

AMAN PUBLIC CHARITABLE TRUST NEW DELHI

Annual Report April 2016 to March 2017

**T-29, Ground Floor
Green Park Main
New Delhi - 110016
India
Telephone: +91-11 41328040-41
Fax: 41328042
Website: www.amanpanchayat.org**

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INTRODUCTION-

We are glad to present to you the Annual Report of Aman Public Charitable Trust, New Delhi, for the financial year 2016-17. The year remarked successful conclusion of many projects along with carrying forward former community development projects primarily focusing on children and youth. We were largely able to benefit around 350-500 youth beneficiaries through our skill training and education oriented projects.

A NASSCOM Foundation supported project Indian Public Library Movement (IPLM) was introduced towards the end of 2016 with around 12 project locations across the state of Jammu & Kashmir. The project IPLM was launched in presence of eminent state and local administrative bodies, who attended its inaugural ceremony at SPS state library, district Srinagar in Kashmir valley. AMAN Trust was successful in certifying 40 school dropout youths who concluded their skill training classroom and practical sessions at the government ITI centre at Pattan. There were other projects that AMAN conducted in 2015-16, the details of which are furnished in later part of this report.

AMAN remains committed to the building of a just and compassionate society through its projects in the field of social and economic development along with campaigns and advocacy programmes in the states of Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh.

DETAILS OF PROJECT

1. The Indian Public Library Movement (IPLM), J&K

Project Period: 1st December 2016 to 30th November 2017

The public library development in India remains an untouched affair. Most of the public libraries in India are either under-utilised or lack adequate resources to cater to the demand of its users. Considering that the public libraries are easy to access knowledge centres, it demands urgent attention for reinvention and transformation. IPLM is a movement to restore the worth that public libraries deserve in the present context. It is to accomplish restoration of

public libraries as inclusive knowledge and information centres that serve the needs of the communities in present time. Libraries enable community members to meet, interact, share, learn and grow. Considering the violence that the state of J&K has been witnessing, the public libraries act as spaces where children and adolescents are able to engage themselves positively amidst civil disorder which otherwise leaves lasting traumatic impressions on their tender mind.



AMAN Trust in collaboration with NASSCOM Foundation launched project IPLM in Jammu & Kashmir with a vision to support and train library administration staffs to enhance and develop their skills that is needed in process of repositioning public libraries. For making the library services useful to its users, AMAN's field team engaged rigorously in mobilising the community across 12 districts in the state J&K public libraries to generate awareness and promote the use of public libraries. Some new services were added to these libraries to enhance library user's experience. The project understands the importance of networking and developing sustained partnership to harness resources from the community for effective functioning of libraries. Several rounds of training for the librarians and other staffs were conducted by the capacity building expert team. The below mentioned activities were the key highlights of IPLM in J&K-

- a. Making NEET JEE preparatory e-learning resource and study materials available at district public libraries under IPLM, J&K.
- b. Initiation of refurbishing of district public libraries for making public libraries appealing to its users. The libraries were provided with required infrastructural amenities- white washing the library building, construction and purchase of required furniture that are prerequisite for enhanced user experience.

- c. The district public libraries were provided with all that is needed for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) readiness. Each of the district public libraries were provided- five desktop computers, LAN connection, an internet hotspot device, one printer, a photo-copier machine and a scanner for aiding educational services at libraries.
- d. A dedicated children's corner was created for each of the district public library to encourage the use of library services by children between the age group of 4-12 years of age in nearby communities.
- e. Awareness generation for promoting use of libraries was widely attempted through community mobilization and arrangement of library exposure visits for youths enrolled at various educational institutes.



While many librarians admit that project IPLM J&K had resulted in increased number of users of library services especially the youth population, it has also led to rewarding collaboration between AMAN Trust and the state department of library and research, J&K.

2. Market Aligned Skill Training (MAST) program, J&K- an Update

Project Period: 1st December 2015 to 31st May 2017



Jammu and Kashmir MAST project is a joint initiative of AMAN Public Charitable Trust, New Delhi, The American India Foundation Trust, India and American India Foundation, United States aiming to explore various livelihood possibilities for school dropout youths in the region.

The project aims at providing suitable industrial training to interested youths who could eventually get employment in local industries. Simultaneously, the project aimed to provide required counseling and soft skills training to the youths who have been brought up in a hostile environment arising out of conflict situations.

MAST centre at ITI Pattan took off on 15th February 2016 with due support from technical education board and important state administrative bodies. Potential youths were identified for imparting skill based trainings to help them be positively productive thereby creating socially responsible youths. The project plan focused on creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for around 180 – 200 youths through skilled based trainings (mechanics, electrical, plumbing, carpenter, cutting and tailoring etc.) Thereby ensuring dignified lives, improved confidence and raised self- esteem through ethical absorption of skilled youths with suitable employers. The youths enrolled at MAST Centre typically were under the age group of 16 to 30 years

The first batch of 40 youths, 20 each in electrician and plumbing trade training successfully concluded their trade training in June 2016. The youths were finally awarded a graduation diploma certified and signed by the donor agency, implementing partner and Principal, ITI Pattan, district Baramulla.

The project was successful in motivating several school dropout youths in taking up skill training courses. Some graduate youths are now part time practicing as plumber and electrician. The government's ITI centre at Pattan block, district Baramulla in collaboration with the Rashtriya Rifle 29 and AMAN Trust, New Delhi decided to continue offering some short-term training courses for interested youth.

3. Women Weavers Welfare Initiative in Baragaon village, Barabanki, Uttar

Pradesh

Project Period: 1st May 2017 to 30th April 2018

Barabanki district in Uttar Pradesh state has a thriving craft of hand woven fabrics. However, with increasing mechanization of production, power looms, dominance of middle men and other such factors, many weavers are forced to leave their traditional profession and migrate to towns in search of alternate employments. A few families continue to weave and are bearing the responsibility of preserving the age old practice. Interestingly, most of the weaving units are led by women weavers in these households.

With a view to support and ensure wellbeing of the women weavers, AMAN Trust with support from American Jewish World Service (AJWS) has begun this modest initiative with weaver families in Baragaon village of Baranbanki district. The project aims at building necessary collaborations to build capacities of the women weavers on- promoting them draw fair wages, create a sustainable livelihood, skill up-gradation and sensitize them on basic health and hygiene issues.

The project intervention had encouraged many young women weavers to take charge of their weaving unit while engaging in regular production of good quality hand woven cotton



products. Some women are also assisting their husband in various forms of embroidery craft works like zardozi and chikankar. Leading online stores like JAYPORE, ITOKRI, AMAZON.IN are promoting sale of their hand woven produce. Many other brand studios like – EitherOr, JiCuration, Anoothi, are also stocking up these hand woven products.

4. Capacity Building & Advocacy for Scrap Worker's Rights and Health, Delhi

Project Period: 1st June 2015 to 31st May 2016

A large population of immigrants, refugees and migrants in the city of Delhi is a part of labour force in unorganized sector. Not much has been done to address the challenges faced by these workers in the unorganized sector across Delhi.

With a vision to address the challenges faced by the migrant workers, AMAN Trust with the help of its donor agency American Jewish World Service (AJWS), conducted various capacity building training and awareness generation activities under this project. Below are the highlights of project activities-

- a. Mobilizing the rag pickers or urban waste worker's community held in Okhla and Jahangirpuri localities of south and north Delhi respectively through capacity building workshops and community meetings.
- b. One day workshop held on climate change and urban waste management on 9th August 2016 in Jahangirpuri G block, attended by a total of 21 workers from both

north and south Delhi regions.

- c. An exposure visit to the Dry Waste Collection Centre (DWCC), Jayanagar, Bangalore was conducted to understand the process of dry waste collection and thereby build capacities of scrap workers.
- d. Case study and recording of cases of migrant rag picking and urban waste processing workers and aiding their living conditions by handing their cases to local CSOs and human rights advocates.

Considering the success of its first phase, the project has been extended further to ensure reaching more number of scrap workers across Delhi.

5. Gender-Sensitive Citizenship: An EbongAlap AMAN Trust Initiative

Project Period: May-June 2016 to May-June 2017

AMAN Trust in collaboration with EbongAlap, Kolkata aims to execute the project on creating a Gender Sensitive Citizenship in the regions of West Bengal supported by Human Capability Foundation (HCF). For past five years, AMAN and EbongAlap have jointly executed various projects concerning gender justice, peace building and mobilizing youth in educational institutes in social welfare and human rights issues. In continuation to the fruitful collaboration, AMAN and EbongAlap commit to hold a series of discussions and workshops aimed to advocate gender sensitivity in educational institutions across the state of West Bengal. In order to accomplish its vision, the project committedly worked with a grass-root community based organization Disha in the Sunderban region of West Bengal.

In partnership with fellow NGOs the project tried bridging the gap between the women of island, urban middle class and rural working class and youth through a range of activities in Sunderban region. The project team was invited to collaborate with state government's SarvaSikshaAbhiyan (Mission) to work with adolescents to generate awareness on gender and sexuality issues in seven government high schools across highly sensitive Indo-Bangla border region. The main issues addressed through project intervention were - (i) relationships, friendships and issues of sex abuse, (ii) cell phones and its use/misuse. In collaboration with Sappho for Equality on Self, Society and Gender-Sexuality two workshops were conducted to discuss various queer issues with trans-sexuals, bisexuals and inter-sexuals in the Sunderban regions of West Bengal.

The project was successful in initiating dialogue amongst the adolescents on important issues

pertaining to gender sensitivity. Responses recorded from children proved that the workshops were helpful for them to build understanding on sex abuse, adolescent girl's health and hygiene and understand the need for gender sensitivity. The project was also successful in collaborating with the state government of West Bengal which resulted in enhanced intervention.

11. Update on Queer Writing Series

Queer and feminist politics are at a peculiar crossroads in India in present days. Earlier histories of queer movement in India were rooted in many ways in an intersectional, feminist politics which saw gender, sexuality, caste, race, religion and ability intrinsically connected. Such a politics, a queer politics, had the opportunity and potential of building a sexuality politics that was more than just LGBT, and included all those denied sexual rights which in India are a broad list. The Supreme Court reversal of the 2009 judgment has returned a sense of uncertainty into queer spaces. The reactions have had many different facets- while opinions are changing, a climate of intolerance has gotten a boost and the law has yet again empowered as a tool of discrimination.

This project marked a significant move forward by opening up the production of knowledge by publishing texts on gender and sexuality that will be widely circulated by being freed of copyright, translated as well as circulated free of cost after a period of time. It created sustainable, accessible and rigorous portfolio of writing and publication, the key themes of the writings being – gender, sexuality and rights with 4-6 titles within the broad themes.

CONCLUSION

The year 2016-17 witnessed progress in terms of successfully concluding previous projects. Some new projects were introduced to continue AMAN's contribution in the field of peace keeping and allied capacity building as well as advocacy efforts. All this was possible because of our generous donors, beneficiaries, other stakeholders of program and our sincere AMAN team from program fields who stood by us through financial and moral support of. We place on record our immense gratitude to all of them.

Jamal Kidwai
Director – AMAN TRUST, New Delhi