

# INFRASTRUCTURE Development Investment Program FOR TOURISM IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

## COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM (CBT) ACTIVITIES-CASE STUDY



**CHANGING LIVES IN HIMACHAL PRADESH THROUGH**  
Community Based Tourism (CBT) Activities under Infrastructure  
Development Investment Programme for Tourism in Himachal  
Pradesh (IDIPT-HP) Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation  
(DTCA), Govt. of Himachal Pradesh

IPE Global implemented and ADB supported Infrastructure Development Investment Program for Tourism (IDIPT), Himachal Pradesh provides an overall assistance for efficient implementation of the investment programme by supporting sustainable and inclusive tourism development and heritage conservation in Himachal Pradesh. Through IDIPT project, the CBT (community based tourism) programme provides skill-based training to the local communities that helps them earn a livelihood while also encouraging respect for local traditions and culture as well as for natural heritage at the same time.



## INSPIRING Women Achievers- ANITA THAKUR OF JYOTI SELF HELP GROUP

### **STRONG WILL TO RESOLVE MAKES HER TO FLY IN SKY**

Anita Thakur, 40 years of age of village Ghalai in Mahi Gram Panchayat in Solan district of Himachal Pradesh, was a home-maker three years ago, helping her husband in the agricultural fields during the busy season to support her family. A woman of strong will, now she moves places not only in her state but in many other parts of the country to learn new skills. She is a changed woman today, inspiring other women to come out, earn on their own and feel proud of their self-image. A Self-Help-Group (SHG) she joined in 2016 in her village and skill trainings she received under IDIPT-HP project of Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Himachal Pradesh, transformed her life and made her a different person altogether. She is a change-agent in true sense now.



**ANITA**  
**DISPLAYING**  
**HER**  
**HANDMADE**  
**Pine Needle**  
**PRODUCTS**

"I am thankful to CBT Team lead by Mr Surinder Negi Ji & Mr Rakesh Tiwary from IPE Global who not only motivated me but also helped to arrange trainings for me and my Group.

The most important contribution was linking our group with Market and marketing our products through Tourism departments stores / Hotels and arranging for our stalls at various locations and Fairs. This not only Instilled confidence in us but also gave the real Exposure to me and my group.

It was only due to training that we got through IDIPT-HP Project that our Lockdown period could be gainfully utilised productively for making products in Idle time which we immediately sold after lockdown restrictions were lifted partially."

**-Anita**

## SKILLED WITH ASPIRATIONS AT HEART...

Anita, born and brought up in village Sultanpur, some 25 kilometres away from village Ghalai where she is married now, is the first daughter of Mr. Ishwar Singh and Mrs. Parvati Devi. She claims that she was greatly influenced by her mother the most to become self-dependent in life. She studied upto class 10 and could not continue her further studies because the financial position of the family was not so good. She learnt knitting and stitching at home under the guidance of her mother before getting married 19 years ago to Mr. Suresh Kumar.

She is also skilled in agriculture work which kept her occupied all through those years till she decided to try her hands on other skills leading to additional income generation for the family. She has a son, studying in class 11 and willing to join army after studies. Anita has all support to him including financially to fulfil his dream.

### WHAT MADE HER START A NEW JOURNEY?

In February, 2016 when Self-Help-Groups (SHGs) started getting formed under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) in the state, women of Gram Panchayat, Mahi were contacted by development-block officials of Kandaghat. Anita not only joined Jyoti Self-Help-Group but became its Secretary to strengthen it in all possible manners. She assembled those women of her village who were hardly meeting together to become a part of savings-and-credit process through the SHG. Though involved largely in savings, which continued for initial two years, this SHG broke the status quo in life of Anita who started moving out to Block office and Banks.

In between, a Community-Based-Tourism (CBT) intervention of Infrastructure Development Investment Program for Tourism (IDIPT) in Himachal Pradesh under which Anita's Gram Panchayat was also identified, enhanced the pace of change in lives of women, including Anita. On 27th June 2017, an Entry Level Workshop was organised at Mahi to introduce the concept of CBT and inherent list of trainings to its stakeholders. Women were to be benefitted the most through Cooking, Home Stay and Handicrafts related trainings. Basic level Pine Needle Handicrafts Weaving Training conducted from 8th to 10th February 2018 was a real game-changer in terms of additional source of income generation activity for the SHG members of Mahi Panchayat.

Anita missed the Basic Level Pine Needle Handicrafts Weaving Training conducted in February 2018, as she was away in Mandi to attend another SHG related training to become a Community Resource Person. Back home she resolved to learn all the skills involved in weaving different pine needle handicrafts. This dream was fulfilled, to some extent by other members of her group trained by us in basic level training, particularly by Mrs. Reena Sharma, President of Jyoti Self Help Group, who proved to be her true mentor in transferring the skills to Anita. The advanced level Pine Needle Weaving Handicraft training conducted in April 2019, which she also attended had further enhanced her skills, standardisation of products. Now, Anita produces products which are state of the art and comparable to none in her group and in the Panchayat also, earns the maximum amongst all the members in Mahi Panchayat. A few photographs of products made by her are displayed below, which really proves the saying that seeing is believing.

Seeing her success in the field, the ladies of other wards of her Panchayat as well as nearby Panchayats were also attracted towards learning this skill from her. She has become a Master Trainer now and was able to transfer this skill to about 70 women in her Panchayat as well as also in the nearby Panchayats.

## ADDING FEATHER TO THE CAP UNDER DIFFERENT TRAININGS!

Anita, being an active member of her SHG, got many opportunities of trainings during the last three years. She is now trained in Book-Keeping of SHGs and acts as Community Resource Person. She has participated in many exposure visits within as well as outside the state.

The Pine Needle handicraft training she received under IDIPT-HP project has proved to be a turning point in her life as this training has helped her in generating additional income which now crossed Rs. 3,50,000/- in a short span of one and a half year. The other CBT trainings she received are on Basic Level and Advanced Level Cooking and Home Stay Management. She is a quick learner and has the capacity to make others to learn also. She has acquired all the capabilities of a Master Trainer on weaving Pine Needle Handicraft Products. This is proved by the fact that the other SHGs of nearby Panchayats have requested her services as Master Trainer by paying fee ranging from Rs. 1000/- to Rs. 1500/- per day.



Fruit Basket with Design in Wooden base



Wooden Based Trays



Flower Basket



Chiller Box

## WHAT MADE HER TO EXCEL – CRITICAL DETERMINANTS FOR THE SUCCESS OF HER ENDEAVOUR

Anita has become a role-model not only for her own SHG, but for all other SHGs of her Gram Panchayat and even beyond. The following factors made her to excel, particularly in making pine needle handicrafts products which is now a regular source of income for her:

- She always wanted to be a leader in whatever field she was involved. Further, she cares for her team members by helping whenever they needed.
- She started making Pine Needle handicrafts soon after learning the skill. With appreciation and encouragement from the Deptt. of Tourism and Rural Development Agency (DRDA) and Block Development Officer, Kandaghat Block, she never stopped. She encouraged others to produce and earn.
- She is a hard worker and never leaves the task uncompleted. She referred to training manual and reading materials to refine her handicraft products that others did rarely.
- She has managed to get full support of her husband who also helped and encouraged her in her efforts.
- A backache which hinders her from hard agriculture work has been turned into an advantage by her to stay at home and make handicrafts.
- She works overtime till late in nights and early mornings to meet her production targets.

- She innovates, with support from her husband by making wooden base in tray and looking mirrors with pine needle frame which are her much appreciated innovations.
- She is quick to use social media to remain in touch with group members. It has helped in improving the designs of her handicraft products as also in marketing.
- She never hesitates to share her skills with others. She has become a Master Trainer in herself.
- Lastly, the marketing support provided by the CBT team is a constant source of encouragement and critical driving force for the success of her endeavour not only for herself but for all the other women SHGs of Mahi Panchayat.



## Improvement in Quality of Life and Change in Economic Status

Anita works very hard and earns good income accordingly from the sale of Pine Needle handicrafts. Her belief never to depend on one source of income, prompted her to think of other ways of earnings. So, the second source of income came naturally in the form of training fee on imparting Pine Needle handicraft weaving training to SHG members as also training in strengthening SHGs. Within short span of one and half year of her involvement in this field, her earnings can be summarised as follows:

Earnings from sale of Pine Needle Handicrafts	Earnings as Training Fee	Total
<b>Rs. 3,00,000.00</b>	<b>Rs. 50,000.00</b>	<b>Rs.3,50,000.00</b>

This earning matters a lot in her life. It is her own hard earned money which she can spend on her child's education, meeting her own needs and on house hold expenses as per her own will. It has generated huge self-confidence in her and respect in the society. Recently, Anita bought a new gold ear rings for her. It was a proud moment in her life.

Anita remains always busy, mostly in managing her SHG, in producing high quality pine needle handicrafts and in imparting training to other women, formally or informally. She is on a mission mode to transform the lives of women in need.

# CHIEF MINISTER VILLAGE SKILL Scheme

The Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh Shri Jai Ram Thakur had an interaction with Mrs. Anita Devi through VC on 1st July 2020 at Block Development Office Kandaghat in Solan district (HP) regarding Chief Minister Village Skill Scheme. She showed her Pine Needle products to the CM. Impressed by her products, the CM has selected her as a Master Trainer for the Chief Minister Village Skill Scheme for imparting Pine Needle weaving craft training to educated un-employed girls of Mahi Panchayat. Presently, five girls are undergoing this training at the Srinagar Panchayat Bhawan at Kandaghat. The duration of the training will be three months from 15th July 2020 to 15th October 2020 during which the Master Trainer will be paid monthly remuneration of Rs. 7500/- . A photograph of girls undergoing training is appended below:



