



**Sustaining Impact ,Empowering  
Artisans**



**Annual Report 2022-23**

# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE...



## Mr. Georgi Eapen Zachariah

It is truly a great privilege to write this note as 'Asha' looks forward to completing a journey of being in faithful service to artisans of the country for 48 years, fulfilling the vision of its founding fathers.

I am sure the Organization has faced its own share of challenges and fine-tuned itself to mechanism to overcome those challenges in the years gone by as the nature of opportunities and challenges varied itself during the past 48 years of its existence. One line could be the movement from "rationised " economy of 1970's and 1980's to slowly operating in a surplus economy as the country and the world moved to more globalized market to operate and the boundaries thinned down to create market space which are beyond geographical boundaries. From there it moved to Digital market space and Digital method of communications and the organizations and communities moving to digital transformations to enhance efficiencies and create larger markets for itself.

In the middle of all these, the core values of fair trade principles, Practices of Sustainability and Social responsibility remained intact, cherished and strengthened. It is the core values that will drive our growth as we move forward in a world, which is increasingly digital in more than one ways.

The new Asha House to expand our facilities to back our operation has been spruced up and the office has been shifted to enable better operational excellence. We look forward to shortly commencing and speeding up the completion of Asha Resource centre at Saharanpur, which will become a landmark facility for skill training of artisans.

As we inch closer to touching 50 years of being in service to the artisans of the country in another two years, may I look back and acknowledge the vision of the founders of this movement called 'Asha'. The precious and valuable employees who spearheaded the execution of all the efforts, the artisans whose lives Asha has impacted deeply, the clients across the globe who ensured that the products designed and developed by the rural artisans across the country reached the consumers across the globe and the board members and office bearers who lead this organization through the journey of last several years.

May 'Asha' as an organization shine through in the years to come to influence and impact the livelihood of larger number of rural artisans of this country, spreading its footprints across the nation as we move forward with equal enthusiasm and commitment.

Mr. Geogi Eapen Zachariah.





# CEO's Message

## Mr. Rajesh Kumar

Dear Members of the Asha Handicrafts Community,

As we reflect upon the past year and present our annual report, I am filled with deep gratitude for the unwavering support and resilience shown by our artisans, staff, board members, and clients. The challenges we faced, such as the global pandemic and the inflation caused by the Russian-Ukraine conflict, tested us in ways we never anticipated. Yet, we stood together, supporting one another and striving to sustain our mission of empowering artisans and promoting fair trade.

To our esteemed artisans, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for your unwavering dedication and craftsmanship. Throughout the uncertainties and disruptions caused by the pandemic, you continued to create exquisite handicrafts, showcasing your immense talent and skill. Your commitment to preserving traditional techniques and enriching lives through your art is truly commendable. Your resilience has been an inspiration to us all.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to our dedicated staff members. Your tireless efforts, adaptability, and commitment to our mission have been instrumental in navigating the challenges we faced. Despite the uncertainties and changes in our operational landscape, you have remained steadfast in supporting our artisans and ensuring the smooth functioning of our organization. Your dedication and professionalism are truly commendable.

To our esteemed board members, I express my sincere appreciation for your guidance and wisdom during these trying times. Your strategic insights and unwavering commitment to our mission have been invaluable. Your support and direction have helped us navigate through the storm, making informed decisions that have strengthened our organization and positioned us for future success.

Last but not least, I want to express my gratitude to our clients, who have remained loyal and supportive throughout these difficult times. Your continued trust and partnership have allowed us to sustain our operations and provide vital support to our artisans. We acknowledge the challenges you faced, such as large inventory and disrupted business ecosystems, and we are grateful for your understanding and collaboration as we worked together to find solutions.

As we move forward, we remain committed to our mission of creating sustainable livelihoods for artisans and promoting fair trade practices. We will continue to adapt and innovate, finding new ways to overcome challenges and seize opportunities. Our artisans' talent and creativity, combined with the dedication and support of our community, will guide us towards a brighter future.

Once again, thank you for your unwavering support and commitment. Together, we have proven that we can weather even the most challenging storms. Let us move forward with renewed determination, ensuring a better future for our artisans and creating a more equitable and sustainable world.

With gratitude and warm regards,



Email

info@ashahandicrafts.com

Address

123 Anywhere St, Any City

## GM's Message

### Mr. Ivan Carvalho



This year was marked by the re-introduction of several in-person activities along with resumption of international travel both from Asha as well as from our clients. The year highlights a number of impactful activities that represents the work Asha has performed. From producers training and capacity building programs to international market access activities and from research to new craft introduction are some of the tremendous achievements for Asha. As a result of this we have been able to achieve our mission of improving lives through the creation of sustainable trade partnership with the producers and clients across the world.

While this year looks like complete return-to-normal, we are now getting a sound of several new challenges that includes global inflationary pressures and political unrest in some countries. It's true that inflation is hitting us hard here in India as well, but we're not the only ones feeling the pangs of rising costs. In recent times, we have noticed significant price hikes everywhere—from gas to food and even clothing etc. In India, many people are losing their jobs, homes and are unable to feed their families because of increasing costs.

Inflation is also the cause of the steady disappearance of certain industries, such as India's arts and traditional crafts. Many of the younger generations are choosing to take high-paying tech jobs in the cities as the handicraft industry is not so profitable and money making. The older generations are getting older and hence survival of crafts is a big concern.

At Asha, we are facing significant increases in pricing from labour to materials to shipping. Yet we have worked hard to be able to offer the best price possible to our clients while remaining true to our mission of being a fair trade.

Though India's traditional crafts are becoming a rarer art form, we strive to keep sales going so that there is demand for our products and these treasured crafts do not disappear.



# Sudhir's Story

43-year-old Sudhir Rawal is an ambitious master craftsman who pursued his passion in the handicrafts world when he was very young. Born in the historic city of Panipat that is commonly known as “City of Weavers” or “The Textile City”, in a respectable Indian Army household.

An eager, passionate and curious teenager who had completed his Bachelor's education and secured employment with a textile export house. Over a period of 17 years, Sudhir worked and allowed himself to learn the necessary skills of the handicrafts industry. He eventually moved out to begin a unit of his own named as ‘Mayank Handlooms’ and began working in the domestic market in 2017 in partnership with a friend.



Sudhir met with Asha Handicrafts at the Handicrafts exhibition and then started working. This meeting opened a new window of opportunity for him and he quickly sent samples of his work to Asha office. To his joy, he received his first order for 100 pieces of the beautiful herringbone recycled throw.

Today Sudhir receives orders for as many as 1000 pcs and continues to collaborate with Asha Handicrafts Association. Most of the local artisans in his unit are women. There are 15 artisans in the unit currently and increases depending on the work he has at hand. His persistence has created employment opportunities for the simple ordinary women artisans in the existing community.

Sudhir patiently, committed himself to the craft of creating exclusive recycled throws in various colours and designs. Asha Handicrafts chose to help him fulfil his desire of owning his own production unit. This year with the financial support provided, Sudhir established his own workshop and purchased the required machineries to make the handicrafts.

Sudhir lives with his wife and they are the proud parents of two brilliant sons, the older who is pursuing his studies in textile designing and merchandising and the younger completing his High School.

Consistently creating exclusive and unique throws, Sudhir has seized every opportunity in his path and intentionally made a place for himself in the handicrafts world. Asha Handicrafts Association is privileged to walk alongside Sudhir as he stretches himself to achieve greater heights beyond his potential.





# Be Educated ,Be Empowered !

171

Students supported with Financial assistance for continuing formaleducation



40

Children benefiting computer skills from E academy Project

60

Children benefiting from Tuition Project



10

Girl Child Schlarships

## Go green Breathe clean !



Trees were planted by Artisans

52

Bicycles were distributed to artisans across the country

50

## Health Matters!

More than 1000 Patients

are provided with free medical consultation in saharanpur every year

2 Artisans

were given free medical assistance for diseases like heart problems and stomach infections



# Fair Trade Advocacy

400 Artisans and the Asha staff were educated about fair trade practices and climate change



Successfully carried out the WFTO external audit and secured guaranteed fair trade member certification



## Craft Promotion

19 new artisans were taken on board



## Skill Development

Annual Artisans meet for skill upgradation- Artisans group heads participated



## Capacity Building

Building Infrastructure and promoting sustainable raw material



10 Countries

55  
Producers

4535  
New Product  
Designs

450000  
Products  
Exported

48 Years of  
Existence

585 Artisans  
Working

25 Clients



**Our Reach and  
Impact**



# Asha at glance

Combined Effort Counts for SUCCESS



*Celebration of Happiness*

**ASHA'S BIRTHDAY**

*Service*  
**AWARDS**



*Celebrations*

*In-House*  
**TRAINING**



*POST*

**AWARENESS**

# Board Members



**Mr. Geogi Eapen Zachariah**

**Chairman**



**Mr. Suresh Mathew**

**Vice Chairman**



**Ms. Sunita Nair**

**Secretary**



**Mr. Leslie R.G**

**Treasurer**



**Mr. Darryl Braganza**

**Member**



**Mr. Leo Salins**

**Member**



**Ms. Marina Cherian**

**Member**



**Mr. James Varghese**

**Member**



**Mr. Bijoy Thomas**

**Member**

# Office / Warehouse

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