

ITRHD
INDIAN TRUST FOR
RURAL HERITAGE AND
DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE



'Strategies for
Rural Development and
Heritage Conservation.'

Synopsis of Nila Moti Trust
presentation

- 1992 setting up of the Nila Moti Foundation in Switzerland
- - strategies
- - who are the beneficiaries
- 1997 setting up of Nila Moti Trust in India
- - why Khimsar
- - construction of the buildings
- - preliminary steps for admissions
- - how to choose the beneficiaries
- - inauguration of Nila Moti Trust
- - how can the ladies benefit?
- - rules
- - illiteracy
- - yoga
- - breakfast
- - a day at Nila Moti
- - introducing weaving
- - different departments
- - how to integrate a new person
- - quality of the products
- - visitors
- - extra muros
- - introducing English/Hindi lessons
- - electricity
- - accountants
- - visiting India
- - future projects

INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTER
NEW DELHI
MARCH 3RD AND 4TH 2012



**NILA MOTI:
an extraordinary human adventure**

It all started in **1992**, when my husband and I created the **NILA MOTI FOUNDATION** and a **shop** in our farmhouse in **Switzerland**, selling beautiful objects and textiles delicately handcrafted in India.

The profits were to go towards the construction of a crafts center dedicated to promoting women activities and handicraft in rural areas of Rajasthan.

In **1993**, we have started to file the paperwork for setting up a Trust in India.



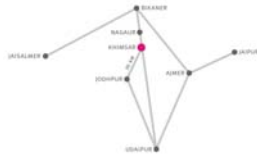
In **1997**, NILA MOTI TRUST has been officially recognised by the central government in New Delhi . The RBI has given the permission to transfer the funds (benefits of the sales in Switzerland) of the Nila Moti Foundation to India for the construction of a crafts center in Khimsar.



NILA MOTI TRUST has purchased 3000 m2 of land opposite the Police Station and the Hospital in Khimsar, District Nagaur, Rajasthan.

It was essential to find a centrally located area easily accessible by foot for the ladies.

Why Khimsar in Rajasthan?



Preliminary step

In January 2001, 7 months prior to the opening of Nila Moti Trust, a four day meeting had taken place in Khimsar in presence of:

Brigitte Singh, Jaipur based French block printer
Paola Manfredi, Delhi based Italian designer
Judy Frater, Kutch based American coordinator of Kala Raksha

Our friends **Gajendra and Priti Singh of Khimsar** have given us tremendous support and have been instrumental for setting up the Nila Moti Trust. This rural, quiet area away from bustling cities was an ideal place for giving employment and empowerment to needy ladies.

Hundreds of applications

Hundreds of ladies from the village and nearby villages have come to meet us bringing their needlework or their mother's or grand-mother's.

Their applications have been carefully written down with all the details of the ladies regarding themselves and their family, social background etc. etc.

The construction of the 5 buildings took 3 and a half years. Many people from the village were employed. It created a lot of expectations and hope to get some work. It was reasonable to start in a slow manner. The idea came to ask advice from experts who once were in a similar situation.

How to choose from all the names?

We decided for the following criteria:

Young needy mothers chosen from all different backgrounds and casts, widows and ladies whose husband is absent or handicapped

Inauguration of Nila Moti Trust

- On 15th August 2001, the buildings of Nila Moti Trust in Khimsar have been inaugurated.
- Gajendra and Priti Singh and the womenfolk of Khimsar have attended the big day.
- 15 young mothers from all different social background were employed with a regular income



In 2012, 77 staff members are employed in Nila Moti Trust.

This includes 4 persons working as gateman, driver and or shop-in-charge and 4 persons working part time



What else?

- Providential Fund
- 110 days paid yearly leave
- Payment of medical bills
- 3 months paid pregnancy leave
- Yoga, breakfast, Hindi/English lessons
- Holi / Divali / 15th August gifts
- Retirement pension

How can the ladies benefit?

What can we offer
to a young, needy mother?

**a regular income and
decent working conditions**

She gains self respect and empowerment

Rules of Nila Moti Trust

- Honesty
- Respect towards each other
- Commitment
- Punctuality
- No politics



- 90 percent of the ladies at Nila Moti are illiterate young mothers
- two of them are severely handicapped (polio)
- 40 percent of them are widows
- Age group between 25 and 44 (in 2012)



Illiteracy

The idea of giving Hindi lessons in the morning was not a good one.

They strongly opposed to that saying that they are too old for school...

Unexpectedly successful

We gave them one week to try.
It turned out to be a hit!

After two years the yoga teacher left.
Some Nila Moti ladies are now teaching and the classes are very popular every morning at 9.

An Indian lady yoga teacher from L.A. participated in the yoga class and praised the high standard

YOGA

AN UNPOPULAR IDEA!

When we suggested the idea of yoga we met with lots of protest from the teacher and from the ladies!

The teacher thought it is no use to teach illiterate ladies... the ladies said they have enough exercise in their work at home...

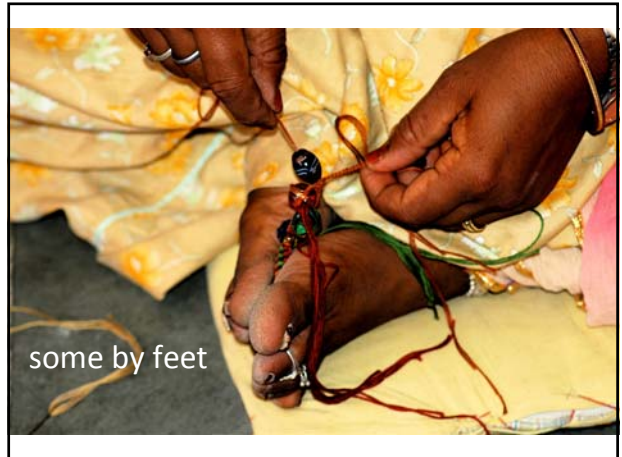


Chai, biscuits and fruit



It's ten a.m.

work starts



some by feet

some by hand



easier this way...





Others get their machine ready



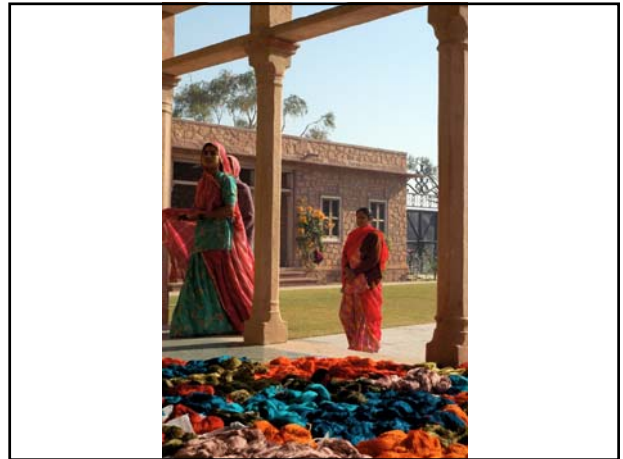
Kantha concentrates on her jacket

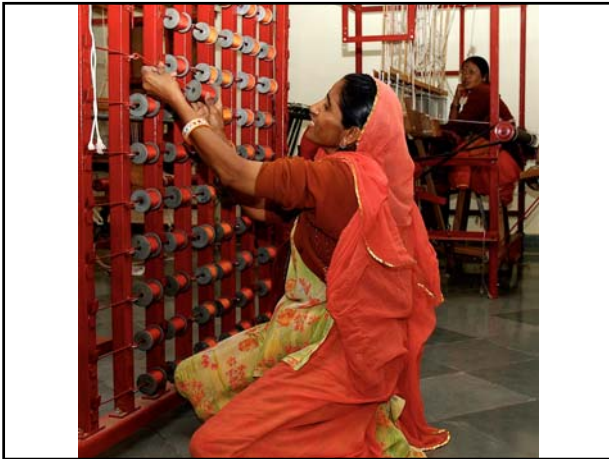


Introducing weaving: a challenge

TARA, the Delhi based NGO for Technology and Action for Rural Advancement, has made the looms for us.

Seven ladies have learnt the craft and are working together making interesting materials used as fabrics for jackets, coats and other products





Different departments

After some time some ladies were capable to become head of a group and we formed different departments of production:

- Tailoring
- Animals
- Beedwork, gudri and all handwork
- Weaving



Sharda cuts the materials and distributes the work



How to integrate a new person?

When a new lady joins, she can experiment in the different departments. She may feel that she is good at machine stitching and after some days she prefers to work in an other department. We give her time to find out in which activity she will develop good skills and where she is at ease and happy.



counting...not so easy



Quality

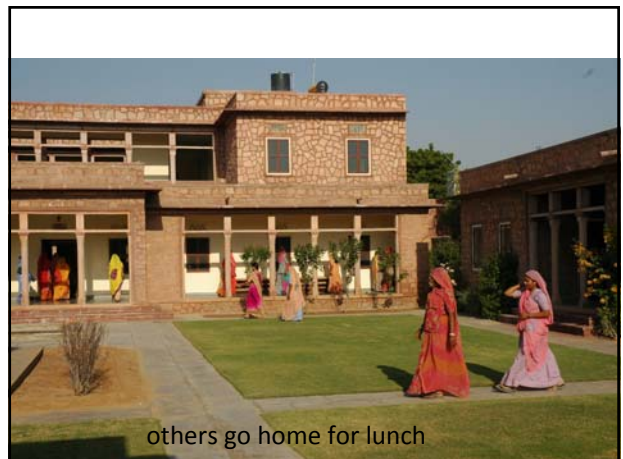
- Selling in Switzerland high quality products of famous Indian artisans set the standard for our own production in Khimsar.
- Slowly and surely we learnt to quilt and stitch, assemble and finish little treasures. The ladies have developed skills and their natural talent has made the rest.



Shobaji

Shobaji went to school till 8th standard.
She is in charge of 10 ladies.

On each product she puts a piece of cloth mentioning the name of the artisan and the time spent on the product. Also everything is noted in a separate book for each lady.



Visitors

- Many Indians and foreigners come to Nila Moti
- They can freely visit and photograph
- We have set up a shop in the premises

Extra muros

A small display of our products at the Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur during a visit of Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall

Guests from Jodhpur



A new resident at Clarence House



Products

- The product range has been developed over the years. The fast changing trends are continuously challenging us to create new styles and designs. The demand of the Indian, European or American clientele is not the same. A number of young designers regularly contribute with their own creations.



slippers



Getting ready for a
colourfull show
at the

**Embassy of
Switzerland
in
New Delhi**

English/Hindi lessons again!

To be able to converse with Indians and foreigners, the ladies felt the necessity to learn.

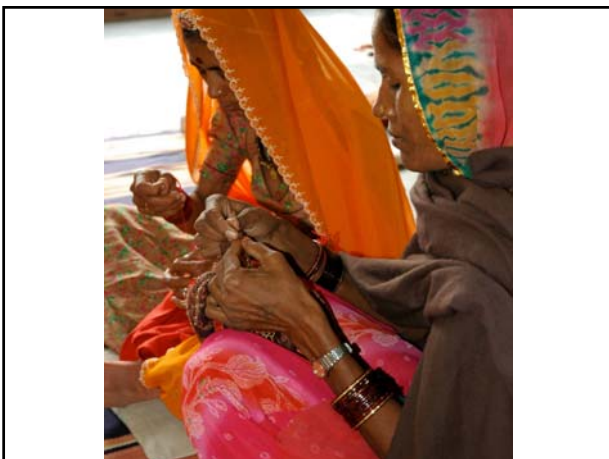
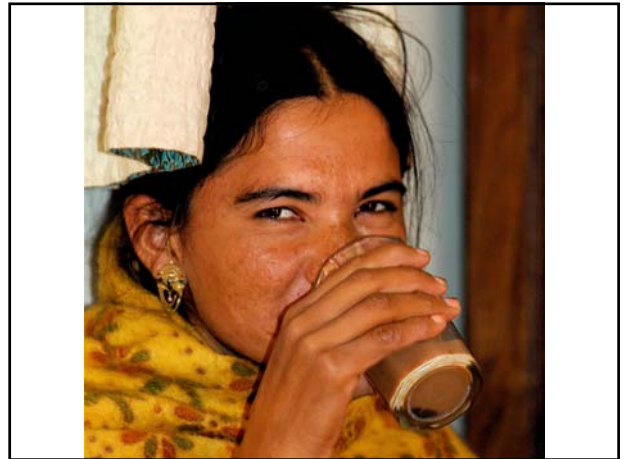
Hence, in 2011, Hindi and English lessons were successfully introduced.

Two lady teachers from Khimsar come daily from 1.30 to 2.30. The Nila Moti staff gives half an hour of the lunch break, the Trust offers half an hour of working time.

In the evening at home, some children help the mother with their homework.



Namaste or
good afternoon?



Ayachuki and Syia

From morning to evening
they clean the floors, the windows,
doors and wash rooms.

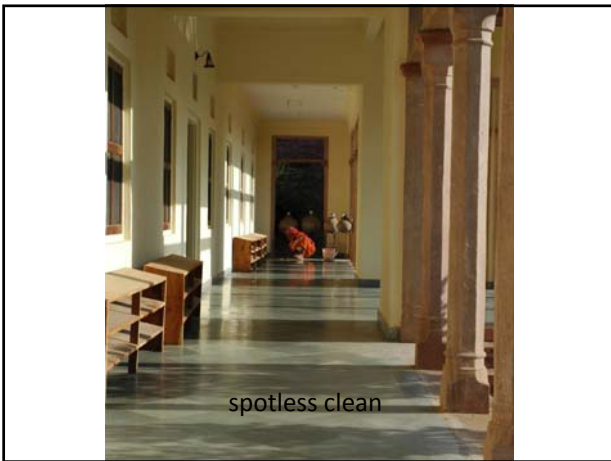
They are the artisans
of a great quality of environment.



At five sharp they leave

Most live in Khimsar, but some come by bus from a nearby village. They return home happily but their day is not finished yet.

Nila Moti has become like a family for many of them and particularly for the widows. They help each other and share their problems.



spotless clean





Generator room



Electricity, generator

Two electricians from Khimsar Fort work part time for Nila Moti Trust. All electrical problems are solved by the team. Most of the time the generator works for two to three hours per day. In the hot season all the fans are also needed.

ACCOUNTANTS

- Two accountants from Khimsar Fort work at Nila Moti part time. They handle all money related matters as well as export, shop, stock, salaries and contact by internet.
- A chartered accountant team in Jaipur is in charge of the control of the entire organisation and files the necessary reports to the Home Ministry in Delhi.

Electricity



Travelling to India

- Travelling four times a year to India, carrying new designs and buying materials from Delhi ensures a constant progress in variety and design.
- Quality checking is essential. Listening to the ladies and interacting with them is just as important.

Future project



Biological treatment
of textile dyeing
wastewater

Thank you for your attention!



DYEING UNIT

NILA MOTI TRUST is collaborating with the Jaipur based block-print and textile engineer **Mr. Vikram Joshi** for the creation of an ecologically-sensitive system for treatment of textile dyeing waste-water.

The Shristi Eco-Research Unit (SERU) in Pune is designing an eco-friendly system using plants and bacteria.

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Diwali 2012

For the 20th anniversary of the
NILA MOTI FOUNDATION IN SWITZERLAND
we hope to inaugurate the dyeing unit at
NILA MOTI TRUST IN KHIMSAR,

another dream comes true...