

The Good Sight

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The Sunny Side

SELCO's solar solutions light up rural economy

Great Guardian: Magsaysay awardee Dr Bharat Vatwani is more than just a psychiatrist

Collaborating for a cause: Piramal Foundation strives to address development issues through partnerships



▲ Jail inmates with their creations

Weaving redemption one knot at a time

Jaipur Rugs Foundation's Prison Project engages with 80 inmates across Jaipur Central Jail and Bikaner Central Jail to provide them meaningful livelihood by teaching them the art of carpet weaving

India has millions of craftsmen who are engaged in traditional crafts that symbolise the cultural identity of the Indian civilisation. But these art forms are threatened by mechanised mass production, which is killing human creativity. One such endangered art form is the art of carpet weaving, which had been on a steady decline due to systemic malpractices and mechanization. NK Chaudhary, the founder of Jaipur Rugs Company, felt a need to set up an entity that worked relentlessly to preserve this art from fading away. In 2004, he established the Jaipur Rugs Foundation (JRF) with a vision to create a society where equality, justice and peace prevail through socio-economic development. Its key aim is to provide opportunities

for all, with the insurgent mission to serve as a social innovator to promote the cause of artisans by providing them with job opportunities resulting in an uplifted rural society.

JRF being an inclusive development practitioner is committed to promoting creativity everywhere it goes, especially in places where others are reluctant to venture. JRF is working with 80 inmates across Jaipur Central Jail and Bikaner Central Jail to provide them meaningful and fulfilling work by teaching them the art of carpet weaving. At JRF, we feel that the capacity to imagine brings motivation, which then adds to the prestige and prosperity of individuals if nurtured appropriately.

One of the biggest tragedies to befall a family is the incarceration of the breadwinner. The innocent victims of the justice system are the families whose lives are upended irreversibly. Most of the prisoners come from economically weak backgrounds and are barely literate. Their lives are marred by poverty and crime and the only way to bring about change is to empower them economically. JRF has started an initiative to teach carpet weaving to inmates who are serving long sentences. The aim is to create a sustainable livelihood for them so that they can support their families through it. The foundation is also helping in opening bank accounts for these prisoners so that they can receive the payment for their work directly in their accounts for the work they do.

"I can't believe I made this carpet. I am very happy doing this work. This keeps my mind and heart busy. I want to make all the beautiful things of the world in it," says Rabin, one of the

JRF is a social enterprise that is working towards eliminating middlemen and ensuring fair wages for artisans. It has touched the lives of 40,000 artisans out of which 80% are women.

inmates, after weaving his first ever Artisan Originals (AO) rug. The AO rugs are designed and woven by the weavers themselves. They are a display of the weavers' own creativity and ideas. For the first time ever, weavers become the designers of their own rugs and express themselves through their designs.

Mostly, there are instances where inmates are given random works just to keep them occupied. The works that are given to inmates lack backward and forward linkages, leading to underutilisation of their potential which leads to unwillingness to work. JRF taps into this latent potential by using its socio-economic development model and conducts training and workshops with the inmates and provides them forward market linkages for their hard work. It also instils mindfulness and provides holistic health support to the inmates working there, thereby providing them means of sustainable livelihood.

"This innovative initiation and effort of Jaipur Rugs Foundation and the Prison Department is really an appreciable effort. Prison inmates are trained in rug weaving and production. Their efforts are getting appreciated globally. This leads to a



Grow-Trees Testimonials



Roland Folger, Managing Director & CEO, Mercedes-Benz India

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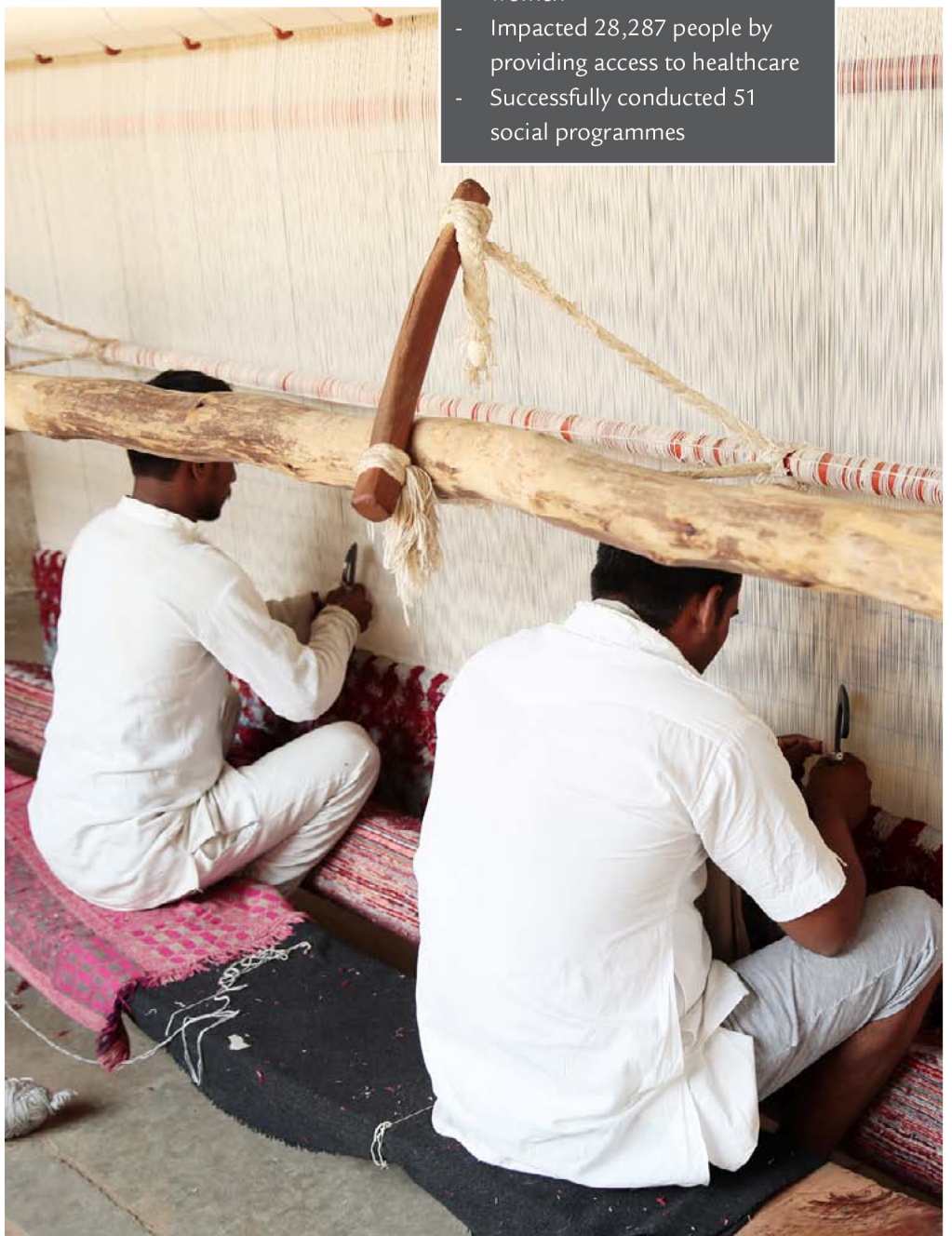


Dia Mirza (Bollywood Actress)

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▲ Inmates at work

The Jaipur Rugs Foundation has touched thousands of lives with its work across 600 villages in India:

- It has impacted 1,29,200 lives
- Given livelihood to artisans in 600 villages, spread across five states
- Created 40,000 jobs directly and indirectly
- Empowered 41,605 rural women
- Impacted 28,287 people by providing access to healthcare
- Successfully conducted 51 social programmes

village community members and brings transformation by imparting knowledge of health, hygiene, family life, education and environment. “Let goodness, fairness and most importantly, love prevail in business; profits will inevitably follow,” says NK Chaudhary, Founder, Jaipur Rugs Company.■
(Contribution by Jaipur Rugs Foundation for The Good Sight)

perfect way of reformation in prison. The earnings which the prison inmates are making go to their families. 25% of their earned income is given to the victims’ families as well,” says Rakesh Mohan, Superintendent, Jaipur Central Jail.
JRF’s purpose of existence has been consciously integrated with the UN sustainable development goals whereby, the significance of creating sustainable market-based solutions for the disempowered has been comprehended. Through this initiative, JRF is focusing on an idea that creates true social value.

Other than this, JRF also trains and nurtures artisans in remote villages in five states across India and provides sustainable livelihood to them at their doorstep. It is a social enterprise that has worked towards eliminating middlemen and ensuring fair wages for artisans. It has touched the lives of 40,000 artisans out of which 80% are women. The status of these women in their communities has improved as a result of the sustainable livelihood provided to them. For the first time in their lives, these women are now financially empowered and improving the lives of their family. Reviving the dying art of carpet weaving and creating a sense of bonding with the community is at the core of the foundation’s philosophy. It is working towards making the handmade carpet industry a sustainable one. It was set up with the aim to bring about positive change in the lives of India’s marginalised craftsmen and preserve the dying art of carpet weaving by making it a sustainable means of livelihood for future generations. The foundation also provides functional skills to artisans and