All India Women’s Education Fund Association (AIWEFA)

New Delhi

Promotion and Development of Local Handicrafts Using Locally Available Resources

Programme to brand and market a new range of products from Andaman and Nicobar.

Report of Artisans Exposure Visit to Delhi
Date: 9th February to 16th February 2018

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Artisans Exposure Visit to Delhi: 9th February to 16th February 2018

Promotion and Development of Local Handicrafts Using Locally Available Resources

Executive Summary of the Exposure Visit:

The program was designed in resonance with the objectives of the visit. During the 7 day program, a team of 15 Artisans accompanied by 2 Officials visited Delhi with the purpose of gaining a new vision and fresh insights at the International Suraj Kund Mela; State Emporia; Central Cottage Emporium; “Hunar Haat” - a craft bazaar; Dastkar Mela at Kisan Haat and Craft Museum.

In the introductory session, on artisans were given a briefing on the Aims and Objectives of the Exposure visit by AIWEFA’s Project Coordinator. The handicraft business has been increasingly in demand because of many people who love to personalize their purchases and tourists who seek cultural items for souvenirs. The group was asked to remain observant to new ideas which they could incorporate in their product line and provide a variation that would be typical of the Islands as such products would appeal to the tourists who visited the Islands throughout the year. The changing needs of the tourists should also be borne in mind, as typical souvenirs had now given way to preferred functional and utilitarian cultural products for friends and family.

A&N I Artisan on and after exposure to the Fairs and Exhibitions were observing and learning ways to make their products more receptive to increase the range and their Sales. The participants were eager to know how they can procure the tools and equipment used in their respective crafts. They were curious to know how they can also participate in the mainland fairs organised at different time of the year.
Project Introduction:

The All India Women’s Education Fund Association (AIWEFA) has been retained by the A&N I, KVIB to:

- Facilitate Stakeholder consultation
- Conduct of exposure visit in 2 batches (30 working artisans to West Bengal and Orissa and 30 working artisans to Tamilnadu and Puducherry
- Branding & Marketing
- Evaluation and Monitoring

Project Objective:

- New Product Development with a District Andaman and Nicobar Industries brand
- Chart a plan to build unit capacity and human resources
- Intellectual property protection and registration

Project status till date:

1. State Level Workshops held on 9 to 10 June 2017 and (Report submitted for the Workshop on 17th August 2017- included conduct of artisan assessment form, SWOT analysis form, Timeline Matrix and Stakeholders Role and Responsibilities, Market Assessment 11,12 June 2017, Timelines and Way Forward).
2. AIWEFA Team visit to KVIB Andaman & Nicobar Islands from 8th to 13th December 2017, for conducting the following tasks:
   a) Monitoring
   b) Product prototype assessment for production and
c) Initiation of Branding Activity
4. Artisans Exposure Visit 1 to New Delhi from 9th February to 16th February 2018.
5. Artisans Exposure Visit 2, yet to receive from KVIB technical team the details on craft sector to be covered.
An exposure visit to Delhi and NCR Melas, Haats, Museums, Emporia took place from 9th February to 16th February 2018. With an objective to:

- Expose and familiarise the Andaman & Nicobar Islands (A&N I) artisans to level of skill development available nationally and in the region
- Update knowledge of the stakeholders in latest technology, design, materials and marketing strategies.
- Develop and demonstrate innovative ways to promote marketing for products made in A&N Islands and endow them with a unique identity.

A team of 15 Artisans accompanied by 2 Officials visited Delhi from 9th to 15th February 2018 with the purpose of gaining a new vision and fresh insights at the International Suraj Kund Mela; State Emporia; Central Cottage Emporium; “Hunar Haat” -a craft bazaar; Dastkar Mela at Kisan Haat and Craft Museum.

**Briefing of Artisans**

On 9th morning prior to entering the Suraj Kundmela grounds artisans were given a briefing on the Aims and Objectives of the Exposure visit by AIWEFA’s Project Coordinator. The handicraft business has been increasingly in demand because of many people who love to personalize their purchases and tourists who seek cultural items for souvenirs. The group was asked to remain observant to new ideas which they could incorporate in their product line and provide a variation that would be typical of the Islands as such products would appeal to the tourists who visited the Islands throughout the year. The changing needs of the tourists should also be borne in mind, as typical souvenirs had now given way to preferred functional and utilitarian cultural products for friends and family.

A kit comprising of a folder and pen was provided to them for recording the observations, any queries, contacts, links, any other details etc. Artisans were comfortable in using their mobile phones for taking pictures and videos of the products displayed in the stalls.

Interested artisans in the team made videos of the craft production demonstrations being given by the craftsmen participating in Mela. Some team members tried their hands with the tools used by the craftsmen, as they were interested to procure the same for cutting, grinding, polishing and finishing works. In the feedback sheet provided by AIWEFA Coordinator, the artisans were asked provide details of their craft and the requirement of tools/equipments, in order to coordinate the details of manufacturers and assess the availability for procurement. No feedback sheets have reached us so far.
A&N I artisans Team Visit to 32nd Suraj KundMela 2018

Suraj kund International Crafts Mela is a splash of colours that merge with the rhythm of drum beats and explode in a spontaneous celebration of culture, tradition and festivities. It takes place at Suraj kund in Faridabad, Haryana during the first fortnight of each February. This year, from 2 to 15 February 2018, saw a lavish and colourful display of folk traditions and cultural heritage from India and the region.

Occupying a place of pride on the international tourist calendar, more than a million visitors throng the Mela during the fortnight including thousands of foreign tourists. The SurajkundMela is unique as it showcases the richness and diversity of the handicrafts, handlooms and cultural fabric of India and south east Asia, and is the largest crafts fair in the world.

For the 32nd Suraj kund International Crafts Mela-2018, the state of Uttar Pradesh has been chosen to be the Theme State. The Mela provides a rare opportunity to the Theme State to showcase its handicrafts, handlooms, performing arts, cuisine and its tourist potential to a vast cross-section of people in an impressive manner.

A large number of renowned national and international folk artistes and cultural groups present daily performances at both the Chaupals- the open-air theatres located in the Mela premises. Also enthralling cultural evening programmes are held at the main Chaupal during each of the Mela evenings. The Mela is indeed a custodian of the heritage crafts involving use of traditional skills that are fading away due to mass produced and machine made cheaper imitations. A special section is earmarked for showcasing of these heritage crafts.

Kyrgyzstan is the Partner Nation for the 32nd Suraj kund International Crafts Mela-2018

Kyrgyzstan, officially the Kyrgyz Republic, is an amazing mountainous country in the heart of Central Asia. The main wealth of this enchanting nation is its pristine pure nature-alpine meadows, snow-capped peaks, mountain lakes, 6500 glaciers which originate from more than 28 thousand fast flowing rivers and headwaters. This beautiful nation has one of Central Asia's largest forest reserves which is home to rare wild life such as the Snow Leopard and Argali. Located at an altitude of 1606 metres above sea level Issyk-Kul, the mountainous frost lake is a marvel of nature. Inhabited by diverse ethnic groups like Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Russian, Durgan, Ukranian, Vighur and others,
Kyrgyzstan is landlocked by Kazakhstan to the north, Uzbekistan to the west, Tajikistan to the southwest and China to the east. Kyrgyzstan will be hosting The Third World Nomad games (WNG) in September 2018, a concept aimed at revealing the culture of various nomadic peoples around the world. These Nomadic Games will not only be an International competition, but also a platform for cultural disclosure of all nomadic peoples of the world.

The multi-cuisine Food Court provides ethnic cuisines from all over the world, and are immensely popular with visitors. The scintillating folk performances at the two ‘Chaupals’ and mesmerizing evening recitals at ‘Natyashala’ ramp up the entertainment quotient. There are designated places for amusement, adventure sports and joy rides to make it a must visit event for the young.

**Important information for the A&N I Artisans:**

Suraj kundMela is organised to promote handicrafts and handlooms with the aid of craftsmen invited from all over the country. The selection of artisans also includes those who are practising languishing and lesser known crafts and to introduce them to patrons. At this prestigious fair they get an opportunity to display crafts and techniques by organising demonstration sections in the Mela grounds. The Authorities painstakingly re-create a traditional rural ambience and set up an environment to showcase these rural crafts traditions.

The Mela is organized by the SurajkundMela Authority and Haryana Tourism in collaboration with Union Ministries of Tourism, Textiles, Culture and External Affairs. The novelty of the Surajkund International Crafts Mela is that one of the Indian states gets the honour to occupy the position of the Theme State each year. The Theme State was conceptualized broadly with a view to promote and focus on art, craft and cuisine of each state of India every year.
A &N I artisans Team Visit to Central Cottage Industries Emporium

India has been an enigma to many across the globe. A country that has inspired trends, aroused curiosity, delighted tourists and at the end of it, all left an impression on the minds of everybody. Who has visited it.

The world famous Central Cottage Industries Emporium has been India’s window to the world for over 60 years and is known as a source for authentic handloom and handicraft products. Post colonialism, observing the adverse effects of industrialization on the Indian economy and social milieu, a need was felt to give Indian crafts their rightful place and enthuse the parched creative spirits of millions of crafts persons across the country and help them to earn a decent livelihood. In 1952 the Cottage was conceived by a band of dedicated art lovers and their consistent endeavour led to the creation of “Cottage” – the abode of Indian handloom & handicrafts that helped to restore the crafts persons pride in their work, recognized their genius and gave them a viable and honoured future.

Sixty years down the lane, “Cottage”, with flagship showroom in Delhi and showrooms in Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, stands tall helping India and the world, gain access to the finest crafts with an assurance of authenticity, beauty and value while setting standards in aesthetics and design. It also has an exclusive lifestyle showroom at Rajiv Gandhi Handicrafts Bhawan in New Delhi. The emporium showcases the finest crafts from all over India under one roof ranging from exquisite sculptures, paintings, artefacts, metal ware, woodcraft, pottery, stoneware & marble craft, branded Bankura silver, carpets, furniture, furnishings, home linen, sarees, ready to wear, accessories, jewellery, craft items, herbal products and much more. Each product is unique reflecting the traditional myths, folklores, religious beliefs, cultural ethos and rich heritage of India. Also the Cottage is largely instrumental in transforming traditional handicrafts and handlooms into high fashion goods to suit modern usage while retaining the basic ethnic values. It has also engaged itself with craft clusters in different parts of the country for providing marketing support to the product development. Cottage has also been playing major role in the revival of languishing crafts.

The emporium has promoted handicraft and handloom on multiple fronts-- embracing market research, handpicked selection, design development, impeccable quality, careful variety, fixed prices, imaginative promotions, a basket of auxiliary services like customized corporate gifting, interior designing services, packing/shipping facilities, specialized gift wrapping, ATM, foreign exchange counters etc. Envisaged as a showcase of the creations of Indian craftsmen, weavers and folk artists the Central Cottage Industries Emporium has been a favourite with customers in India and the World over. It has taken special care to make sure that you get a feel of what the real India is all about through its products, décor, exhibitions and everything else that goes with it.

The artisan team was guided and taken across the emporia’s displays and counters by a senior official of Cottage emporia, who narrated details of products on display in sections. The team members who were carrying their product albums, shared the product pictures, which were appreciated for the unique creations from indigenous raw
materials. The team also expressed that “Cottage” epitomizes the heart and essence of India.
**A &N I artisans Team Visit to State Emporia’s**

State Emporia Complex on Baba Kharak Singh Marg host all Indian states shops, with their respective names: Zoon, the Kashmir emporium; Poompuhar, the Tamil Nadu emporium; Cauvery, the Karnataka emporium; Amrapali, the Bihar emporium; **Rajasthali**, the Rajasthan emporium; **Gurjari**, the Gujarat emporium; Manjusha, the West Bengal emporium; Mrignayani, the Madhya Pradesh emporium. The three-storeyed Tripura emporium called Purbasha is jam-packed with goodies for your home: beautiful products made of bamboo and cane.

Rajiv Gandhi **Handicrafts Bhavan**, right next to the emporia complex, houses stores that sell **books, paper products, rural handicrafts**, etc. **It is where Sagarika the A&NI shop is located on the first floor. It was moment of joy for those artisans (registered with Sagarika as suppliers) who found their products displayed on the showroom shelves.**
A&N I artisans Team Visit to 2018 Hunar Haat

With an eye to encouraging the handicraft and handloom sector, “Hunar Haat”, was opened to public on February 11, 2018 at Baba Khadak Singh Marg, New Delhi. The theme of “Hunar Haat” being organized by the Ministry of Minority Affairs is “Development with Dignity”.

The Hunar Haats that are being organised across the country have become a “credible brand” to fulfil Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s commitment to “Make In India”, “Stand Up India” and “Start Up India”. “HunarHaat” have proved to be an effective mission to provide market and opportunities to talent of master artisans and craftsmen from across the nation.

“Hunar Haat” is successful in providing employment and employment opportunities to more than 3 lakh artisans and other people associated with them in the year 2017, through the 5 “HunarHaat” organised at International Trade Fair at Pragati Maidan (2016, 2017) and Baba Kharak Singh Marg (2017) at New Delhi; Puducherry (2017) and Mumbai (2017).

“Hunar Haat has become a hit, as lakhs of people visit the “Haat” and encourage master artisans and culinary experts, the visitors purchase handmade products made by these artisans on a large scale. The A&N I artisans interacted with the stall holders. Some of them showed their keenness to participate in “Hunar Haat” if organised in A&N I or on the mainland.
**A&N I artisans Team Visit to Dilli Haat**

Dilli Haat established jointly by Delhi Tourism (DTDC), Government of Delhi and NDMC, D.C. (Handicrafts) & D.C. (handlooms), Ministry of Textiles & Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and opened in March 1994. Over the years, Dilli Haat has become a composite venue of crafts, music, dance and cultural festivals.

**Important information for the A&N I Artisans:**

Only craftsmen registered with D.C. Handi crafts are eligible for places at the Dilli Haat. The stalls are allotted on a rotational basis to craftsmen who come from all corners of India at nominal payment for a period of 15 days.
A&N I artisans Team Visit to Craft Museum

The National Handicrafts and Handlooms Museum (NHHM) commonly known as National Crafts Museum in New Delhi is one of the largest crafts museums in India. It is run by the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.

A&N I artisans Team visited:

i) Galleries at Craft museum which have a diverse and rare range of exquisite display of stone and wood carvings on the doors, windows, lintels, posts of the museum building. Folk and Tribal paintings are sprawled on the wall canvas in the passages.

ii) Village Complex which was formerly known as “Rural India Complex (Gram Jhanki)” was set up on the occasion of Asiad 1972 by the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts.

iii) Crafts Demonstration is a programme in the unique participatory activity. Here visitors can see 50 craftsperson every month from different parts of India. ShilpKuteer, the craftsperson dormitory is their home for one month.

Important information for the A&N I Artisans:

It will be good learning and promotional experience, if artisans from A&N I KVIB can participate in the Crafts Demonstration at Craft museum.
A&N I artisans Team Visit to DASTKAR’s Basant Fair

Dastkar is a brand name for quality craft from genuine producers and the main focus remains the Indian urban retail market and customer. In the face of industrialization, mall culture and aggressive international brand advertising; despite the lack of professional marketing infrastructure, macro investment in both financial and human resource and the social marginalization of craftspeople, Craft continues to hold its niche place in the Indian market.

Dastkar is a private not-for-profit NGO established in 1981, working to support traditional Indian craftspeople, many of them women and village based, with the objective of helping craftspeople regain their place in the economic mainstream, in a country where the craft sector is second only to agriculture in providing employment.

Over 30 years ago 6 professionals from different fields came together with a common vision: ensuring the future of India’s uniquely rich crafts heritage and living skills lay in providing craftspeople with the necessary tools, support and market access that would allow them to achieve sustainable livelihoods through their inherent hand skills.

They recognized that craftspeople had great skills but were getting increasingly marginalized as markets became more urbanized and sophisticated. There was an immense gap between the mainly rural crafts-person and the urban consumer. It was essential to bridge this gap that Dastkar came into existence to provide this link of awareness and interaction between crafts-person and consumer, without the intervention of government agencies or commercial middlemen, helping both sides realise the potential and needs of the other.
Important information for the A&N I Artisans:

Dastkar carries out its mission through advocacy with governmental, non-governmental & foreign agencies; as consultant, evaluator & resource provider to craft groups and as organiser of direct retail marketing platforms in its popular Bazaars and Exhibitions, bringing together craftspeople, producer groups, environmental organisations, social activists and cultural performers with urban consumers, students and international buyers.

Dastkar assists craftspeople through support service activities such as capacity building workshops, skills training, collaborative design innovation and product development; helping them transform traditional skills into products that have contemporary appeal, thereby providing craft communities with a source of permanent employment and sustained earning.
Conclusion

Despite rapid urban industrial development, in most rural areas Craft remains a powerful catalyst for social and economic empowerment and often the only employment opportunity for women.

Fairs and Melas have a unique appeal to Indian Public Psychology, people feel an instinctive desire to visit Fairs and Melas whenever and wherever they are organised and indulge in a shopping spree.

When Artisan/Craftsmen are exposed to the Fairs and Exhibitions they observe and learn ways to increase their Sales.

AIWEFA’s recommendation to visiting artisans team from A&N I for achieving greater success at trade shows and exhibitions includes:

1. **Before applying for the participation, understand what type of fair is it?**

2. **What opportunities will be available to build and link up your business.**

3. **Sharing the stall or space and costs.** This could work well, for example, for two crafts that complement each other. For instance, you’ll need to staff your stand for the full time of the fair. If you don’t have staff, you’ll have to be there yourself. If things get very busy it can be tricky taking even a toilet or meal break. Sharing a stand allows you to come to some joint staffing arrangements or at least have someone always on the stand.

4. **Location preferences for putting up the stall is important too, high customer footfall areas bring better business.**

5. **Set clear targets for the event.** These might be sales targets. Targets allow you to monitor the success of the event, so that next time you have a clearer idea.

6. **Never go into a trade fair under-prepared.** Make sure you have business cards, handouts, helpers/staff to look after the stand, etc.
7. Don’t skimp on signage make your stand worth looking at. All signage should be clear and top quality because it sends out the first and perhaps most important message about your craft business.

8. A gimmick to attract customers by doing something different. Making the customer participate in an activity.

9. Fairs often include craft demonstration space adjoining the exhibits. If appropriate, offer to be one of the demonstrators.

10. Work the crowds. Train the people staffing the stand to be more assertive. Instead of passively waiting for people to come into the stand, work the crowds in the passageway.

11. To gain brand awareness- New businesses may wish to try this tactic, or existing businesses trying to gain new customers or expose themselves to a new market.

12. Researching the competition- Trade fairs and exhibitions are wonderful places to research the competition and pick up all their promotional material. If you’re not known to them, you can do some direct research by talking to them, or you can send along someone else to pick up the information.

13. Making new contacts- offer good opportunities to extend your business contacts: both of potential customers or clients and suppliers.

14. The networking at such meetings is hard to quantify in money terms, but can pay off in the future in all sorts of unexpected ways.

The above points were shared with the AN & Island artisans/craftsmen on 15th February.