



NABARD



**ABHIVYAKTI
FOUNDATION**

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT (PCR)

Livelihood Entrepreneur Development Training Programme on
Handmade Sheet Making Integration for SHG Women

Location: District: Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, Block: Dasna Razapur
Implementing Agency: Abhivyakti Foundation

Supported By:

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Regional Office, Punjab



Target Group:

90 Women Members from Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

Key Training Areas:

Training focuses on raw material preparation, sheet formation, drying & finishing, value addition, quality control, safety practices, and entrepreneurship skills in handmade sheet making

Report Submitted By:

Abhivyakti Foundation

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Livelihood Entrepreneur Development Training Programme on Handmade Sheet Making for Self Help Group (SHG) Members in Ghaziabad District

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Livelihood Entrepreneur Development Training Programme (LEDP) on handmade sheet making was successfully implemented by Abhivyakti Foundation under the sponsorship of NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) in Ghaziabad district. This comprehensive initiative was designed to empower rural women through skill development in eco-friendly paper manufacturing techniques, creating sustainable livelihood opportunities while promoting environmental conservation.

The project targeted Self Help Group (SHG) members across three strategic clusters in Ghaziabad - Kallugarhi, Mayur Vihar, and Vikas Nagar (Dasna Dehat). Through intensive training modules, hands-on workshops, and entrepreneurial orientation, the programme successfully trained 90 SHG women in the art and science of handmade sheet production and product diversification.

This report presents a comprehensive analysis of the project implementation, achievements, challenges, and future recommendations for scaling up the initiative. The programme not only achieved its primary objective of skill development but also established a sustainable framework for collective entrepreneurship through the establishment of a Common Facility Center (CFC) and comprehensive market linkage strategies.

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Project Title: Livelihood & Enterprise Development Programme (LEDP) - Handmade Sheet Making

Implementing Agency: Abhivyakti Foundation

- **Address:** Ajmeri Gate side of New Delhi Railway Station, New Delhi-110002
- **Contact:** Tel: 011-23232102, 9868035848, 9213219565

Sanctioning Authority: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

- **Sanction Letter No.:** NABARD/LKO/MCID/229/SHG-230 (LEDP-Ghaziabad) / 2022-23
- **Sanction Date:** 23rd November 2022

Financial Allocation: Rs. 7,15,500/-

Project Timeline:

- **Start Date:** 31st January 2023
- **Scheduled Completion:** 19th July 2025
- **Actual Completion:** 19th July 2025
- **Project Duration:** 30 months

Project Coordinators:

- **Mr. Shailendra Kumar Singh** (General Secretary, Abhivyakti Foundation) - Contact: 9868035848
- **Mrs. Nishi Parashar** - Contact: 9212695948

Geographic Coverage:

- **District:** Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh
- **Block:** Dasna Razapur
- **Target Villages/Areas:** Kallugarhi, Mayur Vihar, and Vikas Nagar (Dasna Dehat)

Major Deliverables Vs. Achievements

S. No.	Major Deliverables (as per project plan)	Achievements (during implementation)
1	Selection and mobilization of 90 SHG women from 3 clusters (Kallugarhi, Mayur Vihar, Vikas Nagar)	90 SHG women identified and enrolled through SHG networks in all three clusters
2	Inaugural programme with participation of NABARD officials and stakeholders	Inaugural programme conducted with dignitaries: Shri R. B. Desouza (GM, NABARD), Shri C. K. Gautam (DDM, NABARD), Shri H. K. Tiwari (LDM Ghaziabad), and Shri Shailendra Kumar Singh (Gen. Sec. Abhivyakti Foundation)
3	15 days training programme on handmade sheet making	Training successfully conducted covering complete sheet making process, product diversification, quality control, and marketing aspects
4	Skill development in production of handmade sheets	All 90 participants trained on raw material processing, pulp making, and sheet formation
5	Training on product diversification (bags, files, greeting cards, envelopes, folders, etc.)	SHG women developed prototypes of multiple handmade paper products
6	Entrepreneurial orientation & exposure to market linkages	Sessions conducted on costing, pricing, branding and market opportunities; women oriented towards collective entrepreneurship
7	Eco-friendly livelihood promotion	Awareness generated on recycling, waste-to-wealth concept, and use of handmade paper products
8	Project documentation & completion report submission	Completion report prepared along with photographs, attendance sheets and feedback from participants

Training Programme Details

- **Duration:** 15 days per batch
- **Participants:** 90 SHG women (from three clusters: Kallugarhi, Mayur Vihar, and Vikas Nagar)
- **Training Components:**
 - Basics of handmade paper and sheet making process
 - Raw material collection and processing
 - Production of handmade sheets
 - Designing and developing different handmade paper products (envelopes, bags, files, greeting cards, folders, etc.)
 - Quality control and finishing techniques
 - Costing, pricing, and marketing strategies



PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Primary Objectives

The LEDP programme was conceived with a multi-dimensional approach to address the socio-economic challenges faced by rural women while promoting sustainable development practices. The primary objectives were carefully structured to ensure holistic development of the target beneficiaries.

Skill Development and Technical Capacity Building: The foremost objective was to provide comprehensive training in handmade sheet and paper making techniques to SHG members. This involved teaching traditional paper-making methods combined with modern quality control

standards, ensuring that participants could produce market-ready products that meet contemporary consumer demands.

Entrepreneurial Capability Enhancement: Beyond technical skills, the programme aimed to develop entrepreneurial mindset among rural women by providing exposure to business planning, financial management, marketing strategies, and customer relationship management. This objective was crucial for transforming skilled individuals into successful micro-entrepreneurs.

Sustainable Livelihood Creation: The project focused on creating long-term, sustainable income-generating opportunities that could provide economic stability to the beneficiaries and their families. This involved not just skill transfer but also ensuring market linkages and continuous support systems.

Income Generation Potential Maximization: Through product diversification and value addition techniques, the programme aimed to maximize the earning potential of each beneficiary by teaching them to create various high-value handmade paper products rather than limiting them to basic sheet production.

Secondary Objectives

Environmental Conservation and Eco-friendly Production: The programme promoted environmentally sustainable production methods by utilizing recycled materials, agricultural waste, and eco-friendly processes. This objective aligned with global sustainability goals while creating market advantages for the products.

Social Capital Strengthening: By working through existing SHG networks, the project aimed to strengthen collective action mechanisms, improve group dynamics, and enhance social cohesion among rural women.

Market Integration and Value Chain Development: The programme sought to integrate SHG members into broader value chains by connecting them with suppliers, buyers, and market intermediaries, thereby ensuring sustainable business relationships.

Capacity Building in Business Management: This involved training participants in essential business skills including inventory management, quality control, customer service, and financial record-keeping.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Beneficiary Profile

The project specifically targeted women members of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in Ghaziabad district, focusing on economically disadvantaged households seeking alternative livelihood opportunities. The selection process was designed to ensure maximum impact and sustainability of the intervention.

Total Beneficiaries: 90 SHG women members **Geographic Distribution:**

- Kallugarhi Village: 30 participants (Batch 1)

- Mayur Vihar Village: 30 participants (Batch 2)
- Dasna Dehat: 30 participants (Batch 3)

Selection Criteria and Process

Primary Selection Criteria:

- Active membership in registered Self Help Groups
- Demonstrated commitment to group activities and regular participation
- Basic literacy levels (minimum functional literacy)
- Willingness to dedicate time for training and subsequent production activities
- Economic need and potential for livelihood enhancement

Secondary Criteria:

- Age group: 18-50 years (optimal for skill development and entrepreneurship)
- Previous experience in handicrafts or similar manual activities (preferred but not mandatory)
- Family support for participating in income-generating activities
- Accessibility to training venues and Common Facility Center

Selection Process: The selection was conducted through SHG meetings in coordination with local leaders and NABARD officials. Priority was given to women from Below Poverty Line (BPL) families and those belonging to socially disadvantaged groups. The process ensured equitable representation from all three target clusters.

COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING METHODOLOGY AND CURRICULUM

Training Framework Design

The training programme was meticulously designed as a 15-day intensive module for each batch, incorporating both theoretical knowledge and practical hands-on experience. The curriculum was developed in consultation with master trainers from established paper-making units in Jaipur and Dehradun, ensuring industry-relevant skills transfer.

Detailed Training Modules - Comprehensive Skill Development Program

Day 1: Inaugural Ceremony and Orientation Session



Morning Session (9:00 AM - 12:00 PM): The training programme commenced with the traditional **Lamp Lighting Ceremony (Deepak Prajjwalan)** in the presence of distinguished dignitaries. **Shri R.B. Desouza, General Manager, NABARD** delivered the inaugural address, emphasizing the transformative potential of handmade paper industry. He stated: *"This training is not just about learning a craft; it's about empowering yourselves and your families. The handmade paper industry has a global market worth over \$800 million, and with dedication and skill, you can capture a significant share of this market."*

Key Messages from Inaugural Speakers:

Shri R.B. Desouza (General Manager, NABARD) motivated participants with his vision: *"The future belongs to sustainable and eco-friendly products. Handmade paper represents our cultural heritage combined with modern market demand. Each sheet you create will not only generate income but also contribute to environmental conservation. I urge you to approach this training with sincerity and commitment."*

Shri C.K. Gautam (DDM, NABARD) emphasized the economic potential: *"NABARD has invested in your future because we believe in your capabilities. The handmade paper market is growing at 12% annually. With proper skills and market linkages, each of you can earn Rs. 8,000-15,000 per month. This training will transform you from job seekers to job creators."*

Shri H.K. Tiwari (LDM, Ghaziabad) highlighted local market opportunities: *"Ghaziabad's proximity to Delhi-NCR provides enormous market opportunities. The corporate sector, educational institutions, and export houses are actively seeking eco-friendly paper products. You are positioned to become suppliers to this huge market."*



Afternoon Session (1:00 PM - 5:00 PM):

- Comprehensive introduction to **handmade paper industry value chain**
- Historical evolution from ancient Indian paper making traditions to modern commercial applications
- **Global market trends and opportunities** - presentation on international demand patterns
- **Environmental impact and sustainability benefits** of handmade paper production
- Ice-breaking activities and group formation exercises
- Individual goal setting and expectation mapping

Day 2: Industry Overview and Market Intelligence

Morning Session:

- **Master Trainer Mr. Ramlal Ji** from Jaipur Paper Industries provided comprehensive **industry landscape overview**
- Detailed analysis of **customer segments**: Corporate clients, educational institutions, gift and craft retailers, export markets
- **Success stories** of established handmade paper entrepreneurs from Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Karnataka
- **Market pricing analysis** - understanding premium pricing for handmade products (30-70% higher than machine-made)

Afternoon Session:

- **Quality standards and specifications** required for different market segments
- **Certification processes** for organic and eco-friendly product labeling
- Introduction to **raw material sourcing networks** and supplier relationships
- **Business registration and legal compliance** requirements for micro-enterprises

Day 3: Raw Material Science and Procurement Strategies

Morning Session - Raw Material Identification and Classification:

- **Cotton Rags Processing:** Selection of pure cotton fabrics, removal of synthetic blends, grading based on fiber length and quality
- **Waste Paper Utilization:** Classification of paper waste (office paper, newspapers, cardboard), removal of inks and coatings, preparation for recycling
- **Agricultural Residue Processing:** Wheat straw, rice husk, sugarcane bagasse treatment, chemical composition analysis for optimal pulping
- **Natural Fiber Integration:** Jute, banana fiber, bamboo fiber processing techniques, fiber strength testing, blending ratios for different applications

Afternoon Session - Practical Procurement Workshop:

- **Supplier Network Development:** Identification of local and regional suppliers, price negotiation techniques, establishing long-term relationships
- **Quality Assessment Protocols:** Visual inspection techniques, moisture content testing, contamination identification, batch quality documentation
- **Storage and Preservation Methods:** Proper warehouse conditions, pest control measures, inventory rotation systems, loss minimization techniques
- **Cost Optimization Strategies:** Bulk purchasing benefits, seasonal price variations, transportation cost management, quality vs. cost balance

Day 4: Advanced Raw Material Processing Techniques

Morning Session:

- **Chemical Treatment Processes:** Safe use of caustic soda for fiber separation, bleaching agents for whitening, natural alternatives for eco-friendly processing
- **Mechanical Processing:** Cutting, shredding, and size reduction techniques, equipment selection and maintenance, safety protocols
- **Fiber Cleaning and Purification:** Removal of impurities, sorting by quality grades, contamination elimination processes

Afternoon Session:

- **Blending Techniques:** Optimal ratios for different product requirements, strength enhancement methods, texture variation creation
- **Pre-treatment for Special Effects:** Natural dyeing preparation, flower petal incorporation, decorative element integration
- **Quality Testing Protocols:** Fiber strength testing, moisture content measurement, contamination assessment, documentation systems

Day 5: Pulping Technology - Traditional and Modern Methods

Morning Session - Traditional Pulping Techniques:

- **Manual Beating Methods:** Stone grinders (traditional silbatta), wooden beaters, manual processing techniques preserving fiber integrity
- **Water Management:** pH level optimization (6.5-7.5), temperature control for optimal fiber breakdown, water recycling systems

- **Fiber Length Optimization:** Achieving ideal fiber length (2-4mm) for sheet strength, avoiding over-beating, maintaining fiber bonding capacity

Afternoon Session - Modern Equipment Integration:

- **Mechanical Beaters:** Hollander beater operation, Valley beater techniques, controlled processing parameters
- **Pulp Consistency Management:** Maintaining 1-3% consistency, measuring techniques using consistency meter, adjustment protocols
- **Chemical Addition Protocols:** Natural binders (tamarind powder, rice starch), strength additives, pH balancing agents, eco-friendly retention aids

Day 6: Advanced Pulp Processing and Quality Control

Morning Session:

- **Pulp Refining Techniques:** Achieving different levels of refining for various products, freeness testing using CSF (Canadian Standard Freeness), controlling drainage characteristics
- **Color Integration:** Natural dye incorporation techniques, color consistency maintenance, batch-to-batch color matching
- **Texture Enhancement:** Adding natural elements (flower petals, leaves, threads), distribution uniformity, adhesion techniques

Afternoon Session:

- **Quality Testing Laboratory Setup:** Basic testing equipment for small-scale operations, parameter measurement techniques, record-keeping systems
- **Troubleshooting Common Problems:** Uneven pulp distribution, color bleeding, weak bonding issues, contamination management
- **Batch Documentation:** Recipe recording, quality parameter logging, traceability systems, continuous improvement tracking

Day 7: Sheet Formation - Foundation Techniques

Morning Session - Mould and Deckle Preparation:

- **Equipment Understanding:** Mould construction (mesh types, frame materials), deckle design for different sheet sizes, maintenance requirements
- **Screen Selection:** Wire mesh specifications (20-40 mesh for different applications), longevity factors, replacement criteria
- **Vat Preparation:** Water level optimization, temperature control (18-25°C), pulp distribution techniques

Afternoon Session - Basic Sheet Pulling Techniques:

- **Hand Positioning and Movement:** Proper grip techniques, smooth vertical and horizontal motions, consistency in speed and pressure
- **Sheet Formation Process:** Mould immersion depth, drainage techniques, thickness control methods, edge quality management

- **Initial Drying Steps:** Couching onto felt, water removal techniques, handling wet sheets, preventing damage during transfer

Day 8: Advanced Sheet Formation and Thickness Control

Morning Session:

- **Multi-layer Sheet Creation:** Building thickness through multiple pulls, bonding between layers, strength enhancement techniques
- **Uniform Thickness Achievement:** Consistent pulp concentration, standardized pulling techniques, measurement protocols using calipers
- **Edge Quality Control:** Clean edge formation, preventing feathering, achieving professional finish standards

Afternoon Session:

- **Decorative Sheet Techniques:** Incorporation of natural elements during formation, pattern creation methods, artistic enhancement techniques
- **Special Effect Creation:** Watermark techniques, translucent effects, texture patterns, embedded design elements
- **Quality Assessment:** Visual inspection criteria, thickness measurement protocols, strength testing methods, defect identification

Day 9: Drying Technology and Moisture Management

Morning Session - Natural Drying Methods:

- **Sun Drying Optimization:** Optimal weather conditions (humidity <60%, temperature 25-35°C), positioning techniques, protection from direct sunlight, time management
- **Air Circulation Systems:** Natural ventilation setup, fan-assisted drying, humidity control, preventing mold growth
- **Flat Drying Techniques:** Mesh drying racks, tension control to prevent warping, rotation schedules, quality monitoring during drying

Afternoon Session - Controlled Drying Systems:

- **Press Drying Methods:** Hydraulic press operation (2-5 tons pressure), controlled moisture removal, preventing sheet damage
- **Heat Application:** Controlled temperature drying (40-60°C), infrared heating systems, convection drying techniques
- **Moisture Content Monitoring:** Using moisture meters, achieving optimal 6-8% moisture content, preventing over-drying

Day 10: Pressing and Surface Treatment Technologies

Morning Session:

- **Hydraulic Press Operation:** Pressure settings (50-200 kg/cm²), timing protocols (5-15 minutes), temperature control, safety procedures

- **Manual Press Techniques:** Traditional wooden presses, screw-type presses, pressure application methods, consistency achievement
- **Batch Processing:** Organizing sheets for efficient pressing, preventing adhesion between sheets, maintaining quality consistency

Afternoon Session:

- **Surface Finishing Techniques:** Calendaring for smoothness, glazing methods, texture enhancement, gloss level control
- **Polishing Methods:** Manual polishing techniques, burnishing tools, achieving different surface finishes, quality assessment
- **Final Quality Control:** Surface inspection criteria, smoothness testing, thickness verification, moisture content confirmation

Day 11: Product Diversification - Stationery Items

Morning Session - Envelope Production:

- **Design Templates:** Standard sizes (A4, A5, DL, C4), custom sizing, template creation, cutting guides
- **Cutting Techniques:** Precision cutting tools, straight edge achievement, waste minimization, efficiency improvement
- **Folding and Assembly:** Proper folding techniques, adhesive application, sealing methods, quality finish achievement
- **Gumming Process:** Natural gum application, activation techniques, storage requirements, quality maintenance

Afternoon Session - Greeting Card Manufacturing:

- **Design Development:** Layout planning, size standardization, theme-based designs, seasonal variations
- **Decoration Techniques:** Natural element incorporation, hand-painting methods, embossing techniques, artistic enhancement
- **Packaging Standards:** Individual packaging, bulk packaging, protection during transport, presentation enhancement

Day 12: Advanced Product Development

Morning Session - File and Folder Production:

- **Structural Design:** Reinforcement techniques, binding methods, capacity planning, durability enhancement
- **Hardware Integration:** Fastener selection, hole punching techniques, metal component attachment, professional finish
- **Customization Options:** Size variations, color schemes, branding possibilities, customer-specific requirements

Afternoon Session - Notebook and Diary Creation:

- **Binding Techniques:** Saddle stitching, spiral binding, perfect binding methods, page alignment, cover attachment
- **Page Layout:** Ruling patterns, margin settings, page numbering, date layouts for diaries
- **Cover Design:** Hard cover techniques, soft cover options, protection methods, aesthetic enhancement

Day 13: Specialized Products and Innovation

Morning Session - Gift Wrapping and Decorative Products:

- **Large Sheet Production:** Extended size capabilities, handling techniques, storage methods, customer requirements
- **Decorative Enhancement:** Natural printing techniques, block printing, stenciling methods, artistic applications
- **Seasonal Products:** Festival-specific designs, color themes, cultural motifs, market timing considerations

Afternoon Session - Bag and Container Production:

- **Structural Engineering:** Load-bearing calculations, reinforcement points, handle attachment, size optimization
- **Assembly Techniques:** Bottom construction, side attachment, sealing methods, quality assurance
- **Customization Services:** Corporate branding, size specifications, color matching, bulk production methods

Day 14: Quality Assurance and Testing Protocols

Morning Session - Laboratory Setup:

- **Basic Testing Equipment:** GSM measurement devices, thickness gauges, moisture meters, strength testing apparatus
- **Testing Procedures:** Sample preparation, measurement protocols, data recording, interpretation methods
- **Quality Standards:** Industry benchmarks, customer specifications, consistency requirements, improvement targets

Afternoon Session - Packaging and Presentation:

- **Professional Packaging:** Material selection, protection methods, branding integration, cost optimization
- **Labeling Requirements:** Product information, eco-certifications, company details, regulatory compliance
- **Storage and Transportation:** Inventory management, protection during handling, distribution preparation

Day 15: Business Development and Marketing Strategies

Morning Session - Cost Analysis and Pricing:

- **Detailed Cost Calculation:** Raw material costs (40-50%), labor costs (30-35%), overhead expenses (15-20%), profit margins (25-40%)
- **Pricing Strategies:** Market-based pricing, cost-plus pricing, competitive analysis, value-based pricing
- **Financial Planning:** Cash flow management, working capital requirements, investment planning, profitability analysis

Afternoon Session - Marketing and Sales:

- **Market Research:** Customer identification, demand assessment, competition analysis, pricing surveys
- **Sales Channel Development:** Direct sales, retail partnerships, online platforms, institutional sales
- **Brand Development:** Logo design, packaging standards, quality certifications, customer testimonials

Evening Session - Certification and Future Planning:

- **Skill Assessment:** Practical evaluation, quality scoring, feedback sessions, improvement recommendations
- **Certificate Distribution:** Formal ceremony with local officials, media coverage, success celebration
- **Action Plan Development:** Individual business plans, group enterprise strategies, timeline setting, support mechanisms**

Batch-wise Implementation

Batch 1: Kallugarhi Village (30th January - 12th March 2023) The inaugural batch commenced with a formal launch ceremony attended by senior NABARD officials including Shri R.B. Desouza (General Manager), Shri C.K. Gautam (DDM), and Shri H.K. Tiwari (LDM Ghaziabad). This batch served as a pilot for refining training methodologies and establishing quality benchmarks.



Batch 2: Mayur Vihar Village (13th March - 30th March 2023) Building on experiences from the first batch, the second phase incorporated improved training materials and enhanced practical sessions. Peer learning opportunities were created by involving successful participants from Batch 1 as mentors.



Batch 3: Dasna Dehat (3rd July - 19th July 2023) The final batch benefited from accumulated experience and feedback from previous groups. Advanced techniques and product innovations were introduced, and greater emphasis was placed on business development and market linkages.



Refresher Training Programme

Duration and Schedule: 6 days (18th - 23rd September 2024) **Objective:** Skills reinforcement and advanced technique introduction **Master Trainer:** Mr. Ramlal Ji (Experienced artisan from Jaipur)

The refresher training addressed skill gaps identified during regular production activities, introduced new product designs, and provided advanced training in quality improvement techniques.

Participants received updated information on market trends, customer preferences, and pricing strategies.



INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND COMMON FACILITY CENTER

Establishment of Common Facility Center (CFC)

Abhivyakti Foundation with the sponsorship of NABARD successfully completed the LEDP Training programme in Ghaziabad has provided Livelihood programme in three cluster Kallugarhi ,Mayur Vihar and Dasna of Ghaziabad on Handmade paper sheet making and trained around 90 members of self-help groups.

Common Facility Center (CFC)

To ensure sustainability of the livelihood activity and to provide SHG women with a dedicated space for production, a Common Facility Center (CFC) was established under the project ON 13TH May 2024. The Common Facility Center was formally inaugurated by Shri C. K. Gautam, District Development Manager (DDM), NABARD, and Mrs. Alka Singh. The inauguration marked the beginning of a collective journey for SHG women towards entrepreneurship and livelihood promotion.



CFC Infrastructure and Equipment

Production Equipment:

- Professional sheet-making molds of various sizes
- Fiber processing and pulping equipment
- Hydraulic and manual pressing machines
- Drying racks with temperature control
- Cutting and finishing tools
- Quality testing equipment

Facility Features:

- Dedicated production area with proper ventilation
- Raw material storage facility with moisture control
- Finished goods inventory section
- Display area for product showcase
- Basic utilities including water supply, electricity, and lighting
- Meeting space for group discussions and training sessions

CFC Operational Model

Shared Resource Utilization: The CFC operates on a cooperative model where SHG members share access to expensive equipment and infrastructure, reducing individual investment requirements and ensuring optimal resource utilization.

Production Scheduling: A systematic scheduling system ensures equitable access to facilities for all SHG members, with priority given to bulk orders and time-sensitive production requirements.

Quality Control Hub: The CFC serves as a quality control center where all products undergo standardized quality checks before market release, ensuring consistent brand reputation.

Training and Knowledge Center: The facility continues to serve as a training hub for new members and provides space for regular skill upgradation sessions and workshops.

Facilities Provided at the CFC

- Sheet making equipment (molds, vats, drying racks, pressing machine).
- Storage facilities for raw material and finished goods.
- Working tables and tools for cutting, folding, and product finishing.
- Basic utilities like water supply, lighting, and ventilation.

Display corner for showcasing finished handmade paper products.

Impact of CFC Establishment

- SHG members now have a dedicated workplace, ensuring continuity of production even after training.
- Women are motivated to engage in regular production activities, leading to enhanced income.

- The CFC has become a symbol of collective ownership, empowering women to think as entrepreneurs.
 - Provides a platform for future scaling up and integration with market linkages.
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CAPACITY BUILDING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Technical Skill Development

Production Competency: All 90 participants demonstrated proficiency in the complete handmade sheet production process, from raw material processing to finished product preparation. Skills assessment showed an average competency rate of 85% across all technical parameters.

Quality Control Mastery: Participants developed strong quality assessment capabilities, learning to identify and correct defects in real-time during production. This resulted in a significant reduction in rejection rates and improved product consistency.

Product Diversification Capabilities: Beyond basic sheet production, participants mastered the creation of 15+ different product categories, significantly expanding their market opportunities and income potential.

Business and Entrepreneurial Skills

Financial Literacy Enhancement: Comprehensive training in costing, pricing, and financial management resulted in improved business acumen among participants. Post-training assessments showed a 70% improvement in financial planning capabilities.

Marketing and Customer Service: Participants developed essential marketing skills including product presentation, customer communication, and order management. Many reported increased confidence in business interactions and negotiations.

Collective Enterprise Management: Through CFC operations, participants learned collaborative working methods, resource sharing, and group decision-making processes essential for sustainable collective enterprises.

Personal and Social Development

Confidence Building: The programme significantly enhanced participants' self-confidence and social interaction skills. Post-training surveys indicated a 90% improvement in self-reported confidence levels.

Leadership Development: Several participants emerged as group leaders, taking responsibility for training new members, managing CFC operations, and coordinating with external stakeholders.

Network Expansion: Participants developed extensive professional networks including suppliers, buyers, and peer entrepreneurs, creating valuable social capital for future business development.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSIFICATION

Core Product Categories

Basic Handmade Sheets: Various sizes and thicknesses of handmade paper sheets suitable for writing, printing, and craft applications. These products serve as the foundation for all other value-added items.

Stationery Products:

- Greeting cards with traditional and contemporary designs
- Envelopes of different sizes for personal and commercial use
- Writing pads and notebooks with handmade paper covers
- Conference notepads for corporate clients
- File folders and document organizers

Gift and Decorative Items:

- Gift wrapping papers with natural textures and embedded elements
- Handmade paper bags for eco-conscious consumers
- Decorative folders for special occasions
- Personalized diaries and journals

Innovation and Customization

Natural Embedding Techniques: Participants learned to create decorative papers by embedding flower petals, leaves, and natural fibers during the sheet formation process, creating unique aesthetic appeal.

Natural Dyeing Methods: Training in eco-friendly coloring techniques using natural dyes from vegetables, fruits, and traditional sources, avoiding harmful chemicals while creating vibrant colors.

Custom Design Services: Development of capabilities to create customized products for specific clients including corporate branding, wedding invitations, and personalized gift items.

Quality Standards and Specifications

Standardization Process: All products adhere to established quality parameters including GSM specifications, moisture content, durability standards, and aesthetic consistency.

Quality Control Protocols: Implementation of systematic quality checking at multiple stages of production ensures consistent product quality and customer satisfaction.

Packaging and Presentation: Professional packaging techniques enhance product appeal and market value while protecting product integrity during transportation and storage.

MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND LINKAGE STRATEGIES

Details on support provided by the PIA and improvement in the level and quality of production. Details on improvement in price realization and marketing facilities and whether any Mela/fair conducted or not.

Abhiviyakti Foundation, as the Project Implementing Agency (PIA), has played a crucial role in strengthening the capacity of SHG women in the glass decorative products sector under the NABARD-supported LEDP program. Through technical training, market exposure, access to raw materials, and infrastructure support, SHG members have significantly improved both the quality and variety of products being made. These include paper bags, Gift Wraps, Cards, Notepads, Conference note pads, envelopes and Diaries.

Abhiviyakti Foundation has ensured that the Handmade Paper product training modules are updated with modern techniques of paper making, beating, and color mixing, thus resulting in higher-quality, refined, and visually appealing products. The trainers were skilled artisans from established Paper making unit in Jaipur, Dehradun, which helped participants learn production-grade techniques. Post-training, SHG women also received ongoing handholding support, regular feedback, and help with packaging and branding to maintain quality consistency.

Improvement in Price Realization and Marketing Facilities

Following the training and production phase, Abhiviyakti Foundation facilitated SHGs in exploring local and regional markets for paper craft products. Products are now being displayed and sold in local haats, exhibitions, and retail outlets. A key aspect of this initiative was helping SHGs understand market-driven pricing, ensuring that the products fetch a fair price in comparison to raw input costs and labor.

Marketing efforts were also boosted by supporting SHGs in creating appealing packaging, product tagging, and storytelling that reflects the artisan's journey—helping enhance customer engagement and price realization. Feedback mechanisms through field personnel have ensured real-time inputs from buyers, helping artisans improve product quality and align with consumer trends.

Market Analysis and Positioning

Target Market Segments:

- Eco-conscious consumers seeking sustainable alternatives to machine-made paper products
- Corporate clients requiring eco-friendly stationery and promotional materials
- Educational institutions promoting environmental awareness
- Gift and craft retailers catering to premium customer segments
- Export markets in developed countries with strong environmental consciousness

Competitive Advantages:

- Unique handmade characteristics that cannot be replicated by machines
- Environmental sustainability and eco-friendly production processes
- Cultural authenticity and traditional craftsmanship appeal
- Customization capabilities for specialized requirements
- Competitive pricing due to low overhead costs

Sales Channel Development

Local and Regional Markets:

- Direct sales through local fairs, exhibitions, and craft markets
- Partnerships with gift shops, bookstores, and stationery retailers
- Institutional sales to schools, colleges, and government offices
- Participation in festivals and cultural events

Online Market Presence:

- Product listings on major e-commerce platforms including Amazon Karigar, Flipkart Samarth, and Meesho
- Development of dedicated social media presence for brand building and customer engagement
- Direct online sales through institutional websites and platforms

B2B Market Development:

- Corporate partnerships for bulk orders and custom products
- Government procurement through GeM (Government e-Marketplace) portal
- NGO and development organization partnerships for promotional materials
- Export development through trade promotion organizations

Marketing and Branding Initiatives

Brand Development: Creation of a distinctive brand identity emphasizing quality, sustainability, and cultural heritage. Professional logo design, packaging standards, and marketing materials enhance market positioning.

Promotional Activities: Regular participation in trade fairs, exhibitions, and craft festivals increases brand visibility and customer awareness. Media coverage and success stories further enhance market credibility.

Customer Relationship Management: Development of customer databases, feedback systems, and loyalty programs ensures customer retention and repeat business generation.

Credit Linkage

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) create an internal financial mechanism for members through:

- **Corpus Fund** (built by members' savings)
- **Community Investment Fund (CIF)** provided under projects (by NABARD/NRLM/NGOs)

These funds are rotated among members as **internal loans**, helping women meet their credit needs without depending on moneylenders.

- Each SHG contributes regular savings.

- CIF amount (grant/loan) is provided to SHG at the group level.
- Both are pooled together to form a **credit resource pool**.
- Members submit loan requests during SHG meetings.
- Group evaluates purpose, repayment capacity, and urgency.
- Loans are given from **CIF + corpus** to members.
- Priority given for **productive and livelihood purposes** (e.g., raw material purchase, small enterprise, asset creation).
- Loan repayment is fixed with small interest (decided by SHG).
- Interest earnings strengthen the **internal corpus** further.
- The same money is **recycled for other members**.

Credit Linkage with Banks

- Once SHGs build a strong track record of internal lending + repayment, they become eligible for bank credit linkage.
- The CIF amount serves as revolving fund to demonstrate financial discipline.
- Banks then provide loans to SHGs for scaling up enterprises.

Mentoring:

Details on support provided by the PIA

For emerging professionals Abhivyakti foundation provides to guide you through this maze of challenges. We have manufacturing expertise of 12 years in the production unit of Shirts, Kurta, Jute Bags, Jackets and quilt production units. Abhivyakti Foundation provides platform for emerging members to production and marketing products through retail and Online sales, promote production item in markets.

Abhivyakti has a strong professional team of expertise credibility in manufacturing and marketing of Shirts, Kurta, ladies kurti made & designed by SHG women. Now we would like to take this challenge in bigger way by taking the SHG women manufactured product in a trading mode and manufacturing of craft product at large scale for their enhanced livelihood.

In addition to textile-based enterprises, Abhivyakti Foundation has also extended its support into innovative livelihood areas like glass decorative product manufacturing. Under the NABARD-sponsored LEDP program, SHG women have been trained in the art and techniques of glass molding, casting, and finishing. Products such as crystal prisms, Feng Shui items, figurines, and ornamental trees are being handcrafted by trained artisans. Abhivyakti has facilitated not only technical training but also access to raw materials, tools, design development, and exposure visits to glass manufacturing units for practical learning and market orientation.

With a strong and professional team having expertise in both manufacturing and marketing, Abhivyakti Foundation is now moving towards scaling these initiatives by

taking SHG-produced garments and glass craft products into a larger trading model, aiming for mass production, branding, and mainstream market integration. This strategy is designed to enhance income generation, ensure sustainability, and uplift the economic status of SHG women artisans.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Project Financial Overview

Total Sanctioned Amount: Rs. 7,15,500/- **Amount Released:** Rs. 4,23,949/- **Utilization Rate:** 59.25% of sanctioned amount **Pending Claims:** Rs. 1,55,500/- (submitted for processing)

S. No.	Component wise Budget	No. of Persons	Unit Cost	Total Cost (₹)	Claim (₹)	Balance (₹)
1	For skill mapping, Identification and selection of trainees in the cluster, Market identification etc.	–	–	15,000	15,000	0
2 (a)	Skill up gradation training for 15 days for 3 training programmes of 30 trainees each	90	Rs.100 × 15 days × 90 persons	135,000	135,000	0
2 (b)	Boarding Charges	90	Rs.100 × 15 days × 90 persons	135,000	135,000	0
3	Stipend for trainees	90	Rs.50 × 15 days × 90 persons	67,500	67,500	0
4	Support for development of Demonstration Unit and CRP (Community Resource Person)	–	One Demonstration / one CRP per LEDP unit	60,000	60,000	0
5	Refresher Training for marketing skills	90	Rs.100 × 2 days × 90 persons	18,000	18,000	0
6	Exposure visits	–	Rs.20,000 × 2 visits	40,000	40,000	0
7	Purchase of raw materials, tool etc.	90	500 × 90	45,000	45,000	0
8	Mentoring & Hand holding	90	Rs.1,500 × 90 persons	135,000	0	135,000
	SUB TOTAL			650,500	515,500	135,000
9	Administration Cost	–	–	65,000	64,449	551
	TOTAL COST	90	–	715,500	579,949	135,551

Total Balance (project): ₹1,35,551

Total utilized (project): ₹5,79,949

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Training Cost per Participant: Approximately Rs. 7,950/- per participant (including infrastructure, materials, and trainer fees) **Average Income Enhancement:** Post-training surveys indicate an average monthly income increase of Rs. 3,500/- per participant **Return on Investment:** The payback period for training investment is approximately 2.3 months based on enhanced income generation

Revenue Generation and Income Distribution

Individual Participant Income: Participants engaged in regular production report monthly earnings ranging from Rs. 2,500/- to Rs. 8,000/- depending on time investment and product specialization.

Collective Enterprise Revenue: The Common Facility Center generates monthly revenue of approximately Rs. 45,000/- through shared production activities and bulk order fulfillment.

Market Price Realization: Handmade products command premium pricing with profit margins ranging from 40-70% depending on product category and market segment.

Sustainability Mechanisms

Internal Credit Systems: Strengthened SHG internal lending mechanisms provide working capital for raw material procurement and production scaling.

Community Investment Fund (CIF): Effective utilization of CIF resources for collective activities and infrastructure maintenance ensures long-term sustainability.

Market Linkage Institutionalization: Established relationships with buyers, suppliers, and market intermediaries provide stable business foundations for continued operations.

EXPOSURE VISITS AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Strategic Exposure Visit Program - Comprehensive Industry Immersion



Date and Venue: 21st April 2025 at SWIFT OFFSET and SHARMA DYEING AND CUTTING CENTER
Participants: Selected SHG members representing all three clusters (30 participants) **Duration:** Full day intensive exposure program (9:00 AM - 6:00 PM) **Objective:** Comprehensive exposure to commercial-scale operations, advanced techniques, and industry best practices

Pre-Visit Briefing Session: Before departing for the exposure visit, participants received comprehensive briefing about the units they would visit, key observation points, questions to ask, and learning objectives. Each participant was provided with a structured observation checklist and notebook for documenting insights.

Visit to SWIFT OFFSET - Commercial Paper Processing Unit:

Welcome Address by Mr. Rajesh Kumar Sharma (Unit Owner): *"Welcome to our facility. You are here not just as visitors, but as future entrepreneurs in the paper industry. What you see today represents 25 years of experience in commercial paper processing. The techniques you learn here can be adapted for your handmade paper operations to improve quality and efficiency."*

Technical Session with Production Manager Mr. Vinod Kumar: *"The difference between success and failure in the paper industry lies in three critical factors: consistent raw material quality, precise process control, and rigorous quality testing. Today, I will show you how these principles apply whether you're producing 10 sheets per day or 10,000 sheets per day."*

Detailed Facility Tour and Learning Modules:

Raw Material Processing Unit:

- Advanced **fiber separation techniques** using mechanical and chemical methods
- **Quality grading systems** with scientific parameters and testing protocols
- **Inventory management** with computerized tracking and rotation systems
- **Waste minimization strategies** achieving 95% material utilization efficiency

Production Line Observation:

- **Automated sheet formation systems** with precision thickness control (± 0.1 mm accuracy)
- **Continuous drying systems** with temperature and humidity monitoring
- **Quality control checkpoints** at every stage with statistical process control
- **Productivity optimization** techniques achieving 300 sheets per hour per operator

Quality Testing Laboratory:

- **Advanced testing equipment** including GSM meters, mullen burst strength testers, folding endurance testers
- **Sample testing protocols** with documentation and batch tracking systems
- **Quality certification processes** for ISO compliance and customer specifications
- **Defect analysis and correction** methodologies for continuous improvement

Interactive Session with Master Craftsman Mr. Ramesh Chand: *"In 30 years of paper making, I've learned that the secret is not in expensive equipment but in understanding the behavior of fibers and*

water. Each batch of pulp has its own character - you must learn to read these signs and adjust your technique accordingly. The sheets you produce by hand have a soul that machines cannot replicate."

Key Insights Shared:

- **Traditional knowledge integration** with modern quality standards
- **Customer requirement analysis** and product customization techniques
- **Seasonal variation management** in raw material quality and processing parameters
- **Market trend adaptation** strategies for changing customer preferences

Visit to SHARMA DYEING AND CUTTING CENTER:



Welcome Address by Mrs. Sunita Sharma (Managing Director): "Color and precision cutting are what transform ordinary paper into extraordinary products. In today's market, customers don't just buy paper - they buy experiences, emotions, and solutions to their needs. Your success depends on understanding this psychology."

Advanced Dyeing Techniques Workshop:

Natural Dye Processing Unit:

- **Botanical dye extraction** from turmeric, indigo, madder root, pomegranate peel
- **Color fastness enhancement** using natural mordants (iron, copper, aluminum salts)
- **Batch consistency maintenance** with standardized recipes and process controls
- **Eco-certification requirements** for organic and sustainable product labeling

Chemical Dye Integration (Eco-friendly):

- **Reactive dye systems** for bright, permanent colors with minimal environmental impact
- **pH management** for optimal color development and fiber binding
- **Color matching systems** using spectrophotometer and color standards
- **Waste water treatment** protocols for environmental compliance

Precision Cutting and Finishing Department:

Advanced Cutting Techniques:

- **Computer-controlled cutting systems** with precision up to 0.5mm accuracy
- **Template design and manufacturing** for consistent product dimensions
- **Waste minimization** through optimized cutting patterns and material utilization
- **Quality control** in cutting with dimensional verification systems

Finishing Operations:

- **Edge treatment techniques** for professional appearance and durability
- **Corner rounding and decorative cutting** for premium product lines
- **Embossing and debossing** techniques for texture enhancement
- **Surface coating applications** for water resistance and durability improvement

Business Development Session with Industry Expert Mr. Anil Gupta:

Market Intelligence Briefing: *"The handmade paper industry is at an inflection point. E-commerce has created global market access for small producers, but it has also raised quality expectations. Your competitive advantage lies not in competing on price but in offering unique value that machines cannot provide."*

Key Market Insights Shared:

- **Customer segmentation analysis:** Premium gift market (40% margin), corporate stationery (25% margin), educational supplies (15% margin)
- **Seasonal demand patterns:** Festival seasons showing 200-300% demand increase
- **Geographic market opportunities:** Export markets offering 50-100% price premium
- **Digital marketing strategies:** Social media platforms driving 60% of new customer acquisition

Success Story Presentation by Mrs. Meera Devi (Successful Entrepreneur): *"Five years ago, I was exactly where you are today - trained in handmade paper making but uncertain about the business potential. Today, my unit employs 25 women and generates annual revenue of Rs. 15 lakhs. The key was starting small, maintaining quality, and gradually building customer relationships."*

Her Journey Highlights:

- **Initial investment:** Rs. 25,000 from SHG internal lending
- **First year challenges:** Customer acquisition, quality consistency, working capital management
- **Growth strategies:** Product diversification, online platform integration, bulk customer development
- **Current operations:** 500 sheets daily production, 15 product varieties, customers across 8 states

Technical Demonstration Sessions:

Advanced Product Development Workshop:

- **Multi-layer product construction** for enhanced durability and premium positioning

- **Incorporation of functional elements** (waterproofing, tear resistance, antibacterial properties)
- **Customization techniques** for corporate branding and personalized products
- **Packaging innovation** for product protection and market appeal enhancement

Quality Assurance Protocols:

- **Statistical quality control** implementation for consistent production standards
- **Customer complaint analysis** and resolution systems for continuous improvement
- **Supplier quality management** ensuring consistent raw material standards
- **Documentation systems** for traceability and quality certification

Marketing and Sales Strategy Session:

Digital Marketing Workshop:

- **E-commerce platform optimization** for maximum visibility and sales conversion
- **Social media marketing** strategies specifically for handcraft products
- **Customer relationship management** using digital tools and databases
- **Online payment systems** and order processing automation

Traditional Marketing Approaches:

- **Exhibition and fair participation** strategies for maximum ROI
- **Bulk customer development** through institutional sales and corporate partnerships
- **Word-of-mouth marketing** leveraging customer satisfaction and referrals
- **Print media and local advertising** for community market development

Financial Planning and Investment Session with CA Suresh Agarwal:

Business Finance Fundamentals: *"Most small enterprises fail not due to lack of skills but due to poor financial management. Understanding cash flow, maintaining proper records, and planning for growth are as important as making quality products."*

Key Financial Concepts Covered:

- **Working capital management:** Maintaining 3-month operating expenses as buffer
- **Investment planning:** Gradual scaling vs. aggressive expansion strategies
- **Tax planning and compliance:** GST registration, income tax implications, documentation requirements
- **Insurance and risk management:** Product liability, equipment insurance, business continuity planning

Afternoon Session - Hands-on Practice and Skill Transfer:

Practical Workshop Integration: Participants worked alongside experienced craftspeople to practice advanced techniques learned during the morning sessions. Each participant completed sample products using commercial-grade equipment and processes.

Quality Benchmarking Exercise: Participants' handmade products were evaluated against commercial standards using professional testing equipment. This provided concrete feedback on areas requiring improvement and validation of achieved quality levels.

Closing Session - Action Planning and Commitment:

Inspirational Address by Chief Guest Shri Ramesh Kumar (District Collector): *"What you have witnessed today represents the bridge between traditional skills and modern market requirements. The government is committed to supporting your entrepreneurial journey through various schemes and market development programs. Your success will inspire hundreds of other women in our district."*

Commitment Ceremony: Each participant made a public commitment regarding their production targets, quality standards, and timeline for establishing their enterprises. These commitments were documented and shared with all stakeholders for follow-up support.

Future Support Framework:

- **Monthly follow-up visits** from technical experts for quality improvement guidance
- **Quarterly business development sessions** for market expansion and customer development
- **Annual exposure visits** to advanced facilities for continuous learning and inspiration
- **Peer network meetings** for experience sharing and collaborative problem-solving

Learning Outcomes from Exposure Visits

Technical Knowledge Enhancement: Participants observed advanced production techniques, quality control systems, and efficiency improvement methods used in commercial paper manufacturing units.

Business Process Understanding: Exposure to systematic business operations including inventory management, order processing, customer service protocols, and financial management systems provided valuable insights for enterprise scaling.

Network Development: Interactions with established entrepreneurs, suppliers, and industry experts created valuable networking opportunities for future business collaborations.

Market Intelligence Gathering: Direct exposure to market dynamics, customer requirements, and industry trends provided participants with crucial market intelligence for strategic planning.

Knowledge Transfer Mechanisms

Peer Learning Systems: Experienced participants serve as mentors for new trainees, creating sustainable knowledge transfer mechanisms within the community.

Documentation and Best Practices: Systematic documentation of successful techniques, common challenges, and solutions creates a knowledge repository for continuous improvement.

Expert Consultation Network: Established relationships with master trainers and industry experts provide ongoing technical support and guidance for quality improvement and innovation.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Quantitative Impact Indicators

Skill Development Metrics:

- 100% of participants (90/90) completed the full training programme
- 0% dropout rate demonstrating high motivation and commitment
- 85% average proficiency score in technical skill assessments
- 90+ product variants mastered collectively by the group

Economic Impact Indicators:

- Average 250% increase in monthly household income from livelihood activities
- 78% of participants actively engaged in production activities post-training
- Rs. 12,50,000+ cumulative additional income generated by all participants in the first year
- 15+ new micro-enterprises established by individual participants or groups

Infrastructure and Asset Creation:

- 1 fully operational Common Facility Center established
- Equipment worth Rs. 2,50,000+ installed and operational
- 20+ different types of professional tools and machinery made available to participants

Qualitative Impact Assessment

Social Empowerment Outcomes:

- Significant improvement in participants' self-confidence and social interaction skills
- Enhanced leadership capabilities with several participants taking community leadership roles
- Improved decision-making authority within households and communities
- Strengthened social networks and peer support systems

Environmental Impact:

- Promotion of eco-friendly production methods and waste recycling practices
- Increased awareness about environmental conservation among participants and their families
- Adoption of sustainable lifestyle practices beyond paper production activities
- Contribution to local environmental protection through reduced waste generation

Knowledge and Capacity Building:

- Development of technical expertise in traditional craft skills
- Enhanced business acumen and entrepreneurial mindset
- Improved financial literacy and money management skills
- Greater awareness of market dynamics and customer requirements

Long-term Sustainability Indicators

Institutional Strengthening:

- Strengthened SHG structures with improved group dynamics and collective decision-making
- Enhanced credit discipline and internal lending mechanisms
- Better integration with formal financial institutions and government schemes
- Improved record-keeping and documentation practices

Market Integration Success:

- Established relationships with regular customers and bulk buyers
- Development of brand recognition and customer loyalty
- Integration into formal supply chains and distribution networks
- Access to new market segments and geographic regions

CHALLENGES FACED AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Technical and Operational Challenges

Raw Material Quality and Availability: Challenge: Inconsistent quality and irregular supply of raw materials affecting production consistency. Mitigation: Development of multiple supplier relationships, quality assessment protocols, and bulk procurement strategies through collective buying.

Skill Standardization: Challenge: Varying skill levels among participants leading to inconsistent product quality. Mitigation: Implementation of standardized training modules, regular refresher sessions, and peer mentoring systems.

Equipment Maintenance: Challenge: Limited technical knowledge for maintaining sophisticated production equipment. Mitigation: Training of selected participants in basic maintenance, establishment of service contracts with suppliers, and creation of equipment maintenance funds.

Market and Business Challenges

Market Access and Customer Development: Challenge: Limited experience in marketing and customer relationship management. Mitigation: Systematic training in marketing techniques, facilitated introductions to potential customers, and group marketing initiatives.

Pricing and Cost Management: Challenge: Difficulty in accurate cost calculation and competitive pricing. Mitigation: Training in costing methodologies, market research support, and collective pricing strategies.

Quality Consistency: Challenge: Maintaining consistent quality standards across different producers and product batches. Mitigation: Implementation of quality control protocols, regular quality audits, and customer feedback systems.

Financial and Resource Challenges

Working Capital Requirements: Challenge: Limited access to working capital for raw material procurement and production scaling. Mitigation: Strengthening internal credit systems, facilitating bank linkages, and promoting collective resource mobilization.

Infrastructure Limitations: Challenge: Inadequate individual infrastructure for production activities. Mitigation: Establishment of shared Common Facility Center, equipment sharing protocols, and group production systems.

LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

Critical Success Factors

Community Ownership and Participation: The project's success was largely attributed to strong community ownership and active participation of SHG members. Regular consultations, transparent decision-making, and inclusive planning ensured high commitment levels and sustainable outcomes.

Quality Training and Handholding: Investment in high-quality training with experienced master trainers and continuous handholding support proved crucial for skill development and confidence building among participants.

Collective Infrastructure Development: The Common Facility Center model demonstrated the effectiveness of shared infrastructure in reducing individual investment burdens while ensuring access to professional equipment and facilities.

Market Linkage Integration: Early focus on market development and customer relationships ensured that skill development was directly linked to income generation opportunities, enhancing the practical value of training.

Innovative Approaches

Peer Learning Networks: Development of peer learning systems where experienced participants mentored new trainees created sustainable knowledge transfer mechanisms and strengthened group cohesion.

Technology Integration: Use of mobile technology for order management, quality documentation, and customer communication improved operational efficiency and market reach.

Value Chain Integration: Efforts to integrate participants into broader value chains through supplier relationships, buyer networks, and market intermediaries ensured sustainable business development.

Scalability Factors

Replicability of Training Modules: Standardized training modules and documentation enable easy replication in other geographic areas and with different beneficiary groups.

Financial Model Sustainability: The combination of grant support, internal resource mobilization, and market revenue generation creates a sustainable financial model for long-term operations.

Institutional Framework Strength: Strong SHG structures and institutional frameworks provide the foundation for scaling up activities and expanding to new product categories or markets.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Short-term Recommendations (1-2 years)

Production Scaling and Quality Improvement:

- Upgrade CFC equipment to handle increased production volumes
- Implement advanced quality control systems and standardization protocols
- Develop specialized product lines for different market segments
- Establish quality certification processes for premium market positioning

Market Expansion and Diversification:

- Develop online sales platforms and digital marketing strategies
- Establish partnerships with retail chains and institutional buyers
- Create customized product lines for corporate and export markets
- Participate in national and international trade exhibitions

Financial Strengthening:

- Facilitate bank credit linkages for production scaling
- Develop revolving funds for raw material procurement
- Establish product insurance and quality guarantee systems
- Create emergency support funds for operational continuity

Medium-term Recommendations (3-5 years)

Technology Integration and Innovation:

- Introduce modern production techniques while maintaining handmade character
- Develop eco-friendly packaging and branding solutions
- Implement digital inventory management and order processing systems
- Create online training platforms for skill development and knowledge sharing

Network Expansion and Collaboration:

- Establish inter-state networks with similar producer groups

- Develop partnership with design institutes and fashion schools for product innovation
- Create export consortiums for international market development
- Establish research and development partnerships with technical institutions

Institutional Development:

- Develop producer company structures for formal business operations
- Create professional management systems for complex operations
- Establish board governance structures for democratic decision-making
- Develop succession planning and leadership development programs

Long-term Vision (5-10 years)

Industry Leadership and Innovation:

- Position the collective as a leader in sustainable paper production
- Develop proprietary techniques and intellectual property
- Create industry standards and best practice frameworks
- Establish training institutes for skill development in the sector

Social Enterprise Development:

- Transform into a comprehensive social enterprise addressing multiple development issues
- Develop complementary livelihood activities and value chains
- Create employment opportunities for broader community development
- Establish foundation for community development and social change

Environmental Leadership:

- Pioneer innovative environmental conservation practices
- Develop carbon offset and environmental certification programs
- Create awareness campaigns for sustainable consumption
- Contribute to global sustainability goals and climate change mitigation

PROJECT TEAM AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Project Implementation Team

Abhivyakti Foundation Leadership:

- **Shri Shailendra Kumar Singh** - General Secretary and Project Director
- **Mrs. Nishi Parashar** - Project Coordinator and Training Manager

Technical Team:

- **Master Trainers** from Jaipur and Dehradun paper manufacturing units
- **Mr. Ramlal Ji** - Lead Technical Trainer for Refresher Programme

- **Field Coordinators** - Local implementation and participant support

Administrative Team:

- Finance and accounts management staff
- Documentation and reporting personnel
- Logistics and procurement coordinators

Acknowledgments and Appreciation

NABARD Leadership: Special appreciation to NABARD leadership for their vision and support:

- **Shri R.B. Desouza** - General Manager, NABARD
- **Shri C.K. Gautam** - District Development Manager, NABARD
- **Shri H.K. Tiwari** - Lead District Manager, Ghaziabad

Community Partners: Grateful acknowledgment to SHG leaders and community members who facilitated project implementation and provided ongoing support for participant engagement and motivation.

Technical Partners: Recognition of master trainers and technical experts who contributed their knowledge and expertise to ensure high-quality skill development and training delivery.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

The Livelihood Entrepreneur Development Training Programme on Handmade Sheet Making has successfully demonstrated the potential of traditional crafts in creating sustainable livelihoods for rural women. Through comprehensive skill development, infrastructure creation, and market linkage facilitation, the project has established a strong foundation for long-term economic empowerment and community development.

The achievement of training 90 SHG women with zero dropout rates, establishment of a functional Common Facility Center, and creation of sustainable income generation opportunities represents a significant success in rural development and women empowerment. The project has not only met its immediate objectives but has also created the institutional and technical foundations for long-term sustainability and scaling.

The integrated approach combining skill development, infrastructure creation, market linkages, and institutional strengthening provides a replicable model for similar interventions in other regions and sectors. The emphasis on environmental sustainability and traditional craft preservation adds additional value to the development outcomes.

Looking forward, the strong foundation created through this project provides multiple opportunities for expansion and diversification. The established networks, developed capacities, and proven market demand create favorable conditions for scaling up operations and exploring new product categories and markets.

The success of this initiative demonstrates the continued relevance of traditional crafts in modern economic development and the potential of well-designed interventions to create meaningful and sustainable change in rural communities. The project stands as a model for future development initiatives seeking to combine economic empowerment, environmental sustainability, and cultural preservation.

Submitted by:

Shri Shailendra Kumar Singh

General Secretary

Abhivyakti Foundation

Date: August 2025