



INTRODUCTION:

Since 2003, Jigmet Dadul with Snow Leopard Conservancy – India Trust (SLC-IT) has worked with communities in Ladakh to reduce conflicts with wild predators mainly Snow Leopards. Besides reducing livestock losses by redesigning livestock enclosures, among the most successful models has been a livelihood approach, by developing environmentally and culturally sound homestay programmes along popular trekking routes.

In areas, where tourists have not reached, and where human-wildlife conflicts is severe, the potential for bringing conservation-based livelihoods remains high on the list. The aim is to develop Predator Friendly woolen handicraft enterprises in remote villages using the wools from yak, sheep, and goats -- thereby adding value to the very livestock which are at the heart of the conflict.

Assistance will be made with the explicit agreement that communities will protect predators, thus enabling us to brand the products as “predator-friendly wool,” tagged with a logo and short description of the concept. In the souvenir shops of Leh, the parachute cafes of Hemis National Park, and the resorts and guesthouses of Nubra Valley, these products will stand out among the others to tell a living story about the conservation of Ladakh’s natural and cultural heritage. In the village of Tangyar, community members will for the first time experience the possibility that living in a high predator area can be an asset, where once it was a liability. A percentage of profit will be set aside by the producers, and used for an environmental project benefiting the entire community, such as a community-based livestock insurance programme, thus building wide support and sustainability into this incentive-based initiative.

With assistance from Rufford and Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust, we have been successfully able to train the local women’s group and develop local woolen handicraft enterprise that supports their livelihoods and gives an opportunity for the local groups to sell their unique products through various channels.

Since the funds were received in July 2010, we had to face many unexpected challenges that only delayed the entire project by 3 months. In July itself, due to unexpected snowfall, the road to tangyar was closed. The team itself was caught in the snow storm. Later in August, Ladakh was hit by severe floods that virtually made the village inaccessible for over a month. Again, due to the sudden challenges the villages went into an early harvesting season.

Despite the constant challenges, we were able to conduct training and consultation sessions with the women’s group in Tangyar. We have been receiving overwhelming response from the group who have shown enthusiastic interests in making the program successful. Presently, we have drafted the Agreement that would ensure snow leopard conservation and branding and marketing of your products. Due to heavy winter snowfall, the road to Tangyar is still closed. It is expected to open soon by mid may, after which the agreement will be finalized, signed and we would start channeling their products to prospective buyers.

Please find below the details of the all the sessions so far.

1) First Planning Workshop (Annex-1)

Since the confirmation of project in late June, we conducted an initial meeting with the women's group, to ensure their support and the prospective activities in the forthcoming period.

2) Second Planning Workshop (Annex 2)

On 8th July 2010, the team conducted the second planning workshop with the women's group of Tangyar. They were 34 participants in all. We discussed the different upcoming activities in the village for income generation through promoting handicrafts and how best we could sell the products in Leh, and the souvenir shops in Ladakh. The aim was to create alternative incomes by means of handicrafts enterprise, and subsequently undertake conservation initiatives in the villages.

3) Marketing Research and Planning Workshop (Annex 3)

On 27th July, 2010, we conducted an internal meeting at the SLC-IT office in Leh, on how best we could conduct the Market survey, find retail outlets, projected production levels, pricing system consideration, advertising, quality control policy etc. This meeting was chaired by Jigmet Dadul, along with the team at SLC-IT

4) Development and Finishing for local Handicraft (Annex 3)

Jigmet Dadul along with Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust (SLC-IT) conducted two day training on Development and Finishing for Local Handicrafts at Tangyar village on 13th and 14th of November 2010 under the Rufford Small Grant Project. All the women were very eager to know how to use natural dye. All the women were very enthusiastic and were keenly watching and listening to the resource person. Some of the women are very interested and they said they wanted to learn more about this natural dyeing process.

5) Market Research survey in Ladakh (Annex 5)

In order to plan the necessary steps that should improve the project's chances of success upon entering the market, it is first essential that sufficient research is undertaken to gain a thorough understanding of the target market. At this early stage it is unsurprising that there are numerous questions that need to be answered, or at least considered. We did market survey in whole Ladakh region and got a positive feedback.

6) Material Developed (Annex 6)

The brochure and tags developed as a part of the project

Once again, I would like to thank Rufford Small Grant Foundation for their invaluable support. We will continue with our interventions in the region and ensure the work done since in the past continues to grow sustainably and we are able to make a difference.

ANNEX-1

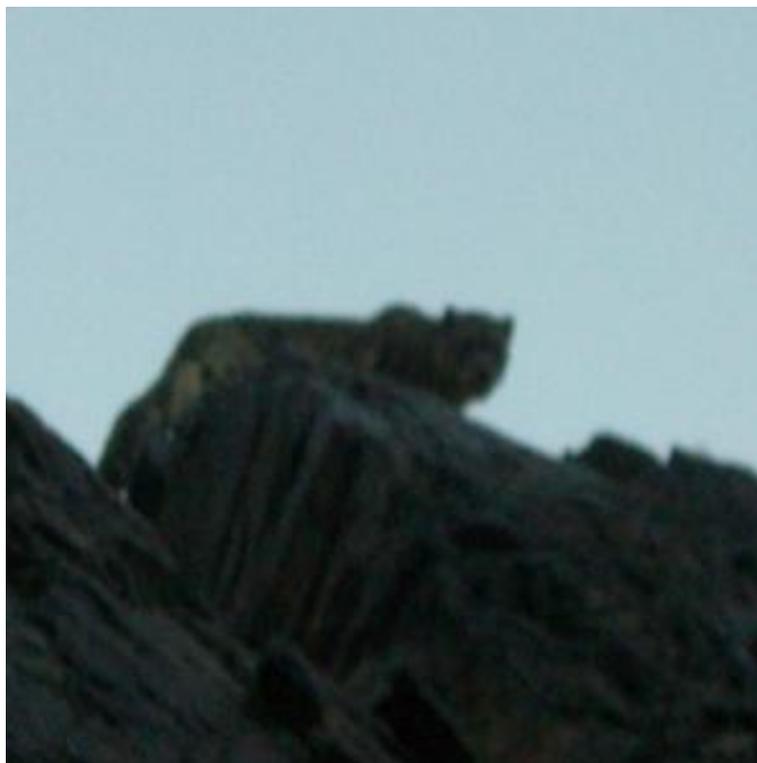
FIRST PLANNING WORKSHOP

29th June, 2010

The village of Tangyar is situated in the Nubra valley, which is a popular tourist destination though the village itself is not on a trekking route. Here the villagers were not accustomed to selling knitwear to tourists and mainly just knitted socks, hats and sweaters for themselves. Many of the older woman spent their time spinning sheep and yak wool. During the summer months the villagers lived in very basic houses nearer to the animal pastures. Their main village is perched on the mountainside across the valley and has a beautiful monastery. It is a village of twenty households. The summer community is mostly women as many of the men work away. The women greeted us with great enthusiasm for the project and they were very interested in an opportunity to have their own source of income. SLC-IT had previously built an enclosure in Tangyar for the animals and so the villages were familiar with the predator friendly agreement. The first meeting in Tangyar was a opportunity to speak about a full-fledge handicraft project that would ensure alternative income and conservation of snow leopards.

As it was difficult to keep their attention, the session lasted 2/ 3 hours. It soon became obvious that the woman in Tangyar were not as advanced so we took the lessons with them much slower to begin with. However, they did catch on very quickly and even improvised on the animals with some great results. We informed the group on the upcoming activities that would be start in July.

This was also the trip, that the Snow Leopard was sighted in Tangyar, unfortunately, it had killed a yak in the village!



Snow Leopard sighting in Tangyar

ANNEX-2

SECOND PLANNING WORKSHOP IN TANGYAR VILLAGE

8th July, 2010

On 8th July, 2010, a group of four, led by Jigmet Dadul, completed a handicrafts workshop in the village of Tangyar. There were no complications and they even managed to install a parabolic heater to be used by the villagers once they set up a parachute café by the roadside. Overall, the excursion was a great success and entirely stress free; the meeting took place on time and the response was from the women was overwhelming.

This is how the trip report should have read. Instead, a lengthy account of this epic adventure is required. What was intended to be a day trip, turned out to be a three day experience of wildlife, culture and drama. The team comprising of Jigmet at the wheel, Rigzin in the front seat and both Philip and Helen (volunteer with SLC-IT) in the back, set off from Leh market around 8am with great expectations of a smooth ride. However, what happened throughout that day could never have been anticipated by any of them.

After two or three hours the „Gypsy“ reached the top of *Wari La*, a mountain pass 5,280m above sea level (17,325ft), and the team hadn't seen a soul the entire climb. Once some prayer flags had been strung up and the group had taken in some spectacular views, they set off down the other side, only to get caught behind a pickup truck seemingly stuck in the snow only a few hundred yards down the pass. For about a mile the other side of the mountain, the pass was covered in snow; though this was no problem for the jeep and Jigmet's magical work at the wheel. However, before they could advance, all four spent just over two hours heaving the pickup truck down the snowy stretch. The air was already incredibly thin, though things were made worse by the constant outpouring of diesel fumes into people's faces. It was such a challenge slowly advancing the car (with zero tread), that Jigmet announced that they would have to turn back. Philip, desperate to continue the adventure and see the village, convinced him to try one last time to push the truck down the slope. With the help of some manly roars and maybe a little help from a higher power, the truck was out of the difficult stuff. Hallelujah. Now in the clear (so he thought), the driver of this awful vehicle sped off without even saying „thank you“, so the group jumped back in the car slightly miffed and thoroughly scorched by the sun. After only ten minutes or so they came across the truck; he was stuck behind a boulder. Jigmet simply sped around him and slithered the „Gypsy“ through a tight gap, leaving the other car behind without any remorse.

On the SLC-IT team went and the trip turned into quite the wildlife safari. Turning one corner they run right into an enormous herd of Yak, babies and all - Philip practically died he was so excited. The group spotted Golden Eagles, Blue sheep, Marmot and even some Foxes. Awesome for Philip who had never seen any of Ladakh's fauna. However, the smooth ride came to an end around 2pm when the jeep hit a twenty yard stretch of snow and ice. Jigmet proceeded to get properly stuck, and after a couple hours the other lad pitched up adamant he could get passed. From 2pm to 7pm, we tried our hardest to get at least one of the vehicles out of the mess. The three men practically built a road out of rocks and earth, pushed and shoved constantly, though with no success. With no socks and just his shocking trainers (they are going straight in the bin when he gets home apparently!), and the many hours spent in the snow, Philip had lost almost all feeling in my feet by evening time. He was frozen and he'd had enough. Helen and Rigzin had been sent off to the village to find help around 3pm (Rigzin came back after an hour or so to deliver the message that Helen had carried on to the

village), and by 7 nobody I had come. So they all decided it was best just to walk down the valley and rescue the jeep in the morning. Jigmet assured the other two that it was a mere hour or so away.

After two hours walking swiftly in the dark, there was no sign of the village. Though miraculously they turned down another valley to be met by a rickety tractor, Helen and a couple of shepherds armed with shovels. It turns out that the walk to the village is actually around twelve miles, so it's really quite remarkable that Helen managed to get down there, then rally the troops to come and save the jeep and the others. Philip and the two women were told to wait and everyone assumed that they would not take long. However, the two hours they waited in the cold were pretty difficult as they paced up and down with the odd set of star jumps to keep warm. Around eleven Philip convinced the other two that they should just walk down to keep warm and get to the village rather than wait. Thirty minutes down the road they turned around to see bright lights screaming towards them. They had spent the majority of the time prying the pickup truck from the ice and once again he went off without any thanks nor thinking to pay the villagers for their heroics. Ah well. Around midnight they were crammed into a small house to enjoy some food and then it was straight to bed after an exhausting day.

The next morning the knackered team learned that they were the first people to make it down the pass this year and that the villagers were all amazed that they were mad enough to attempt it. The SLC-IT group had made it though, and what a gorgeous place to be! *Tangyar* is a village nestled in the Nubra Valley, though they were actually staying in the summer houses about an hour's walk across a river valley from the village. In the summer months the thirty or so households move to small abodes in the fields to work the land so they can survive the winter. No phones, no cars; only animals, wonderfully wrinkly women (decked out in traditional dress) and stunning views of the green and yellow (mustard seed) fields. They had hoped that we might complete the meetings and workshops by lunchtime so we could get back to Leh before people started worrying about their whereabouts. Though once again, Ladakh provided them with a setback, yet as per usual, these initial tribulations resulted in wonderful experiences. Some canal had burst its banks the day before and so the villagers spent the entire day working to repair the damage. This meant that the team would have to stay another night. So in the morning they busied themselves by building a parabolic heater (solar oven type thing), which was to be donated by the SLC-IT so the women could set up a parachute café on the road. After a pucker lunch, Philip trekked over to Tangyar for some sightseeing. Unfortunately, most of the houses were locked shut and the monastery (which was a mission to clamber up to) was closed for the summer too. Philip then returned from this exhausting expedition and spent the rest of the day basking in the sun stroking the injured pashmina goat.

As the sun began to set on the fields, the women returned and finally it was possible to hold the meeting. The SLC-IT has been working on handicraft project with Tangyar and they wanted to hold a follow up meeting to discuss production, marketing and other tips of the trade. So around 8 in the evening twenty five or so women squeezed into a modestly sized room and each had brought a bag of their own products; hats, gloves, socks and these adorable woollen animals (yak, ibex and snow leopards). Everyone nattered away for a couple of hours and Jigmet bought a number of the products to take back to Leh. Around ten, things wound down and the party started.

Since attempting to return to Leh the way we came was craziness, they had to take a different, much longer route. However, this inconvenience was countered by the fact that they were able

to experience driving on the highest road in the world, *Kardung La* is a whopping 18000 or so feet above sea level. The ascent and descent was absolute agony though, the roads were appalling and they all got out of the car for a break feeling like a gang of youths had beaten them up with a baseball bat (it didn't help that Jigmet was determined to show off his rally driving skills). All was well in the end and they all arrived back in Leh with many tales to tell. The meeting was successful, the experience was wonderful, though things certainly didn't go according to plan. But its safe to say the team were thankful by the end that they didn't; it led to an exciting adventure that none of them will forget.

PHOTO PLATE



Stuck on way due to heavy snow



Villagers displaying their handicrafts



The beautiful village of tangyar and their livestock

ANNEX-3

MARKETING RESEARCH AND PLANNING WORKSHOP

27th July, 2010

On 27th July, 2010, we conducted an internal meeting at the SLC-IT office in Leh, on how best we could conduct the Market survey, find retail outlets, projected production levels, pricing system consideration, advertising, quality control policy etc. This meeting was chaired by Jigmet Dadul alongwith the team at SLC-IT. The outcomes are as follows:

Market Research

- Tourist surveys to gauge interest in the introduction of SLC-IT sponsored handicrafts.
- Source information on sales of „Himalayan-Handicrafts“ and quantities of stock the stores purchase initially.
- Include price questions using personal purchases to gauge tourist sentiments about prices of products. Optional day leaving items in stores and collect data by the end of the day.
- Create table of costs of equivalent handicraft products made by „Himalayan-Handicrafts“.

Retail Outlet Sourcing

- Identify suitable retail locations; stores, hotels, etc.
- Establish whether a relationship could exist between the retailer and SLC-IT Trust for the selling of our products.
- Consider roughly quantities they would expect to take initially and if any commission would be taken. Also get feedback on their own quality considerations.

Projected Production Levels

- Research with team what possible levels of production are to support a retail market in Leh beyond their current sales in the villages.
- Find out what further training would be required or research current limitations in production.

Pricing System Consideration

- Consider the SLC-IT Trust policy regarding this handicrafts project; should there be profit, a mark up to cover other costs, or is it non-profit?
- Use information from retail outlet sourcing to note whether stores demand commission.
- Decide on possible prices of items using data from market research. Village feedback also.

Advertising

- Design of posters and fliers with team that could be placed around the town to promote our handicraft business. Supporting women & conservation.
- Label design needs to be reviewed.
- Possible contact with travel guides such as Lonely Planet for publicity and support. Also trekking companies - see friends of SLC-IT list for contact.

Other Matters

- Setting up groups that potentially specify for individual products, division of labor for efficiency and quality.
- Discuss percentages of sales to go to group members according to role in the team.
- Quality control policy, demonstrate what is appropriate/not good enough. Seminar should be held before fabrication period. Will we assign a CBO type figure in the villages for this.

1. What is the circular flow model - create this. Are we buying then selling on to stores?

Or is it a long chain and separate accounting system? Complexity of systems and success of this has to be considered.

1. Year one plan may need to be the focus rather than an overall long term one. Thus, monitoring, testing and reports need to be made.
2. Research Himalayan-Handicrafts model, crafts store accounting etc.

ANNEX-4

PREDATOR FRIENDLY HANDICRAFT

13th and 14th November, 2010

Jigmet Dadul alongwith Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust (SLC-IT) conducted two day training on Development and Finishing for Local Handicrafts at Tangyar village on 13th and 14th of November 2010 under the Rufford Small Grant Project.

The training was facilitated by:

1. Mr. Jigmet Dadul
2. Ms Rigzin Chorol
3. Mrs. Phuntsok Angmo (Resource person)

OBJECTIVES:

- To promote income generate for the women of Tangyar.
- To give knowledge about natural dye processes

PARTICIPANTS

1st day there were around 20 women.

2nd days there were around 34 women

PROCESS

Day One

The SLC-IT team and resources person went to Tangyar on 13th of November. The team conducted a meeting with the participants. After lunch the women were asked to get wool and other materials and gather at community hall. Ms. Rigzin Chorol undertook the registration for all the participants. Later, Mr.Jigmet Dadul introduced the program:-

- The project is under the Rufford Small Grants
- The period of project is one year
- The aims and objective is generating income for the women, especially in high snow leopard habitats and making the local livestock more valuable.
- To conserve biodiversity in this areas.

Subsequently, Mrs. Phuntsok Angmo took over, explained the importance of natural dyeing and its potential in the market and in tourism. She also gave them a check list of requirements for dyeing process. Participating initiated making woolen spools and some of them mashed and mixed the dyeing materials under the supervision of the resource person. The meeting ended late evening and the participants were briefed for the next day.

Day Two

On 14th November, Rigzin re-registration the participants. All the women were very eager to know how to use natural dye. Firstly, they collect the dry woods and cow dung to boil the water for dye and washing the wools etc. Then boil all the dye material in a separate pot for a half an hour. Local material like, arnebia (Demok), Rubab"s root (Lachu patak), walnut shell (stargay chanchil), Carax (Churtsa) pul, (local soda,) ash (Kokthal), Artemisia (Burnak) are used. In the meantime, the women weighed the wool and made spools of wool. Once the water boiled was, Mrs. Phuntsok Angmo started the dyeing process. Later, she taught the participants on how to use dye and make different shades of one color.

All the women were very enthusiastic and were keenly watching and listening to the resource person. Some of the women are very interested and they said they wanted to learn more about this natural dyeing process. She made more than five colours only from the natural and organic ingredients. Mrs. Phuntsok Angmo strongly recommended that one shouldn't buy dyes from the market since there are locally available. Once you make this you can earn more money. She also taught them how to make different designs on cloth.

Some of the local women were also responsible for making lunch for all the participants using the environmental friendly solar parabolic heater. After the completion of the dyeing process, a lunch break was taken. During lunch the participants were very inquisitive and were querying about natural dyeing to the resource person.

After lunch, Mr. Jigmet Dadul concluded the training program. The team and the resource person were offered white scarf as appreciation for the program.

OUTPUT

- Around 35 women were trained natural dyeing process.
- Also trained in making design on cloth.
- This Program is very useful for the future in preserving the traditional skills and knowledge of making handicrafts.
- SLC-IT Team will prepare conditions of agreement that would entail conservation and traditional handicraft practices.
- The final agreement will be developed in consultation with the local community.

FEEDBACK

- The training was very fruitful for the women group.
- They are very happy to have a resources person. They wanted to learn more and more about natural dyeing and they wanted to keep it for future.
- Beside that they wanted to weave machine for more income. They wanted to weave a local carpet for their use and also for sale.
- They promise use that they will practice on dyeing and end of the winter they will have a lots of handicraft product for sale to tourists in summer.

SESSION PLAN

SESSION PLAN FOR THE TANGYAR TRAINING ON 13th and 14th of Nov 2010 Under the Project Rufford Small Grant.					
S/NO	DATE	ACTIVITY	TIMING	WHO	SUPPORT/RE MARKS
1	Day 1st 13/11/2010	Leh to Tangyar	7.00 am	Mrs. P Angmo, Mr. Jigmet & Ms Rigzin	
2	13/11/2010	Registration of participants	11.00 am	Ms Rigzin	Registration forms
3	13/11-2010	Introduction of Programs	11.10 to 11.20 am	Mr Jigmet	
4	13/11/2010	Introduction of pre handcraft, washing wools etc.	11.30 to 1.30pm	Mrs. P. Angmo	
	13/11/2010	Lunch Break	1.30 to 2.30 pm	Women group	
5	13/11/2010	Dyeing Processes	2.30 to 4.00 pm	Mrs. P. Angmo	
6	13/11/2010	Tea Break	4.00 to 4.15 pm	Women group	
7	13/11/2010	Continuing Dyeing Processes	4.15 to 5.00 pm	Mrs. P. Angmo	
8	Day 2nd 14/11/2010	Re-Registration of participants	10.00 to 10.15am	Ms Rigzin	Registration forms
9	14/11/2010	continue with the dyeing process	10.15 to 1.30 pm	Mrs. P. Angmo	Dyeing materials Rigzin & Angmo
10	14/11/2010	Lunch Break	1.30 to 2.30 pm	Women group	
	14/11/2010	Question Answer regarding the dyeing	2.30 to 3.30 pm	Women group Mrs. P. Angmo Mr. Jigmet & Ms Rigzin	
16	26-Sep-10	Back to Leh	3.30 pm		

REGISTRATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS:-

Registration of Participants- Tangyar Handicraft Women Group on 13th and 14th Nov 2010, Under the Rufford Small Grant.			
S/No	Name	Household	Signature
1.	Tsawang Dolma	Tsukas.	TD
2.	Kunzang Dolma	Tsukas.	K-TAKDDH
3.	Kunzang Dolma	Chukpa	
4.	Rigzin Dolma	Tokpa	RIGZIN
5.	Pendama Dolma	Zur	PENDAMA
6.	Tsesing Dolma	Takham	TSDMA
7.	Pendun Yumbel	Dampo	P.Y.
8.	Shalrang Dolma	Shampa	S.D.
9.	Ngain Ngain	Kharbon	N.G.
10.	Dakel Dolma	Rongpa	D.D.
11.	Rinchen Dolma	Chilla	RID
12.	Phutok Dolma	Nasud	
13.	Tsesing Chond	Kharbon	Tchond
14.	Soram Ushabon	Tsukas	S.USHABON
15.	Tsawang Dolma	Tsukas.	TD
16.	Lobrang Choyon	Tsaskal.	L.Choyon
17.	Soram Phusit	Nasud	S.P.
18.	Soram Yangdel	Tokpa	S.Y.
19.	Shingim Rigzin	Shakging	Shingim
20.	Shalrang Dolma	Dungshan	S.D.

2nd day

Registration of Participants ✓
Tangyar Handicraft Women Group on 13th and 14th Nov 2013.
Under the Rufford Small Grant.

No	Name	Household	Signature
1	Rigzin Dolma	Takpa	Rigzin
2	Tsewang Chendol	Kharpo	T Chendol
3	Rinchen Dolma	Rongpa	Rin
4	Khalsang Lamo	Stakpa	
5	Penam Yangdel	Namkhe	PY
6	Tsewang Dolma	Tsaskor	T.D
7	Chenak Angmo	Stakpa	C. Angmo
8	Shalsang Tsomo	Chungpa	TOMO
9	Tsewang Yondel	Takpa	
10	Lobzang Dolma	Kharpo	
11	Sorain Stakdel	Tsaskor	Sorain
12	Penam Dolma	Khangke	
13	Kunzel Dolma	Stakpa	K. Kunzel
14	Kunzum Tsomo	Kharpo	K. Tsomo
15	Penam Dechen	Takpa	P.D
16	Tsewang Dolma	Takhar	T. Dolma
17	Tashi Yangzom	Changzongpa	Tashi
18	Kunzang Khiki	Chungpa	
19	Kunzang Dolma	Kharpo	
20	Sorain Dolma	Takpa	
21	Tsewang Dolma	Kharpo	
22	Rigzin Lhamo	Namkhe	Lhamo
23	Phuntsok Dolma	Tsaskor	
24	Penam Yangdel	Takpa	Penam
25	Tsewang Lhamo	Dangzong	Lhamo
26	Yangdel Dolma	Chungpa	
27	Tashi Lamo	Kharpo	T.L
28	Mulup Lamo	Rongpa	M. Lamo
29	Tashi Yangzom	Chungpa	Yangzom

No	Name	Household	Signature
30	Rinchen Dolma	Chuta	
31	Stanzin Angmo	Shakging	Angmo
32	Lobzang Chenzom	Tsaskor	L. Chenzom
33	Phuntsok Dolma	Rongpa	
34	Tsewang Dolma	Tsaskor	Dolma

PHOTO PLATE



Left: Women spooling the wool. Right: Spooling the wool.



Left: Women mashing the colours. Right: Boiling the colour in water.



Left: Boiling the colour. Right: Colour pot.



Left: Dyeing of the wool. Right: Dying of the wool in smoke.



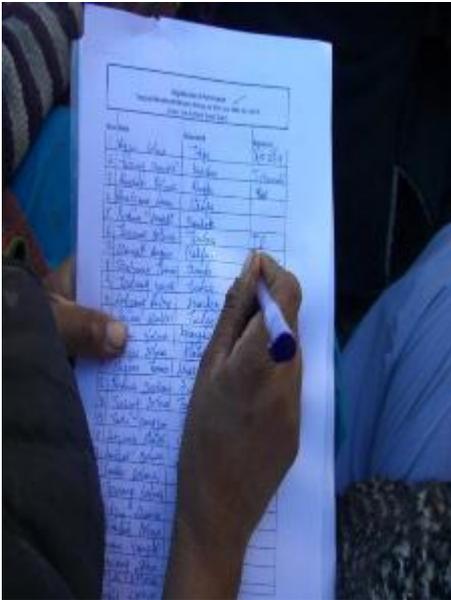
Left: Dyeing the wool spool in walnut shell. Right: Dyeing in ash for orange colour.



Mixing the wool and colour.



Women are having a lunch.



Group Photo of participants with resource person

ANNEX 5

MARKET RESEARCH SURVEY IN LADAKH

Market Research

In order to plan the necessary steps that should improve the project's chances of success upon entering the market, it is first essential that sufficient research is undertaken to gain a thorough understanding of the target market. At this early stage it is unsurprising that there are numerous questions that need to be answered, or at least considered. These include:

- Who is our target customer? What are their criteria for an attractive product? Are they looking for more diversity in the handicrafts sector? Would they welcome the introduction of SLC-IT and Rufford sponsored handicrafts into the retail market of Leh? Using examples of products available, are target customers interested?
- What is an appropriate pricing system? What kind of premium are consumers willing pay for SLC-IT top quality products? Do they believe the current cost of items is too low/too high or just right?
- How does our anticipated competitor, *Himalayan Handicrafts*, run their program? By investigating their current retail locations, what are their levels of success? By asking similar questions to part (i.), how are their products received by our target customers, do they fit their criteria for an appealing product? What are their prices for equivalent products made by SLC-IT sponsored villages? What are the quantities that retail stores stock initially and sell eventually?

If a survey that features concise and useful questions is carried out in the town of Leh of the duration of a couple of days, highly beneficial data can be collected. From the above questions, it seems that the most effective method for researching such matters would be to:

1. Produce a questionnaire for tourists to fill out that should provide direct information from our intended customers about their desires, concerns and suggestions regarding the idea of SLC-IT sponsored products being featured in the Leh retail market, and an attractive pricing system that will encourage decent sale numbers.
2. Conduct a survey of the retail locations currently stocking products made under the umbrella of the women's cooperative *Himalayan Handicrafts* that enquires about the organization's success and the dynamic between retailer and charitable organization.
3. Initiate direct correspondence with our competitor in order to gather practical information from a group that is already succeeding in the handicrafts business.

Once the data has been collected, analysis is necessary to ensure the work already put in during the research process is actually rewarded. If the information sourced is useful thanks to thorough investigation of many aspects of the market, then it should be possible to evaluate what the next steps can be, and whether or not that can be taken. If the nature of the market is favorable (in the sense that our target customer is intrigued by the products, would like to see them made available, etc.), then the SLC-IT can then pursue this venture with some confidence. Further knowledge of how to succeed in this industry gained from *Himalayan Handicrafts* should help the SLC-IT look to tried and tested methods that would make the whole process more efficient and our strategy more competitive. The rest of this section will feature the questionnaires themselves, and a more detailed approach to the areas that need to be

addressed.

Identifying and Investigating the Target Customer

The following questionnaire is intended to first find out who the SLC-IT is likely to receive the majority of their business from, and therefore what the organization must do to encourage these consumers to consider the handicrafts that will be on offer. Thus, a customer profile will be created that includes their criteria for a desirable product, and also what sort of pricing system is deemed agreeable.

1. What is the purpose of your visit to Ladakh? Sightseeing, trekking, volunteering, other?
2. Do you intend to purchase anything in Leh while you are visiting the region?
3. If so, do you think that you will consider buying handicrafts?
4. Which of the following details about a handicrafts item would you want to know and fit your criteria for an attractive product? Please circle your top four choices.

Traditionally made b. Authentic c. Where it is made? d. Supported by a non-profit charitable organization e. Handmade f. Only pure materials and natural dyes are used g. Proceeds are returned to the villagers h. Ethically produced i. Proceeds help support a snow leopard conservation fund

5. Would you like to see more diversity in the handicrafts market in terms of products available and organizations involved?
6. Considering these examples of items produced by the women of both Tangyar and Rumbak, would you like to see similar products available in retail locations around Leh?
7. If so, roughly what price would you be willing to pay for such an item, or what sort of price would be appropriate in your opinion? Now that you know the current recommended retail price, do you think that it is too low/too high/just right?
8. To conclude the questionnaire, would you welcome the introduction of SLC-IT and Rufford sponsored handicrafts into the retail market of Leh?

The questionnaire is supposed to be short enough so that tourists are willing to give up the time to answer the questions, but thorough enough to provide adequate data to be reviewed. Possible difficulties might include language barrier issues, though this should be too much of a problem with further explanation. Due to the limited time available for the marketing and sales plan to be created, the sample size will be less than desirable. However, numbers ranging from 50 - 150 would be very positive and would lead to more valid conclusions to be acted upon at some point in the near future.

Considering the Competition

Know the enemy. It is incredibly productive to learn from those who have come before you. Therefore, conducting detailed research into the history, business model and success of the current dominator in the *ethically produced* handicrafts sector would be highly advantageous to the SLC. All over Leh in hotels and the high-end retail locations in the city (such as the LEDEG Craft's Store and The Women's Alliance), *Himalayan Handicrafts*, a women's cooperative sponsored by numerous major corporations and organizations, are displayed to be sold at

high prices to people willing to pay the premium for undoubted quality and authenticity. Their promotion around the city is phenomenal, with posters and fliers everywhere, and the labeling is superb. Correspondence with the retailers and the organization itself should lead to greater understanding of how to succeed as the SLC-IT handicrafts project is similar in almost every way.

The following questions and information will be asked and gathered at retail locations in Leh that currently sell these handicrafts, and are also likely options for vendors of SLC-IT handicrafts:

2. For how long have you been storing products produced in conjunction with the organization known as *Himalayan Handicrafts*?
3. Do you receive your stock all at once prior to the beginning of the peak season? Or do you have items coming in throughout the tourist season?
4. Have you negotiated supply numbers with the villages/organization, or do you receive whatever is available?
5. Is there any mark up on the price, or do you take any kind of commission for displaying and selling such items?
6. How successful would you say these handicraft products are in terms of interest from customers and sales figures?
7. Are you able to reveal any information regarding the accounts for these products? If so, how do you report sales numbers to the supplier, return the income generated back to the organization, keep record of sales?

This information would be good to have, though it is evident that there will be significant difficulty in discussing these matters with the actual owners of each establishment, or finding employees who know anything about these matters. However, any help from these stores will guide the project towards greater success.

A healthy relationship between the SLC-IT and *Himalayan Handicrafts* would be beneficial to say the least and this has already been stressed. In the overview section, one can find the sort of questions that would want to be asked if possible. The SLC-IT faces a number of challenges with this project:

1. Forming relationships with retailers that are willing to abide by the SLC's preoccupations which include a non-profit policy.
2. Creating some kind of a circular flow model that makes sense in terms of efficiency and simplicity. How to source the products, get them to the market and then return the proceeds from sales to the villagers and manage these money matters.
3. Enforcing an appropriate quality control policy to ensure the supply of unique and well-finished products to the retailers that are going to sell.
4. Advertising the SLC-IT products to the extent that tourists visiting Leh know about the availability of the items and the message behind them.

With their help, this project can go far in generating income for villagers, supporting conservation efforts in Ladakh and increasing SLC-IT exposure.

The information gathered in this significant (and ongoing) process of market research will be

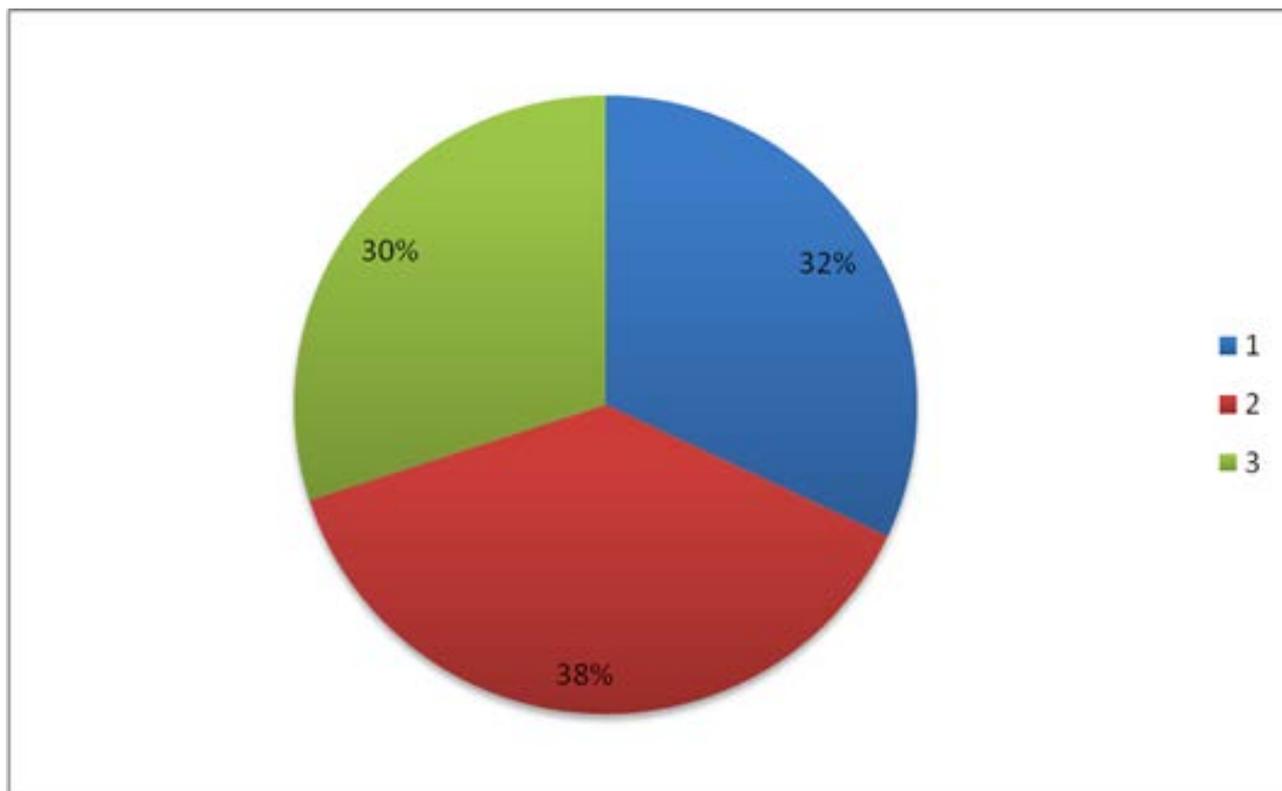
collected and presented in the next section along with the analysis of results of the research conducted. Then conclusions made based on all of this will be expounded in a final section to direct the SLC-IT how to approach the marketing and sales aspect of the handicrafts project.

Market Research * Part II

Customer Feedback

Market Make-up

The first question of the target customer survey asked was what the main purpose of the participant's visit to Ladakh.



Series 1 corresponds to Sightseeing, Series 2 represents Trekking and Series 3 is made up of Volunteers
From this graph one can see that the current home stay program will only attract roughly a third of those visiting Ladakh, and how many of these trekkers actually use the SLC-IT network and even visit Rumbak or Tangyar is hard to say; very few is likely. Thus, by bringing products into Leh, there is scope to capture a great deal more potential customers.

94% of participants intended to purchase something in Leh whilst visiting the region of Ladakh, and an overwhelming 90% thought that they would consider buying items classed as handicrafts. There is business out there.

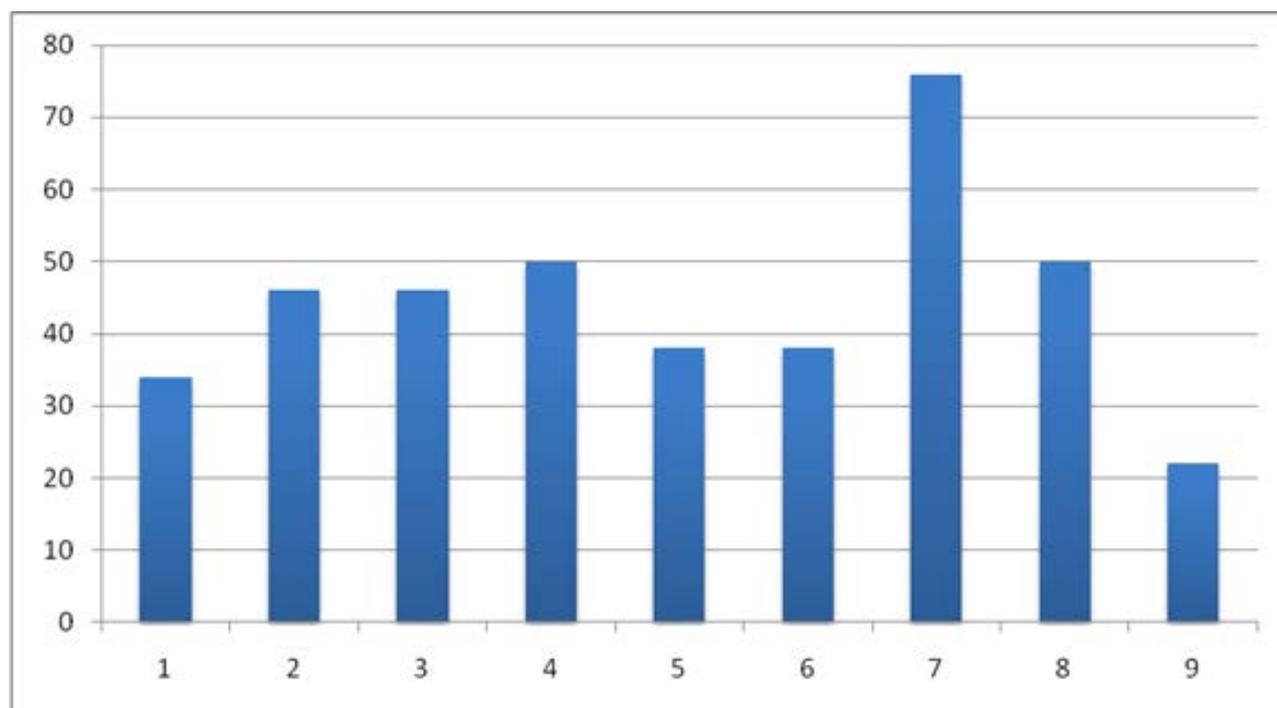
The following bar chart presents the results of the fourth question of the questionnaire that sought to identify details about a product that the customer would want to know and thought made the item more attractive.

They were asked to choose their top four choices from the following options:

- Traditionally made
- Authentic
- Where it is made?
- Supported by a non-profit charitable organization
- Handmade
- Only pure materials and natural dyes are used
- g.

Proceeds are returned to the villagers h. Ethically produced i. Proceeds help support a snow leopard conservation fund

The number underneath each bar corresponds to the question, eg. a. = 1 on the graph



What does this graph tell us? Well, the choice with the fewest selections was (i.), the one stating that proceeds from the sales would help support a snow leopard conservation fund. Now this is clearly the message the SLC-IT wants to convey; that as a conservation fund the organization seeks to help both the local community, but also the wildlife (specifically snow leopards) that has to coexist with society in Ladakh. However, these results show that the potential customers value other aspects of the handicrafts project more, and so the conservation scheme should not be the main thrust of the campaign, but a differentiating aspect that separates the SLC-IT from competitors.

Participants in the survey were most attracted to the idea that proceeds would be returned to the villagers and so this should be stressed in any advertising materials. People want to know where the product is from, that is was 'ethically produced' and 'authentic'. These are rather ambiguous terms, though a charged with a connotations that our target customer recognizes as important. These are words that the SLC-IT needs to use when publicizing the project and articulating what it is all about. It should be focused on the villagers and the product, with notification of the fact that there is a conservation slant as well.

86% of participants believed that more diversity in the handicrafts market in terms of products available and organizations involved would be a positive development. This is promising to learn as this suggests that visitors consider sponsored handicraft projects to be a positive enterprise, and also that greater variety is being called for. After considering the examples of products made in the villages of Tangyar and Rumbak, 82% thought that they would like to see similar products available in Leh. The examples were woolen animals, and from the data it is evident that these are popular products. If finishing can be improved, the animals could be a lucrative design route to take.

The penultimate question came in two parts: a. Roughly what price would you be willing to

pay for such an item, or what sort of price would be appropriate in your opinion? b. Now that you know the current recommended retail price (100 - 150 Rs.), do you think that it is too low/too high/just right?

The average recommended price by the non-locals who took the survey was 158.6 Rs, roughly 160. 46% thought that the actual current cost was too low, 18% felt it was too high and 38% believed it was just right. The modal price is 200 Rs. If one removes those who thought it was too high, the average recommended price is raised to 180 exactly, or one can cut out those who would not want to see similar items available and the average is boosted to 170. There were 41 people who recommended a price of 200 or more, 10 of whom thought 300 - 400, though most of the time they also stressed finishing should be improved. Since the stock numbers are going to be low as the production possibilities are quite low and will be diminished for some time into the future, the SLC-IT is looking for very few buyers at every retail location. Thus, the fact that some participants said that they would be willing to pay twice the current retail price (150 Rs.) is promising. It is not surprising that many felt the price was already too high, they just would not buy the product. Though our target customer, one who actually wants to buy such products might be happy to pay the extra to acquire something so unique etc.

The pricing system is discussed elsewhere, though from the survey one might deduce that the current retail price could be raised so that revenue increases whilst still yielding sales by remaining in a suitable price bracket for interested customers.

Finally, 92% decided that they would welcome the introduction of SLC-IT sponsored handicrafts into the retail market of Leh. This suggests considering the expansion of this project is a viable consideration and with further market research, the SLC-IT should be able to proceed with expansion plans with a great deal of confidence that the introduction of the products would be well received by the market.

Production and Pricing

It is useful to pursue leads, conduct extensive research and consider the project's chances of success. However, it is first necessary to review the current production levels and projections to learn whether or not the introduction of SLC-IT handicrafts into Leh is ever going to be a viable venture.

Pricing is something that is going to have to be flexible. As the project develops and the team can receive integral feedback from sales and customers, the pricing system can be altered to suit the nature of the market itself. There are two costs that need to be examined: the cost of production, and the cost of the finished product in the shops. Information on the cost of raw materials and the hours of labour must be gathered from the villagers themselves, then feedback from target customers on the retail price should be acquired. Therefore, it will be then possible to come up with a retail price for each item category (hats, gloves, etc.) that is attractive to customers, yields an adequate net profit for the villagers and covers all other costs.

Sheep to Shawls

The summer months are the busiest of the year as the women work the fields to ensure there is enough produce to last their families the winter. However, the winter months are comparatively relaxed and the ideal time to fabricate the handicraft products. Currently the production levels are enough to support the modest home stay, parachute café and Leh office retail outlets. Though if this project is to progress, production would have to be increased

significantly, but it is quite possible that with sufficient training and division of labor, the villagers can step up to the challenge. Season one is essentially a trial period in Leh, and a rough estimate for the numbers that would be available to retailers would be around 20 - 30 items. *Himalayan Handicrafts* is in around 35 villages, the SLC-IT is in 2. Thus, the team cannot expect to be movers in the first few years. Despite the low levels of production, the SLC-IT will be generating extra income for the villagers and as they see this and training improves the project can move even further forward.

Before the next manufacturing period, the SLC-IT team needs to visit each village and establish goals for production and educate the villagers on efficiency techniques to help this along. With their feedback, the team can return to Leh and discuss in more concrete terms with retailers about the expected stock. Given that only around 5 retail outlets have been contacted in this initial investigation, the low scale of this project should not be seen as an issue. If there is proper promotion and a high demand can be encouraged, then the low supply should result in the ability to increase prices even more in year two for example. The most important point from this section is that the villagers need as much training as possible and they need to be consulted on what they believe are appropriate production targets for the season.

How much?

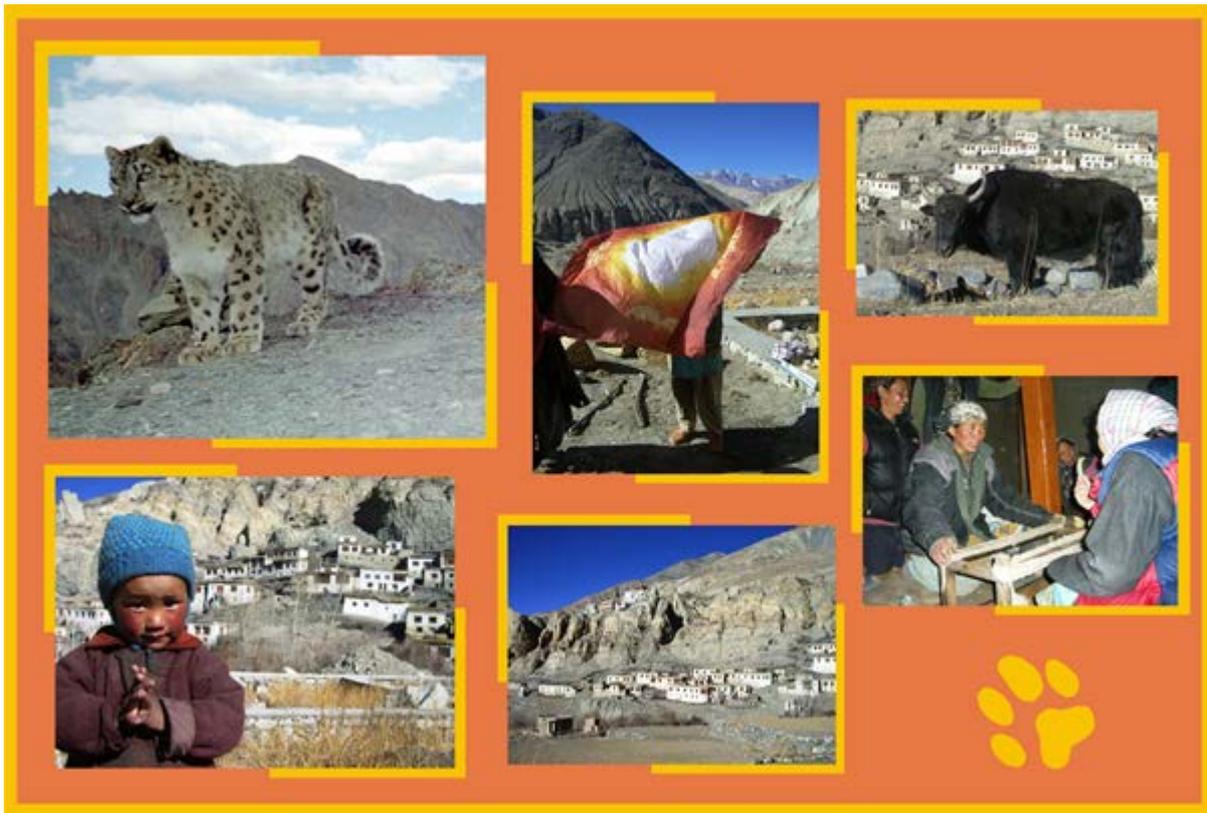
Right now the SLC-IT team travels to the villages of Tangyar and Rumbak and purchases items from the villagers directly, then ships the products to the Leh office for sale. The price at which the items sell is at the sole discretion of the villagers and the situation is the same when it comes to the sale of products at the parachute cafés and the home stays. The cost of the woolen animals range from 50 - 150 rupees. However, there has been no detailing of any of the other costs involved in the process. The team is unsure how long a product has taken to make, the exact materials used, the cost of transportation to Leh, or what is an appropriate retail price. If these products are sold in Leh at other locations, it is possible that there is a commission to cover also. Below these uncertainties have been resolved or at least considered.

From the brief discussion with the coordinator of the *Himalayan Handicrafts* group, it is clear that the SLC-IT needs to review the structure of this project. It would seem possible to set up women's cooperatives in both of the villages. This would encourage division of labour; certain production stages being carried out by different members according to their skill levels. One member would be in charge of monitoring the numbers of finished products and dealing with the money issues - selling and then distributing proceeds amongst the group.

For pricing considerations, a cost-benefit analysis has to be carried out. The SLC-IT needs to collaborate with the villagers to gather information on the time it takes to make a product, the cost of raw materials, and so on. Then using the market research data and considerations of time and money invested into the production of the product, a retail price can be suggested. From here, a profit/hour figure can be calculated and so villagers can focus on products that will yield the greatest profit per hour of labour - time is of the essence and so prioritizing is essential.

Further comment on these matters is almost impossible due to the interference of the floods and my departure from Leh. Though matters have been raised in this section that can at least be considered in the future.

BROCHURE FOR PREDATOR FRIENDLY WOOLEN HANDICRAFT



Shan Predator Friendly wool and handicrafts are made in high human-wildlife conflict areas of Ladakh by the local women's groups. It adds valuable income to communities suffering loss of livestock to Shan (Snow Leopards) and other predators.

Shan Predator Friendly 100% wool is spun in the remotest of places in Ladakh, the wool is extracted from yaks and sheep's during the start of summer season, it is then thoroughly cleaned before knitting, women knit handicrafts during winters, standard procedures are strictly followed for this (no artificial substance is added to it); natural colours extracted from walnuts, geranium and other plants are used to colour the wool. The product is 100% natural and helps in keeping the environment green and clean.



SHAN PREDATOR FRIENDLY WOOLEN HANDICRAFT TAG

SHAN PREDATOR FRIENDLY
Handicrafts



Shan Predator Friendly wool and handicrafts are made in high human-wildlife conflict areas of Ladakh by the local women's groups. It adds valuable income to communities suffering loss of livestock to Shan (Snow Leopards) and other predators. By buying this product you have helped not only the community but also supported protection of Snow Leopards.

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