvement, cultural revival etc. One of the most important and essential part of raising the socioeconomic standards is livelihood generation. With the same intent, Insha Crafts Center, a women’s livelihood unit, was set up in the basti in the year 2010.

At present, there are around 80 women practicing the craft forms of aari embroidery, hand embroidery, tailoring and crochet in Insha. They receive on the job technical training in the above mentioned skills by skilled trainers, and also, are exposed to various soft skills training including life skills and SHG (self help group) training for overall enrichment of their personality, learning and confidence. The product range handcrafted by the members is branded as *Insha-e-Noor* and is marketed through various platforms.

The main objective of Insha Crafts Center is to not only hone the skill sets of these women and give them a source of livelihood but also help them grow as empowered, confident and independent individuals.

Australian High Commission’s support

The Australian High Commission extended its support to the Insha Crafts Center in the form a grant under its Direct Aid Programme in September 2014. The grant was given majorly to strengthen the center through equipments, raw material, skill up gradation and capacity enhancement of the members.

In the past one year, center has been active on several fronts (some of the activities have been directly supported by the DAP grant). We completed four major orders from Fab India, Rangсутra Crafts India Ltd., Indigene Crafts and AKF Canada. A kiosk for the display cum sales of the products of Insha-e-Noor was set up in the premises of Humayun’s Tomb in the first week of February and has been running since then. A new product range was designed (with external design input) and selected samples are under production. Capacity building of members through various trainings, exposure visits has been an ongoing process.

The specific progress report of the center with the help of the support extended by AUSAID pertaining to last one year is given below:

Activity	Status	Details
A. Training support		
A.1- Skill up gradation		
A.1.1- Aari embroidery- Training session	A three day training session conducted by Mr. Asif Sheikh (veteran Aari embroidery craft man) for the embroidery group members of Insha-e-Noor.	The training enhanced the skills of Aari group with special focus on techniques, methods and processes.
A.1.2- On the Job training	On the job training for Aari embroidery, crochet and tailoring by skilled trainers.	On the job training includes training of new members, a continual increase in the difficulty levels of work done by the already existing members, trying out new patterns, cross learning among members, periodic skill tests, and regular monitoring.
A.2- Life skills training	A 10 sessions training schedule was conducted by Ms. Rashmi Sood (Life skills trainer) for all the members of Insha-e-Noor	Energizer training with focus on soft skills like communication, goal setting, interpersonal relationship etc.
A.3- SHG training	Grading and level two SHG training was conducted for the four SHG groups of Insha-e-Noor and three health SHG groups.	The groups were graded following the NABARD guidelines. Level two SHG training included sessions on book keeping, bank linkages, interest calculation and distribution.
A.4- Exposure visit	The members of Insha-e-Noor were taken to CHIRAG (Uttarakhand) for a four days exposure visit.	The members were shown the work of CHIRAG'S livelihood unit called KGU in the villages of Uttarakhand. It led to a lot of cross learning and motivation. The members even made a presentation on their learning in front of entire field staff and office staff of AKF.
B. Enterprise development		
B.1- Equipment support	Five sewing machines, a hanger for display of products, two mannequins (one child and one adult), storage trunks, and other equipments like needles, scissors, iron etc were purchased to augment the capacity and strength of the center. Also, two rounds of eye check up were	Due to the equipment support, the center could incorporate more members, handle larger orders and manage the inventory in a better and more organised way.

	organised for all the members of Insha-e-Noor and glasses were made for those in need.	
B.2- Sample development	Raw material for sampling and production of a new range of products was purchased (all the four craft forms).	A range of 100 samples was produced, out of which close to 40 samples were chosen for first round of production. Material purchased includes different fabrics, threads, accessories, dying etc.
B.3- Participating in Exhibitions/ Membership of Institutions	Insha-e-Noor participated in two corporate exhibitions in the month of September. Apart from that, the members have been successfully running and managing the Humayun's Tomb kiosk on a daily basis.	

Photographs

Following are some photographs of the activities/events conducted in the past one year:



Picture 1: An SHG group's meeting in progress



Picture 2: SHG training in progress



Picture 3: Members having lunch during a training session



Picture 4: Insha-e-Noor's participation in an exhibition



Picture 5: Women's Day Mela organised by the SHG groups in basti



Picture 6: Insha-e-Noor's products displayed in an exhibition



Picture 7: Members of Insha-e-Noor trying out frames



Picture 8: Members of Insha-e-Noor interacting with members of KGU during their exposure visit to CHIRAG



Picture 9: Members of Insha-e-Noor involved in an activity during a Life Skills training session.



Picture 10: Members of Insha-e-Noor in a training session of Mr. Asif Sheikh



Picture 11: New product range of Insha-e-Noor



Picture 12: Humayun's Tomb Kiosk



Picture 13: Members doing a test



Picture 14: Adult mannequin



Picture 15: Marketing artwork

