



Engage. Develop. Sustain.

Annual Report 2020-2021

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Founder's Message

Dear Everyone,

I hope you find this message in good health and safety. With the second wave of COVID-19, businesses around the globe are clueless about how to move forward. This is the time to be grateful and reflect upon ourselves, because if we continue to ignore the pandemic, then the end to the world would be definite.

It is my belief though, that challenging times are also opportunities that nature brings to all of us, to slow down and restart our journey with more consciousness. Businesses need to re-evaluate how they can bring love and care to their employees and customers, because only the one who empathizes, will survive. I request you to pursue this pause to focus on yourself and take care of your health by building your immunity. This is not the time to stress on work. It is time to introspect about what brought us here and what really matters. Know that in this battle, we stand together, as a family.

The year 2020-2021 for Jaipur Rugs Foundation has been centralized around expanding the very purpose of our existence – to upgrade the health, education, and overall social status of our Artisans. The health camps, skill development programs, and Alternate Education Program (AEP) ensured that there was a deep-rooted impact across 600 villages in India. This year, our catalyzing journey of transformative change witnessed the association of eminent and enthusiastic social partners like HCL Foundation, SIDBI, Royal Rajasthan Foundation.

The Social Innovation and Design Lab was initiated at the grass-roots to bring global designers to the doorsteps of our traditional artisans to unleash their potential and showcase their capacities as Artists.

Women empowerment through livelihood and leadership programs remained the focal point of our initiatives. Special mention to our social partner Vision Spring and their team of doctors who ensured vision correction and free eye check-ups for not only our Artisans but all villagers spread across rural India.



Vision

To create a society where equality, justice, and peace prevail through socio-economic development providing an opportunity for all.

Mission

To serve as a social innovator promoting the cause of artisans by providing them with job opportunities resulting in an uplifted rural society.

Philosophy

Our purpose of existence is carefully connected to the Sustainable Development Goals of creating a better and more sustainable future for all our artisans across 669 villages in 5 states.

About Us

The Jaipur Rugs Foundation is a non-profit organization established in 2004 with the vision of empowering and enhancing the skill-set of artisans under the able hands of Mr. Nand Kishore Chaudhary.

The organization works tirelessly and with the dedication to revive carpet weaving, provide sustainable livelihood to the artisans at their doorsteps, nurturing them with better healthcare and education opportunities for a holistic transformation.

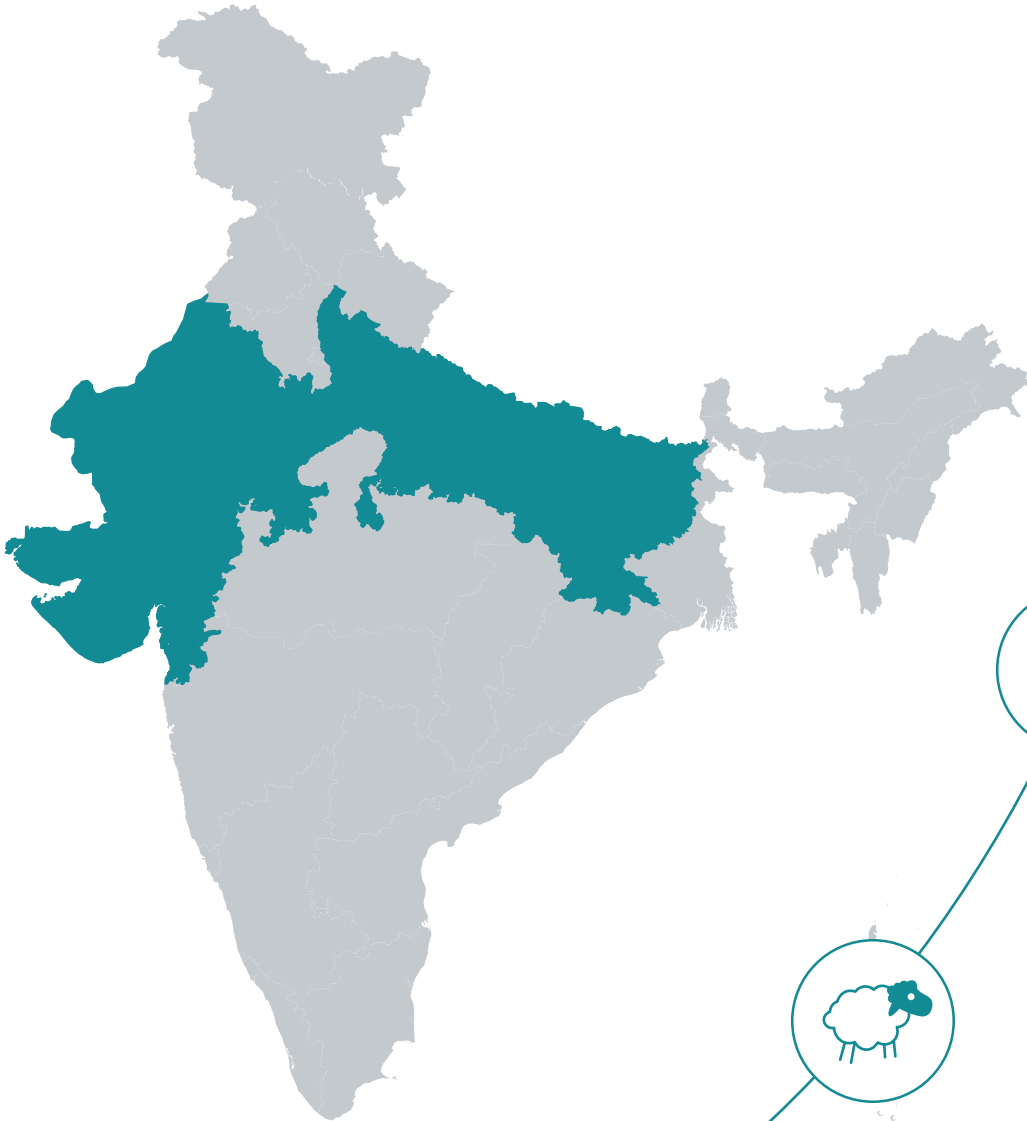
Imbued in traditional finesse handicrafts, the Jaipur Rugs Foundation endeavors to bring handmade art crafted at the grassroots to a global platform to be celebrated and obtain its well-deserved stature. We believe in the power of collective action and work closely with communities creating an outward spiral globally.

A Culture of Compassion

The Foundation's philosophy of compassion is initiated by building deep work around empathy, kindness, love, and simplicity. Serving those who knot happiness for us – our Artisans and their families have been the epicenter of our Jaipur Rugs family and we believe that it is not we, but they who script our progress. Acting with empathy made us break boundaries, helped us transform lives, and create an environment of empathetic progression. We intend to spread the power of empathy by engaging with those who believe in sound intervention for spreading the importance of empathetic living.

Impact Stories

Updated numbers



2,82,725
Lives Impacted



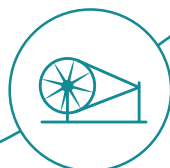
5,577
Educated



73,421
Lives Impacted from
access to Health Care



718
Number of Villages covered



1224
New Artisan skilled



COVID-19 and Rural India

COVID-19 and Rural India

The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on the rural ecosystem in India in the past year (2020-21). The pandemic was often viewed as a solely urban issue. However, its effect on rural-urban migration debilitated livelihoods immediately.

With a huge number of migrants returning to rural areas, the second wave was sure to worsen the socio-economic situation in villages. It was followed by a rise in cases of infection and health-related problems.

When the pandemic lost its momentum in late 2020, it was believed that the worst phase had passed and normalcy would come around, but there were doubts on the sustainable livelihood opportunities for the rural people and on their safety in case the virus knocked their door again.

The onset of the second wave disrupted the rural day-to-day functioning, and this time it had a greater impact on their health. Rumours of fatalities following a cough and fever, the concern of the black fungus illness spreading, shortage of oxygen, and no availability for vaccinations or even testing exacerbated the issue. Apart from the obvious poor medical infrastructure, other factors like the lack of awareness and overall ignorance played a major role in worsening the situation throughout the past year. With the loss of livelihood and inadequate health facilities, many organizations volunteered to provide rural India with much-needed aid throughout. This is where the Foundation undertook the responsibility of assisting the rural Artisan community with their various impactful initiatives.



COVID-19 Toolkit for Resilience and Impact Optimization

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The onset of COVID-19 left everyone in shock and stress, the world was not prepared to deal with the pandemic and it forces us to think of sustainable ways in which we navigate the ongoing crisis, proactively plan for the future, and prioritize our goals. Below we are examining the factors that helped JRF to develop a resilient model and optimize its impact.

Doorstep Entrepreneurship Model

Jaipur Rugs' 'Doorstep Entrepreneurship Model' conceptualized 40 years ago already showed why it is an archetype of social transformation. The livelihood projects conceptualized for the development of the weaver and artisan communities recognized that the rural poor rely on multiple income sources and that risk management is central to their livelihood strategies. This was one of the major reasons why the artisan and weaver communities associated with Jaipur Rugs did not face the wrath of COVID-19.

Sustainable Livelihood

Jaipur Rugs Foundation's initiatives are developed to promote sustainable livelihood to support the elimination of rural poverty and social exclusion for marginalized populations. Support from JRF resulted in improved access to livelihood options. JRF, on the other hand, made sure to reach out to the grassroots populace and have a dialogue with them about the opportunities of becoming skilled artisans in the carpet value chain and get sustainable livelihoods as well as social development facilitation.

Sphere of Totality

The numerous projects and programs under the tri-fold umbrella of Engage, Develop, Sustain provided relief to the rural populace during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have not only protected the people from rural-to-urban migration but have also created an additional source of income in every home by encouraging the girls and women to adopt carpet weaving as a livelihood. The initiatives are incorporated with a sphere of totality that will include leadership, alternative education, access to health care, and social innovation while confirming entrepreneurship development to ensure holistic transformation.

Empowering Women

Jaipur Rugs works intensively with women to find long-term secure sources of income and to make them resilient to external and internal shocks through maintaining or improving their livelihood. Uneducated women in rural India lack job opportunities, nor do they have access to employable skills. Due to COVID-19, there has been a sharp decline in rural women's force participation. To address these issues, JRF is continuously developing social innovation that provides a totality of transformation to rural women with holistic development. These innovations increase women's participation in the workforce and address the high gender gaps that exist in rural India.

Local to Global Impact

Jaipur Rugs Foundation aims at unleashing human potential and creating financial independence by uplifting unskilled rural women into skilled individuals, to the artisan who finally evolves as an artist with a global platform. While preserving culture and strengthening market linkages, JRF concentrates on entrepreneurship training and social leadership. The organization is deeply integrated at the grassroots. The global network and the unconventional grasp on the field enabled JRF to tackle the effects of the pandemic with resilience.

Positively Impacting Marginalised Communities

JRF's initiatives are designed to counter the conventional fixed grassroots mindset that exists for marginalized communities in rural India. The main objective of JRF is to provide people of these communities with secure and sustainable livelihood, through which they can live their life with dignity, respect and become economically empowered.

Another goal of JRF is to advance the role of marginalized communities in decision-making by enhancing self-managed leadership roles. We focus on a holistic approach that enables these communities to practice social, political, and economic participation. Apart from taking care of the livelihood, Jaipur Rugs Foundation also focused more on providing COVID-19 relief and spreading awareness among the communities.



Engage

Jaipur Rugs Foundation drives various healthcare and well-being programs for our Artisans community with the key objective to provide them with basic quality healthcare facilities for better and healthy living which brings prosperity to them and their families.

COVID-19 Support to the Artisans

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JRF has been continuously serving the rural communities against the surrounding panic and spread of the pandemic. The situation that arose as a result of COVID-19 has negatively impacted Rural India rendering numerous families jobless. JRF has been supporting rural communities with activities like distribution of PPE kits and ration, generating and distributing masks, sanitizers and educating rural masses on WHO guidelines of social distancing and maintenance of hygiene. The foundation performed a stimulus check to support artisan families during the difficult phase by providing them with emergency support as well.

Government Linkages

Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Man Dhaan Yojana - PMSYM

The government of India launched a pension scheme for unorganized workers to ensure old-age protection and provide social security. So far, we have linked 1060 artisans with the benefit of this scheme.

1060

Total artisans enrolled with PMSYM

Artisan Cards

The artisan cards are Aadhar card-linked photo identity cards that enable artisans to get the benefit of welfare schemes of the Central or State government that they are entitled to. So far we have provided this card to 1568 artisans.

1568

Total Artisans card issued

Scholarships

Providing unabated education to artisan's children and pave way for them to follow a career of their own choice. Our effort is to help them through the scholarship facilitation they deserve.

Out of 650 scholarships applied for Artisans' wards, 18 scholarships were successfully granted.

650

Total number of applied scholarships



Associated with our organisation for over a decade, Meera Devi is one of our oldest weavers in Bhadla, Bikaner. Know her story in her words:

"I am Meera Devi and I suffer from Hypermetropia. It has been very challenging lately to be productive because of the weakening of my eyesight. Recently, Jaipur Rugs organized an eye camp in our village and my eyes were tested and I was given a spectacle. With the help of that, I can now clearly see without putting any stress on my eyes."

Eye Camp

Creating Impact through a Pair of Glasses

Jaipur Rugs Foundation in collaboration with VisionSpring touched the lives of **7,534 artisans** out of which **4,931 artisans** had their first-ever eye screening in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. By providing an accessible eye care facility, in remote corners of rural India, the foundation is working towards building a community that provides healthcare access to the Artisans at their doorstep.

Health Camp

Jaipur Rugs Foundation puts together several interest-driven health camps with the essential target to provide fundamental health education to the networks and rouse a sound way of life. Consistently the Foundation raises awareness in the artisan communities about the significance of good health and well-being, healthy ways of life just as individuals' entitlement to quality health care services.

At the equivalent time, the craftsman networks are given free health checkups tests including free medication and reference administrations for serious diseases. The fundamental focal point of doing the health camp is to identify and early diagnose people with serious problems and connect them to the nearest hospital for a full course of treatment at no cost. In collaboration with various multi-specialty hospitals, We facilitated follow-up treatments after diagnosis with concerned hospitals to get a full course of treatment at subsidized rates. This empowered the grassroots networks to approach better medical care administrations for healthy living and the prosperity of their families.

485

Total number of artisans and others that got free consultation and medicines

Spinner Engagement Program (SEP)

In the remotest part of rural Rajasthan, resides our extremely talented spinners. Spinners hold utmost importance for JRF as they are the makers of yarn which serves as a foundation for our rugs, they transform raw wool into beautiful and unique yarn, which is as precious as they are. There are almost 2500 Katwaris in Bikaner, who have kept the charkha culture alive even after the arrival of machines.

To empower these communities of spinners, Jaipur Rugs Foundation started a new initiative to increase awareness levels of women involved in hand carding and hand spinning processes so that they develop an owner's mindset and take pride in getting associated with a crucial phase of the supply chain. Spinners' Engagement Programme was conducted in fifteen centers for over 1769 spinners in Bikaner, Rajasthan.

Bhanwari Devi is in her early sixties and for the past 20 years, she has been involved in spinning. Her eyes light up when she explains her journey from a spinner to a quality supervisor.

"I believe every woman should earn because it is only then that she can become independent".

Bhanwari might be uneducated but that hurdle didn't stop her from dreaming big. When her mother-in-law was busy with household chores, she secretly learned how to spin and card the wool. Once she realized she can go forward with the support of her family, she worked with dedication day and night to refine her craft.



Weavers' Engagement Program (WEP)

WEP is an initiative by the Jaipur Rugs Foundation (JRF) that began with a specific purpose of realizing the need for engagement with the artisan communities, to connect them to the larger ecosystem, and give them an opportunity to understand the intricacies of the work they are involved in, and see their finished carpets, so that they work more consciously ensuring efficiency at every step. It helps in making them aware of the quality benchmarks, customer needs, and above all, their growth opportunities.

This financial year, **975 new weavers** were provided with this **opportunity in 65 villages**. The program creates an emotional connection among the artisans and builds a sense of ownership, thereby creating entrepreneurs who work with the owner's mindset and with motivation and creativity, channeling the same into products that receive applause globally.





Alternative Education Program (AEP)

Poverty is one of the most prevalent issues in India. The lack of education and access to it is a major root cause for illiteracy, which in turn generates more poverty. Also, the lack of alternative employment opportunities hurts the rural areas far more viciously than their urban counterparts. Therefore, it is integral to handle both factors at hand because one directly benefits the other. Jaipur Rugs Foundation helps its weavers by making them self-sustained and ensures education, especially to women and children, to break the chains of poverty.

Jaipur Rugs Foundation runs the Alternative Education Programme intending to provide education to its artisans and members of their community in the form of basic literacy and numeracy skills of the age group of 14-35 years. Through the program, we aim to make our artisans self-independent, informed, and more confident.

This year, in partnership with **Jenny Jones Rugs**, we were able to establish 5 new Alternative Education Programme centers in Uttar Pradesh namely - Bhavanipur center 1, Bhavanipur center 2, Hindol, Jatki center 1, and Jatki center 2, respectively. We have impacted the lives of 293 beneficiaries of this initiative by providing them a platform where they can learn and get empowered each day. **Out of 293 total enrolled participants, 258 beneficiaries passed successfully.**

By introducing new methods of teaching and learning, for example, the “Each one Teach one” campaign where the learners have to learn one thing from their elder sisters, to the “Just a minute” campaign where the learners take a brief minute to explain what they have learned in their classes, we have diversified our teaching models to better suit the needs and conveniences of the community. This has further ensured effective results, regular attendance, and a more enthusiastic approach towards learning.

Passionate about education, Farheen has been instrumental in ensuring that an AEP center is opened in her neighborhood so that she and other artisans could learn.

Farheen makes sure everything is ready before the teacher enters the class. If the teacher gets late, she steps-in and starts the revision of the previous lesson. She loves learning as well as rug weaving.

293

Total Enrollment

258

Successfully Passed Out



Develop

We at Jaipur Rugs Foundation partner with various organizations to provide non farming livelihood opportunities for rural women, through hand-knotted rug weaving skill development and grassroots leadership development. We provide them a source of sustainable livelihood at their doorstep to empower them to lead independent and dignified lives.



Encountering the Pandemic

Skill Development for Sustainable Livelihood

Badaun, a district of Western Uttar Pradesh is a place filled with rich history and immense heritage. According to folklore, Badaun was named after Ahir, Prince of Budh. It lies in very close proximity to India's carpet weaving hub, Mirzapur. Thus, preserving the culture of the community which is dying by the day was a cause of concern for us at Jaipur Rugs.

Therefore, in an attempt to revive the economy of the most vulnerable sections in the Badaun district, Jaipur Rugs in collaboration with HSBC and Collective Good Foundation initiated the Skill development for Sustainable livelihood program. This was further launched to help the women who were economically affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The women, though vulnerable and unemployed, portrayed learning capacities, along with a zeal to adopt new skills and ways to enhance their capabilities.

More than 80 weavers were targeted across 4 villages namely Gurupuri Vinayak, Manikapur Kour, Mugarra, and Mairi Bazar. The next forward step was to identify the place to establish a weaving center and make it suitable for training. Hence, we selected 5 places for setting up 5 centers. Those are- Gurupuri Vinayak, Manikapur-1st, Manikpur-2nd, Mugarra and Mairi Bazar.

Throughout this campaign, through ways like community mobilization and village mapping, we aimed to empower rural women at their doorsteps.

In a joining initiative with SIDBI, we launched the Women Empowerment through Livelihood and Leadership Programme to ensure sustainable livelihood opportunities to the women who were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The program took place in Manpura, Rajasthan. The intervention is aimed at addressing the effects of Covid-19 and providing skill sets that have the potential to fetch sustainable livelihoods at the doorsteps of women in rural India. This intervention has the potential to develop the carpet value chain in a holistic and replicable manner so as to promote a viable non-farm livelihood option for the women who were unequally affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The main objective of the project was to create livelihood opportunities for 24 rural women who were impacted by the virus, through a skill development training program.

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Upskilling - Royal Rajasthan Foundation

Rajasthan is one of the worst-performing states when it comes to literacy. Coupled with unemployment, it enters into a vicious circle of poverty, grappling the most vulnerable of the lot. Lack of employment opportunities as well as poor market-oriented skills makes it harder for the rural community to earn a decent livelihood for themselves. Covid-19 was like a nightmare to the already devastating situation at the grassroots, the brunt falling directly on the women and children. Thus, a sustainable employment model became the need of the hour in the villages of Rajasthan.

Jaipur Rugs Foundation together with the assistance of the Royal Rajasthan Foundation initiated the Skill Development for Sustainable Livelihoods for Women in Rajasthan program.

The project aimed to create non-farming employment opportunities for 100 beneficiaries, through hand-knotted rug weaving, skill-development, and Grassroot leadership development of 100 women changemakers. Some of the major objectives of the program implementation were women empowerment through financial independence, comprehensive market-linked value-chain development, reduction in migration for work in the long run, direct domestic and international market linkages, and fair and timely work wages among the rest.



From a Village to an Innovation Hub

Jaipur Rugs Foundation with Royal Rajasthan Foundation came together to develop a Social Innovation and Design Lab to unleash the untapped design potential of the artisans of Aspura. The Social Innovation and Design Lab is a humble attempt to accentuate the journey of these weavers to the level where they are seen as artists. On the basis of artisans' creation, craft sensibilities, design sensibilities 25 weavers were shortlisted for the Lab. The Social Innovation and Design Lab is a place where the women artisans break the shackles of patriarchy, societal judgments, and discrimination and become one with art, and showcase their life and their stories through what they have woven. It is a place where they can understand themselves and the world around them.



The workshops were conducted virtually, it was a great success and it enhanced the designing skills in the women of Aspura, not only it sparked the creative ideas in them but it also generated self-awareness, uniqueness, and independence among the Artisans.

The workshops provided by top designers like **Paola Ferrari, Matteo Cibic and Kavita Chaudhary** not only focused on sustainability but also emphasized our oneness with the nature that surrounds and inspires us. It builds the capacity of the weavers in an exceptional way. Their capability of designing and autonomy rose to a different level.

This initiative has provided ample knowledge and information to the artisans on the journey of becoming a designer. Several workshops and guidance provided in the lab by the finest design professionals in the field with global recognition, made a lot of difference in the understanding and creativity of the artisans. Through this, the entirely new perspective about training labs at the grassroots is opening up. The innovation lab has changed the direction of how people look at formal training and education specifically in the world of design education.

The success of this initiative lies in the essence of originality and creativity it inculcates in the weavers. Challenging the social norms and doctrines of classic design schools, this lab brought the finest professionals of designing to the doorstep of the weavers and provided them with the diverse experience of intersectionality which connects rural India to a globalized world.



It was humbling to see global ambassadors around the world joining hands to give training to the uneducated section of rural India, it is challenging the orthodox structure of design education. For the first time ever, weavers get to be the designers of their own rugs. Each rug in the collection is a masterpiece for the design inspiration it weaves. It is imbued with the individuality of its artisan evident in its unique artistry.

Women Empowerment through Livelihoods and Leadership development (WELL)

Women empowerment is a key factor for achieving sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental sustainability. Education and economic empowerment of women have a noteworthy potential to reduce poverty.

To address the challenges of Women's illiteracy and Poverty, Jaipur Rugs Foundation jointly with the efforts of the HCL foundation initiated the WELL (Women Empowerment through Livelihoods and Leadership development) program. The objective of the program was to provide sustainable and doorstep livelihood for women in the Kothawan block of Hardoi District, Uttar Pradesh which is one of the most vulnerable and poverty-hit districts of Uttar Pradesh. Various socio-developmental activities were also undertaken such as issuing of artisan cards, opening up bank accounts, and setting up eye camps and health camps.

608

Women were trained under the program



Reversing trends through Self-management

To unleash entrepreneurial creativity in the artisans and to improve the challenges faced due to dependency on one another, with the guidance of our founder, NK Chaudhary we implemented self-management at the grassroots of rural India.

This project is implemented in three phases:

Activities and Reflection Meetings: Artisans are involved in activities that require them to take part as a team. This involves activities like solving a puzzle, crossing a hurdle under the guidance of a team member when one is blindfolded.

Reflection meetings: Artisans are made to reflect on the activities to understand the importance of working as a team. This helps them to learn from each other and lead the discussions.

Team Formation: Artisans working on 4-5 different looms are brought together to form teams of 7- 12 members. These groups visit each-others' looms to review and give feedback on the targets decided earlier. Meetings are facilitated by the implementation team.

Follow-up: Implementation team continues to follow-up with the artisans on the progress of implementing self-management practices. Team facilitates the conversations in the groups and tracks their progress against the three targets of on-time delivery, zero-defects and zero-wastage.



Achieving Sustainable Goals through Impact Bond

Jaipur Rugs Foundation along with Grameen Impact Investments India started the initiative to work towards helping the most marginalised women in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, to help them become self-resilient and empowered by training them to become artisans (micro-entrepreneurship) and create an impetus towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals 5 (Gender Equality) and Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and also positively impact SDG Goals 1(No Poverty), Goal 10 (Reducing Inequality) and Goal 17 (Partnership for the Goals). The programme resulted in the training and facilitation of 512 women to become active weavers, among those weavers 333 women were imparted with leadership training.

Through this programme, rural women of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh were developed into local leaders, talented artisans and applications for Artisan Card and Insurance Linkages were submitted under this initiative.



512
Women trained

333
Received leadership training

A man with short brown hair, wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and white trousers, is sitting on a wooden bench. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. He appears to be working on a colorful, patterned textile. The background is slightly blurred, showing a window with a black frame and a yellow wall.

Sustain

Centering the Sustainable Development Goal of empowering the Weaver community, along with the founder's vision of dignity and compassion for these artisans, JRF introduced Jail Project, Narayan Seva Sanstha, Hunarshala and Artisan Original (AO).

Jail Project

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The Jail Project transcends beyond societal boundaries to teach the art of rug weaving to the inmates who are serving long sentences, creating sustainable livelihood for them to support their families. Through this initiative, the 220 prison inmates can forge a path that will see them through times to come, both good and bad. Jaipur Rugs Foundation conducts several training and workshops for their socio-economic development which empowers them to sharpen their skills and mold their potential.

While learning to weave, inmates are encouraged to showcase their unexpressed creativity, which then adds to the prestige and prosperity of an individual is nurtured in the right way.

We also help them to open bank accounts to receive payments for their work directly which makes financial access easy for them and their family.



Artisan Profiling

To celebrate the uniqueness of our artisans, Jaipur Rugs Foundation resolved to collect and store the data of each of our artisans which in turn would honor them in their craft. In the month of April, JRF collected more than **441 artisan profiles**, with a keen focus on the unique capabilities of the artisans. Artisan profiling has been one of the most significant steps in recognizing talents from the grassroots.

Every artisan is a story in itself. The profile consists of several details about the artisan, it gives the profile a personal touch. The profiles are created so that the world can become aware of these talented artisans who are the makers of the most beautiful hand-knotted rugs and get to know them as an individual.





"The skill development program is a ray of hope for me. It has given me a chance to learn and earn while staying at home. Today, our family is able to meet the ends without any difficulty with my earnings."

Resham,
Artisan

Way Forward

The onset of COVID-19 in 2020 brought the worst ever misery to rural migrants all over India. However, Jaipur Rugs 'doorstep livelihood' model was conceptualized 40 years ago for development of Artisan communities after recognizing that the rural people rely on multiple income sources and that risk management is central to their livelihood strategies.

The Foundation reaches out to the grassroots populace and initiates a dialogue about opportunities of becoming skilled Artisans in the carpet value chain which in turn provide them with sustainable livelihood as well as social development facilitation.

Jaipur Rugs Foundation focuses on introducing more programmes and campaigns that will aid covid affected population with the mindset to make the rural community more resilient from any external factor.

Together we are stronger!

