



 **baan-e-loom**
Digital Cluster of Barabanki Weavers

DIGITALLY ENABLED CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

ERICSSON INDIA CSR REPORT

Table of Contents

Cover Sheet 1

Table of Contents 2

Executive Summary 3-4

About the Stakeholders 4-6

Methodology of project interventions and use of Mobile technology 6-7

Programme Activities 8-9

Key outcomes of the programme. 10-11

Case studies of success (beneficiary, location/ site, Project worker) 11-13

Key Challenges faced and corrective actions if any 13

Evaluation 13-16

Budget Report 16

Sustainability 16

Activities not undertaken 17

Recommendations 17

Testimonials and Awards 17

Executive Summary

BACKGROUND:

In India, there are more than 2000 traditional skill-based clusters covering various skills from textile designing, handicrafts, and glass, leather and brass goods to wooden industries. Out of 2000, there are 470 handloom clusters in India.

According to the National Handloom Census 2012-2013, the sector is providing employment to about 65 lakh people in the country. However, the handloom-based clusters are unable to sustain themselves due to its very nature of being unorganized along with having a dispersed and poor structure, inadequate working capital, infrastructure, poor institutional framework and absolute disassociation from modern technologies including digital and Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Barabanki cluster is situated in Barabanki district of Uttar Prdaesh. The total geographical area of the district is approx. 4400 square km. The district consists of 7 tehsils and 17 blocks and on further distribution there are 2 municipalities, 11 town areas, 1 census town, 2063 revenue villages and 24 uninhabited villages, according to Census 2011. There are 1139 Gram Panchayats, 154 New Panchayats, 2 Parliamentary and 8 Legislative Assembly constituencies.

Barabanki is considered to be one of the clusters in Uttar Pradesh. There are about 50,000 weavers and 20,000 looms at Barabanki and nearby areas. The cluster is known for cotton weaving, zardozi art, applique cut work in sarees, scarfs, shawls etc. Most of the weaving households have 6 members in the family. Majority of the population in Barabanki have not attended school beyond the primary level.

There are a number of sub- professions involved in weaving like designer, yarn supplier, loom supplier, dyer etc. While some provide their services in the beginning phase of the supply chain the others are at the end of the link. Often many master weavers become middle men who supply to the market. The master weaver plays a crucial role in deciding the price of the final products. The weaver gets a fixed amount of wage, which is Rs50-60 per day irrespective of the selling price of the final product.

ABOUT THE PROJECT:

The **integrated digital cluster development (IDCD)** model, ideated and implemented by DEF includes decentralized use of digital and ICT tools in critical aspects of cluster development, especially improving and scaling up weaving skills, making new designs, archiving of designs, marketing, grooming entrepreneurial skills and adopting sustainable approach. The IDCD model adopts holistic development approach that can not only improve the livelihoods but also strengthen the socio and economic needs of the community.

The **main aim** of the project is to help cluster occupants combine their previous traditional skills with new age digital skills to connect their skill-based business to the outside world. The main objectives of the project are:

1. **Cluster Resource Centre:** this has been created as the point of contact for the

community to understand the demography of the cluster along with understanding the various needs of the community.

2. Cluster Wireless Network Development: for establishment and provisioning of wireless Internet basic infrastructure and access within and outside the cluster community. The cluster wireless network model will create an ecosystem by connecting schools, health and anganwadi centres.

3. Cluster Core Skills Development: focusing on primary skill development of cluster occupants to enhance their livelihood opportunities, income and living conditions

4. Cluster Tertiary Skills Development: focusing on tertiary skill development to encourage entrepreneurship and self-sustainability of cluster members

5. Cluster Enterprise Development: providing software support for the development of a Digital Resource Center (DRC) for product designing and processing and a Cluster Resource Center (CRC) to provide information-based, digital and non-ICT support services for the core and tertiary activities of the cluster

6. Cluster e-Commerce Development: for the development of an e-commerce portal for the cluster community to connect with national and global customers.

About the Stakeholders

Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) was started in 2002 out of the deep understanding that marginalised communities living in socio-economic backwardness and information poverty can be empowered to improve their lives on their own, simply by providing them access to information and knowledge on using digital tools. In 2002, DEF was registered as a not-for-profit organisation under the Indian Societies Registration Act, 1860, to carry out this mission of empowering people digitally. Through all its diverse activities, DEF seeks to help people living in information darkness overcome the information barrier, learn how to use digital tools and the Internet to achieve greater socio-economic equality by uplifting themselves almost on their own using the power of digital devices to access information and knowledge.

DEF has adopted a multi-stakeholder and multi-dimensional approach based on establishing community-owned and community-managed digital infrastructure and Internet access points in rural and semi-urban areas which operate in such a way that the entire community can avail the benefits of access to the Internet and the global information highway. This is done not only by establishing common Internet access points with all basic digital infrastructure such as computers, laptops, tablets, printers, photo printers, scanners, web cameras, etc. but also by spreading digital literacy among the masses either free of cost or at very affordable prices.

Over the years, DEF's work has evolved to cover six programmatic verticals or major work areas under which several projects have been launched. These programmatic areas are:

1 Access & Infrastructure: Access and Infrastructure in rural areas is provided through *Community Information Resource Centres (CIRCs)*. They are set up in rural and semi-urban areas of backward districts with basic digital equipment together with Internet connectivity. Starting from access to the encyclopaedic world of information and knowledge, CIRC's forms the basic backbone

of running any program initiated by DEF.

2. Governance & Entitlements: DEF aims to enable village councillors across panchayats of India through ICT and digital content for promotion of transparency and empowerment in governance. Through two programs, mainly *Digital Panchayat* and *Soochna Seva*, DEF is carrying out its purpose of enabling biggest electoral system.

3. Education & Empowerment: DEF in partnership with Media Lab Asia of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Government of India, launched Gyanpedia in 2007 as an online repository of digital content generated by teachers and students of rural schools from Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala.

4. Markets & Social Enterprises: Introducing inclusive and decentralised use of ICT and other digital tools in critical aspects of handloom cluster development in an effort to improve and scale up weaving skills, designs, marketing and entrepreneurship, besides creating sustainable livelihood options for the youth.

Keeping in mind about India's traditional art forms, DEF in partnership with various government bodies and CSR groups has initiated **Digital Cluster Development Programme**. It primarily involves inclusive and decentralised use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in critical aspects of handloom cluster development, especially improving and scaling up weaving skills, designs, marketing and entrepreneurship and creating sustainable livelihood options for the youth in the clusters.

Currently there are 5 digital clusters which have been adopted by DEF:

- **Chanderi, Madhya Pradesh:** in partnership with Ministry of Information & Technology in 2009, 'Chanderiyaan' was launched. From being worth Rs 65 crore in 2010, the Chanderi handloom industry has grown over the last five years to be worth over Rs 150 crore today. Today, average household income has tripled as a result have more than tripled due to various consequences of ICT intervention. Almost all weaver households in Chanderi and somewhat related to Chanderiyaan for multiple needs like CAD/CAM software, designing studio's, tailoring classes and the e-commerce website.
- **Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh:** Saidanpur village in Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh specialises in zari and applique cut-work on sarees, scarves and shawls, among other products. Barabanki and its adjoining area are home to around 50,000 weavers and 20,000 looms. Most of the weavers face stiff competition from the power loom owners; this pushes them to lead a life of low prestige. Project **Baank-e-Loom**, initiated in partnership with Ericsson India, aims to improve the livelihood of these weavers.
- **Nuapatna and Barpali, Orissa:** In 2015, the success of Chanderiyaan encouraged several CSR groups to adopt handloom clusters in partnership with DEF. Project DigiKala has been initiated in partnership with Microsoft Corporate Citizenship to deal with the poor condition of weavers and to revive the lost art of Ikkat.
- **Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu:** Five kilometres from Tiruchirappalli is Musiri panchayat town. There are more than 5,000 weavers in this area but more than half the weavers have shifted to powerlooms. In collaboration with Mphasis, Musiri cluster has been adopted to bring the skills of weaving back into the community.

6. Research & Advocacy: Networking for freedom online and offline: protecting freedom of information, expression and association on the internet in India since 2011.

Methodology of project interventions

Serial No.	Activity	YEAR 1 SUB-ACTIVITIES	YEAR 2 SUB-ACTIVITIES
1.	Activity 1: <i>Cluster Resource Centre (CRC)</i>	Baseline survey	
2.		Setting up the centre with at least 500 to 1000 square foot of space	
3.		Providing infrastructural resources such as 10 computers, printers, design software, and other necessary digital tools	
4.	Activity 2: <i>Cluster Wireless Network Development</i>	Deployment of wireless network in one central location covering a radius of 25 km	
5.		50 Wireless Nodes. This will include connecting minimum schools (10), public health centres (5), other institutions (5) and other individual users	50 wireless nodes. This will include connecting minimum schools (10), public health centres (5), other institutions (5) and other individual users
6.		2 TOTs on wireless network	2 TOTs on wireless network
7.	Activity 3: <i>Cluster Core Skills Development</i>	Provide digital literacy, digital skills, and elementary vocational skills to 500 community members	Provide digital literacy, digital skills, and elementary vocational skills to 500 community members
8.		English speaking training and skills to 100 local youth	English speaking training and skills to 100 local youth
9.		Training on digital skills to 100 local young women	Training on digital skills to 100 local young women
10.	Activity 4: <i>Cluster Tertiary Skills Development</i>	150 youngsters would be trained and skilled for digitally enabled entrepreneurship	150 youth would be trained and skilled for digitally enabled entrepreneurship
11.		50 digital designers would be trained and skilled on weaving & design; periphery skills like apparel, embroidery, stitching, packaging, marketing, business development etc.); and create pattern designers picked from the community	50 digital designers would be trained and skilled on weaving & design; periphery skills like apparel, embroidery, stitching, packaging, marketing, business development etc.); and create pattern designers picked from the community
12.	Activity 5: <i>Cluster Enterprise Development</i>	Creation of 5 SHG groups on traditional weavers or craftsmen	Creation of 5 SHG groups on traditional weavers or craftsmen
13.		10 designers to serve at least 200 individual or micro enterprise outfits at functional design centre	10 designers to serve at least 200 individual or micro enterprise outfits at functional design centre

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14.		CRC will offer information based services like government entitlements, etc. to 300 households	CRC will offer information based services like government entitlements, etc. to 300 households
15.		Serving at least 200 households to provide support services for core, periphery and tertiary skill needs; ICT, health, G2C & B2C services;	Serving at least 200 households to provide support services for core, periphery and tertiary skill needs; ICT, health, G2C & B2C services;
16.	Activity 6: Cluster Enterprise Commerce Development	Development of an e-commerce portal exclusively based on the cluster and its entrepreneurs, enterprise, products, skills and services to national and global level customers.	The e-commerce portal would be enabled with online transaction and would sell products made through the CRC and the SHGs associated with CRC and also other community producers from the cluster.

LOCATION OF BAANK-E-LOOM:



Considering Saidanpur is an artisan cluster where weavers still have hope in handloom

and women are as active as their male counterparts. In Saidanpur, Baank-e-Loom is supported by the royal family in terms of setting up the centre. The property is owned by Mr. Wajahat Habibullah, the first Chief Information Commissioner of India.

The site has a lot of artistic and heritage elements in itself, making it an ideal place to set up the centre. The site had been left unused for several years and was used by the public as a dumping ground. Taking up the property came with the responsibility of clearing up the ground, renovating and making it into a desirable centre for the community.

The nearby area of the centre has got two Panchayat Centres and 10 schools which are directly benefitting from the CIRC centre. There is a market around 1 km from the village where there are approximately 50 shops.

Currently 300 students have been enrolled for the digital literacy classes and five batches run every day depending on the suitability of the community. The center is equipped with basic facilities like computer, printer, photocopy machine etc.

Baank-e-loom center provides a unique opportunity for the weavers to be digitally abled. A number of students who are part of the digital literacy classes belong to the weaver families of the area. Introducing CAD/CAM software at the center has enhanced their capabilities. Considering that there is no government weaving facilities provided yet to the weavers in Saidanpur, the Baank-e-loom center is the backbone for the future of weavers.

Programme Activities

Ideated and implemented by the Digital Empowerment Foundation, the **Digital Cluster Development Project (DCDP)** includes decentralised use of digital and ICT tools in critical aspects of cluster development, especially for improving and scaling up weaving skills, helping them make new designs, archiving of designs, marketing, grooming weavers' entrepreneurial skills and adopting sustainable approach. The main aim of the project is to help cluster occupants combine their traditional skills with new age digital skills to connect their skill-based business to the outside world. The following activities have been initiated at our Baank-e-loom centre:

- 1. Digital Literacy:** Digital literacy is one of the main functioning of the CIRC centre. We believe that connecting people with digital literacy opens all barriers of lack of information and exposes people to endless knowledge bank. Digital Literacy program includes acquainting students with how a computer works. To deal with the problem of lack of information, we have set up a centre at Barabanki with basic digital equipment like computer, tablets, photocopy machine, printing machine, scanner etc. From 15th February onwards, basic digital literacy classes started at the Digital Literacy Centre at bank-e-loom. Till August 2016, more than 300 community members have already been made digitally literate, out of which around 50% are women. Currently, five batches run every day depending on the suitability of the community.
- 2. Digital Services:** CIRC centre at Barabanki is equipped with basic digital services like photocopy machine, printing machine, scanner etc. The services can be availed at a very nominal price. It lessens the burden of travelling to faraway places for basic services.
- 3. Wireless for Communities:** The project involves deploying line-of-sight wireless technology and low-cost Wi- Fi equipment which utilize the unlicensed 2.4 GHz and 5.8

GHz spectrum bands to create community-owned and operated wireless networks.

In the month of April the **Wireless for Communities (W4C)** programme was implemented in Saidanpur, before which training was provided to 10 young participants from the community regarding wireless connectivity. Seven W4C nodes were created in and around village Saidanpur which included a private connection at the bank-e-loom, a main broadcast point, over a water tank, at a Primary Health Centre, at a government school, and at a Madarsa in Akbarpur.

4. **Information Services:** Our centre at Barabanki centre Starting from access to the encyclopaedic world of information and knowledge that the Internet represents about government schemes and the rights and entitlements of the citizens, online access to government services, opportunities for distance education, online skilling, telemedicine, e-ticketing, online entertainment, filling online forms, scanning, photocopying, personal communication through e-mails and social media, etc. We train people from community to effectively use computer.
5. **Citizen Services:** Under this activity, using CIRC as the base we provide various services to people from the community. From applying for Aadhaar cards, filling up college forms, applying for passport to weaver cards etc. Our centre fulfils all the queries and creates awareness about government schemes that can be availed by the community members.
6. **Design Centre/Exhibition Room:** Considering our centre also as a heritage property, we have provided a design centre for the weavers. This space has been provided to them to experiment with designs, material and exhibit their products for sale. We plan to display products created by the weavers and other handicrafts from different areas for inspiration.
7. **Entrepreneurship Module:** Under this activity we provide an entrepreneurial set up for the weavers to experiment, design and exhibit their products on an e-commerce portal. The market for the weaver is often decided by the middleman he works for and often the weavers are exploited by middlemen by paying weavers very low prices for their products. To eradicate this structure, we aim to connect weavers directly to the market.
8. **Digital Public Library:** This is a special program introduced by Ms Jyotsna Kaur Habibullah when she visited our CIRC centre. There are number of government and private schools around the centre, therefore the library would be of great help for us to connect with people in the community. The centre has the potential to become an activity centre for children around Saidanpur.
9. **Community Mobilisation:** One of the main purposes of the bank-e-loom centre is to provide a place for community mobilisation activities. Since Saidanpur is abode to number of weaver families, there aren't many community mobilisation activities organised in the village. Our aim is to make bank-e-loom an effective ideation centre for weavers and other groups.
10. **Meetings/Workshop:** The bank-e-loom centre is also a hub for number of other meetings and events. We aim to create awareness in the village through our centre. In the last 6 months we successfully organised two events: World Environment Day and National Handloom Day.

Key outcomes of the programme

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PROJECT ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	TARGET
DIGITAL LITERACY PROGRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 300 students enrolled out of which 80 are women. - 88 students have completed their certification. - 5 batches of digital literacy are running every day. 	Provide digital literacy, digital skills, and elementary vocational skills to 500 community members
WIRELESS CONNECTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently 6 connections have been provided in Saidanpur village. It includes UPS Saidanpur where 200 children and school authorities are benefitting from the connection. Public Health Centre where on an average 100 people visit every day. Saidanpur Madarassa has over 100 students strength who have been connected through Wireless Connectivity. 	50 Wireless Nodes. This will include connecting schools (10), public health centres (5), other institutions (5) and other individual users
DESIGN TRAINING PROGRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100 students participated design competition organised in the centre out of which 20 students have been enrolled as part of the design training classes who belong to weaver families 	50 digital designers to be trained
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently a batch of 20 students is part of english speaking training and skills classes. 	English speaking training and skills to 100 local youth
CIRC SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On an average 250 people visit our centre every month to avail basic digital services like printing, photocopy, scanning etc. 	

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DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT	ENTERPRISE	- 1 SHG has been created with 5 members. The members of the SHG are being trained on equipping themselves digitally.	Creation of 5 SHG groups on traditional weavers or craftsmen
ENTREPRENEURSHIP and E-COMMERCE	MODULE	Not initiated as yet.	
COMMUNITY MOBILISATION		- As of now 5 meetings have been held at our bank-e-loom centre with participation of more than 120 members from the community.	

Case studies of success (beneficiary, location/ site, Project worker)

BENEFICIARY:

ISLAMUDDIN ANSARI

Opening a CIRC centre in Saidanpur Village in Barabanki has contributed significantly in connecting people from the village to the wide world. Many students from nearby school have actively participated in our Digital Literacy classes.

As Nelson Mandela said “without education, your children can never really meet the challenges they will face. So it’s very important to give children education and explain that they should play a role for their country.” Here is a story of our young computer enthusiast:



Islamuddeen Ansari passed his class XII board exam with 84% this year. He hails from Saidanpur and belongs to a family of weavers. He is proud of the weaving knowledge that he has inherited from his family. Belonging to the

poor financial background, he divides his day in three major parts; sitting in his grocery shop, weaving and attending digital literacy classes. After his board exams, Islamuddeen joined Baank-e-loom to enhance his existing knowledge. He is a bright student and he picked up the basics of

computer quite early & eagerly. He is trying to link the process of weaving with the knowledge he has gained by reads on the internet. Last month he found new designs from the internet that can be incorporated in weaving. His enthusiasm to learn and innovate is something which adds colour to centre. He is learning digital designing tools to use his creativity for the good of the weaving community of Barabanki.

PROJECT LOCATION:

Upper Primary School Saidanpur

Upper Primary School in Saidanpur is one of our first centres where wireless connection has been provided. During a conversation with the headmaster of the school, he mentioned how the school has benefitted from the centre. Earlier because of no internet connection, teachers were stuck to their general and old ways of teaching from books. Since internet is now available in school, staff of the school engages more with children by showing them videos, sharing stories, screening short films etc. Teachers also prefer using fun way of teaching through videos and songs. Children are more curious to learn something new and are willing to come to school regularly. Mr. Ashok Kumar mentions that he is thankful to the bank-e-loom centre to provide them with free internet and connecting more than 250 children and staff members with the outside world.

Public Health Centre Saidanpur

Ajay Kumar is the driver of an ambulance at the PHC in Saidanpur. Three months ago he came to know about the baank-e-loom centre. After the internet connection provided by baank-e-loom centre, Ajay Kumar mentions that now he can easily locate his patients and provide them some sort of immediate relief. He also states that he can connect to his colleagues and other ambulance drivers in different cities for better delivery of services. Other members in the hospital can also use the free Wi-Fi. Patients waiting in queue at the hospital can also avail the free wifi and understand the functioning of a government hospital. With more than 100 people visiting the PHC every day, we are successfully connecting a large number of people at Saidanpur.

PROJECT WORKER:

NOORI KHATUN

Noori Khatoon is a trainer at CIRC Saidanpur at District Barabanki of Uttar Pradesh. It is often said that a winner never stops trying and Noori, a 21 year old computer enthusiast is an inspiring



example of that. She teaches basic computer at our CIRC centre. She not only carries a friendly and positive attitude but is also a phenomenal teacher. She has successfully trained more than 100 students and is the favourite didi of all children at the centre.

Since, Saidanpur has number of weaver families; Noori also creates awareness amongst the weaver community. She tells them about the advantages of joining the Baank-e-loom centre. With her as part of our team, we are able to understand the needs of the weavers and are able to create a plan accordingly. Her inputs have been valuable to

understand the change of design that needs to be introduced in weaving patterns in Barabanki cluster. She wants to see her local handloom community flourish with more profitable livelihoods, enabled through digital literacy.

Key Challenges faced and corrective actions if any

We encountered and overcame number of challenges faced while setting up and running the centre. Some of the key challenges are:

- **Infrastructure:** One of the major challenges we are facing is problems with infrastructure. Considering the number of hours of power cut in Saidanpur it is becoming difficult to run digital literacy classes without interruption. Also, since the centre has been renovated from ruins there are hardly any facilities for our team members to stay. Basic amenities like water, electricity and toilet are not available which makes it difficult for our team to live there and work.
- **Mobilising weavers:** Since weavers spend most of their time in weaving, it is difficult for them to contribute time for the digital literacy classes. Most of the weaver families are directly depended on weaving for their meals. To deal with this problem, we identified at least one person from the family who is not directly involved in weaving to join our digital literacy classes. Design training is the first step towards forming a better product. Now 40% of the students enrolled at our centre belong to the weaving families.

Evaluation

PROJECT ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES

1. Community awareness and outreach:



14

One of the main activities that the Saidanpur Centre hosts for the people in the community is awareness programs. In the last six months we have successfully mobilised more than 85 people at our centre. Since we have established a good understanding of the community at Saidanpur,

	<p>centre of baank-e-loom, it was important to identify weavers and designers whose creative aptitude surpassed others. The purpose was to identify weavers who had the potential to be a part of the first batch of digital designing classes. Hence, a painting and designing competition was conducted in March 2016 at the baank-e-loom centre in which twenty talented weavers and potential weavers were selected for registration out of 100 who had participated. The centre has recently begun digital designing classes on Computer Aided Swith these 20 weavers.</p>
<p>2. Training and skill development</p>	<p>At our Baank-e-loom centre we provide training and skill development to youth through various activities. Some include digital literacy classes, digital design training and English speaking. In the last six months 300 students have been enrolled for digital literacy classes. Out of which 80 are women. We have been able to generate great interest among people to learn computer by opening our centre. Almost 88 students have successfully completed their Intel First Step certification. Our trainer Noori Khatoon is also from the community who has been running 5 batches of digital literacy everyday.</p> <p>Apart from digital literacy classes, training to young weavers is being provided through CAD/CAM software. Before starting digital designing classes at the centre of baank-e-loom, it was important to identify weavers and designers whose creative aptitude surpassed others. The purpose was to identify weavers who had the potential to be a part of the first batch of digital designing classes. Hence, a drawing competition was organised where 100 students participated. Out of 100, 20 have been selected to provide design training workshop.</p> <p>We have also initiated English Language Training Program with a batch of 20 students. These students belong to government schools, from the community and students from nearby college.</p>

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3. Culture and heritage preservation	Considering our centre is a heritage property belonging to the Habilbullahs, it is recognised as a significant location in Barabanki. It's a great centre to promote handloom and for people to understand their roots. In near future we plan to initiate rural tourism at our centre and make it a bustling city for people coming to understand and explore the culture of Uttar Pradesh. We have collaborated with INTACH to understand about the heritage property and have been seeking for historical help. To enable the centre more we also aim to digitally archive some of the best designs from the weaving community of Saidanpur.
4. Digital and information access	One of our aims after setting up the centre was to provide at least 50 wireless nodes. Though lesser in number, we have been able to provide 6 connections across Saidanpur. The 6 centres include UPS Saidanpur where 200 children and school authorities are benefitting from the connection. The principal of the school is highly motivated to use new techniques in school and teach children. Public Health Centre of Saidanpur has also been provided with free internet connection where on an average 100 people visit everyday. While in conversation with one of the staffs, he mentions that with the use of wifi patients would be able to avail information pertaining to their interest easily. Saidanpur Madarassa is also one of our nodes. It has a strength of over 100 students who have been connected through Wireless Connectivity.
5. Enterprising & sustainability	We have been able to create one SHG and have been working towards equipping them digitally. Along with our team we have been brainstorming on ideas for the ecommerce portal and how to make the livelihood of weavers of Barabanki more sustainable.

Budget Report

Please find the attachment.



Ericson Financial Un
Audited Report _Aug

Sustainability

We are ensuring that the centre remains sustainable Sustainability of the centre is going to be met through the following steps:

1. **CIRC Centre:** The CIRC centre provides basic digital infrastructure like printing, wifi, photocopy, digital literacy classes. The facilities are available at a very nominal charge for the people of the community. The expenses of the services would be met through the payments made by people using them.
2. **Wireless Network:** Wireless network system has been set up at the Baank-e-loom centre. By providing network facilities to people in the community, schools, government offices we would be able to balance the expenses of the centre.
3. **Entrepreneurship Model:** We are aiming to digitally equip and create sustainable self-help weaving groups. By providing them the infrastructure at present like market, production, machines, training etc, we would be creating entrepreneurs who will take forward the project like a business.
The e-commerce portal would enable weavers with online transaction and would sell their products made through the CRC and the SHGs associated with CRC and also other community producers from the cluster.
4. **Scalability:** We are currently working with 5 clusters. In the coming few years we are looking forward to expand to many different states where Indian handloom is severely affected. Following the model of Barabanki cluster, we are aiming to get a stronger hold over different clusters of Uttar Pradesh
5. **Rural Tourism:** Considering Baank-e-loom has been set up on a heritage property, we see high potential of it turning it into a rural tourism centre. The centre can be a set up for people to learn about weaving, understand rural practices along with the heritage of Nawabi Awadh.

Activities not undertaken

We have been facing difficulties in the following activity:

Entrepreneurship Module: We have been facing difficulties in organising a self-help group purely for business purpose. We have faced challenges in bringing a group of weavers together to innovate with their designs and invest themselves in making it a fully functional and successful business. Since the weavers mostly work for the middlemen and are paid on daily basis, it is hard to convince them to come together and devote some of their time especially for building an enterprise.

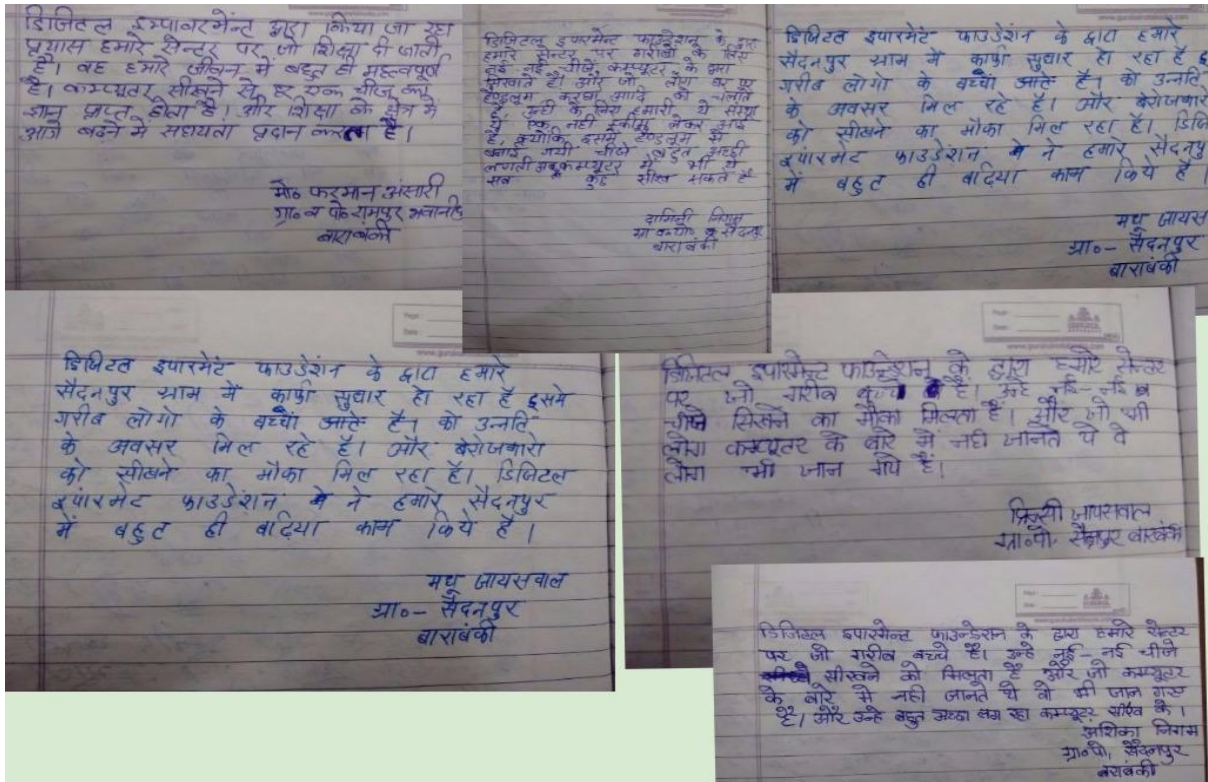
Recommendations

We would like to improve our project in the coming term through these action plans:

- **Infrastructure:** One of the problems that our centre is facing is shortage of electricity. Considering the hours of power cut in Uttar Pradesh it is becoming difficult to run the centre without power back up. Since the centre has also been renovated from the start, there is little facility for our team members to stay. The toilet at the centre is also not in a very good condition. We would expect your support in improving infrastructure of our centre.
- **Number of Events:** In last one year we had almost 5-6 events at our centre. We plan to organise an event every month with participation of people from different places. We also plan to have special events for children from schools and colleges in order to

make Bank-e-loom activity hub in the community.

Testimonials and Awards



ENDLINE SURVEY

In an effort to assess the awareness about the Bank-e-Loom centre among the community and the demographic distribution of the community members, an endline survey was carried out of 200 individuals across seven villages in Barabanki district. A brief overview of the survey is mentioned below:

Demographics

- Most of the respondents surveyed across the seven villages were from Saidanpur Panchayat (142), followed by Chaukhandi Panchayat (24), Rampur Panchayat (20), Akbarpur Panchayat (5), Palhari Panchayat (5), Khedrapur (1) and Toli (1).
- Out of the 200 individuals surveyed, 100 respondents were aged between 13 and 18; 58 respondents were aged between 19 and 25; 25 were aged between 26 and 35; 13 were aged between 36 and 45; and 3 were aged 46 or above.
- Among those surveyed, 109 were females and 90 were males.

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- Most of the respondents were students (66), followed by unemployed (37), daily wage labourers (25), homemakers (25), self-employed (19), private job employees (12), government service employee (7) and farmers (5).
- Of those interviewed, 59 respondents said their monthly income was Between Rs. 101 and 2000, 51 respondents said their monthly income was between Rs. 2001 and 5000, and 80 persons were dependent on other members of their family.
- Among those surveyed, 103 respondents identified themselves as Hindus while 96 identified themselves as Muslims.
- Out of the 200 individuals, 159 belonged to Other Backward Castes, 6 were Scheduled Castes, and 33 belonged to General category.
- Among the respondents, 22 were illiterate, 31 had attended up to the primary school, 33 had attended up to the secondary school, 63 had attended up to senior secondary level, 17 were graduates, and 5 had studied up to post-graduate level.

Awareness

- As many as 145 of the 200 respondents were aware of both DEF and Ericsson; 52 respondents had heard of Baank-e-Loom but not of DEF or Ericsson; and 2 chose not to answer.
- Among the respondents, 122 had smartphone; and 108 felt comfortable using basic ICT devices.
- Among those surveyed, 139 respondents said they rely on the Baank-e-Loom centre for digital services, 34 respondents said they rely on the local CSC, 16 respondents get their work done through friends and family, 1 goes to the panchayat ghar for services, 1 goes to the nearest private digital services shop.
- Among the digital services offered, 44 respondents had availed some basic digital service such as scanning, printing or photocopy; 10 had used the centre to access the Internet, 7 had availed information services, and six had availed other services.
- As many as 66 respondent had first heard about the Baank-e-Loom centre directly from the centre staff, 20 had heard through members in their family, 14 had heard through their panchayat representative, and 31 others had heard through word-of-mouth in the community.
- At least 11 respondents were aware of the functioning of the Baank-e-Loom initiative for more than 25 months, 29 respondents were aware of it for 18-24 months, 72 respondents were aware of it for the last 13-18 month, 41 had heard about it in the last 7-12 months, and 46 had heard of it in the last six months.
- Among those who visited the centre, 23 said they visit the centre on a daily basis while 39 said they visited the centre as and when required; frequency of others varied from once a week to once a month.

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- Among those who visit the centre regularly, 49 said they live within a one-km radius of the centre while 18 said they come from a distance further away.
- Among those surveyed, 35 had learned digital literacy at the Baank-e-Loom centre while 8 had received the training at a private computer course centre and another 8 had received the training at their school or institute.
- Among the respondents, 32 were aware that Internet was available as a paid service at the centre.
- Of those interviewed, 89 persons said that the centre was always open for people to access it; 39 said Internet was mostly functional with good speed; 48 said the laptops were in good conditions.
- As many as 98 respondents felt that the centre was a safe space for women and girls; 116 felt that the staff was helpful and courteous; and 109 respondents said the staff was able to answer their queries.

FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSIONS

In an effort to assess the impact of the various activities implemented through the Baank-e-Loom centre, a series of focused group discussions (FGDs) were organised over a period of two days. Key highlights from the group discussions are given below.

Groups

- A total of 13 FGDs were conducted. These focused group discussions targeted staff (1 group), digital literacy students (2 groups), English language students (2 groups), vocational skill students (1 group), weavers and community members (2 groups), individual Internet users (2 groups) and institutional Internet users (3 groups)

Digital Literacy Students

- Most students who have participated in the digital literacy course thought that the curriculum was well designed with a lot of scope for practical learning and improvisation.
- All students agreed that the digital literacy course offered at the Baank-e-Loom centre was much more affordable (one-time registration fee of Rs. 150) and knowledgeable than those offered by private computer institutes (monthly fee of Rs. 400 for six months)
- Most students went back home to tell their parents about the other services that are available at the centre.
- Most students spend 1.5 to 2 hours at the centre per visit.
- All students rated the trainers 10 on a scale of 1-10.
- Most students thought that the centre was located in a safe space, especially for women. However, some students suggested that it could be shifted to the main road so that more people can access it.

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- All students agreed that the digital services are available at the same nominal prices as other private shops. However, a number of families find the shop in the market more accessible than the centre, given its distance from the main road.
- Most boys had smartphones while girls rarely had a phone of their own. They were dependent on their brothers to make calls, play games or access the Internet for information through a mobile phone.
- All smartphone owners had the following apps installed on their phones— WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube. Some of them even used Instagram, PayTm and music apps. Ludo and War City are popular mobile games amongst the boys.
- All students learned how to use MS Suite, Paint, Notepad and the Internet at the centre.
- While most students were comfortable using the computers and accessing the Internet after the course, a few girls said they were hesitant in using the Internet on their own.
- Several girls suggested that there should be more vocational training courses for them to build their skills in tassle making and developing beautician skills.
- All students were aware that the digital services were offered at the centre but very few were aware of the local CSC.
- Eighteen-year-old Mukesh has learnt to write blogs at the centre and he also writes about films.
- Twenty-four-year-old Saddam Hussain runs a music-based YouTube channel.
- A number of youngsters, especially adolescents, continued to visit the centre to practice their computer skills even after their curriculum was completed and certificates were awarded.
- A number of students would be willing to learn advanced computer skills, such as Tally, Excel and typing for a nominal fee.

English Language Students

- Most students felt they were more confident in using English words now than they were before.
- They felt that peer-to-peer engagement helped them a lot in speaking and learning English.
- The students wish that the English learning programme was an ongoing initiative.
- They felt visual learning acted as an advantage for them.
- The students were glad that it was an exclusive class for girls as it made them less conscious and more confident.
- Some students have suggested to start a certificate course in English typing.

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- All students wanted to learn English because they thought it was an inspirational language.
- The students felt comfortable in talking in English at the centre but not as comfortable at the home.
- The students said their mothers were excited that the kids could use English words.

Vocational Skill Students

- Youth boys felt that wireless training was a very useful workshop for them, and opened up various opportunities for them in the state Capital.
- Eighteen-year-old Vikas was trained in wireless networking at the centre, he now works in Lucknow with Jio network.
- Community girls from weaver and farmer households are very happy that the centre offers training in stitching and tailoring.
- Some women who had participated in pickle-making and packaging trainings said it gave them the confidence to become a bread earner in their families.
- Some women had never participated in the workshops or trainings but were aware of the same through their neighbours.
- Several girls said they learnt new craft skills through the workshops at the centre.

Weavers & Other Community Members

- Most community members were aware of the Baank-e-Loom centre. However, some, especially men, were only aware of the digital literacy classes at the centre.
- Most women who participated in the FGDs said they had participated in various awareness and vocational workshops.
- While the men agreed that they were aware of such workshops being organised at the Centre, they had barely attended one or two.
- Some members of the community had never visited the centre, claiming they did not have the time or reason to visit the centre.
- Youth respondents said they had participated in most of the workshops with the purpose of capacity building.
- Most community members had heard of the centre through the ground staff during the mobilisation drives or through their neighbour's children who had enrolled themselves for digital literacy classes.
- Weavers, especially, saw a lot of relevance of the Internet for the expansion of their business.
- Women felt safe to send their daughters to the centre due to the presence of

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a woman trainer.

- Most people thought that the centre was well located, but a few suggested that it can be moved to the main market for easy accessibility.
- Most community members had spent up to an hour at the centre each time they visit. Others would just come for a digital service and leave.
- Every community member had a sense of trust for the coordinator and trainers, and felt that they were working for the good of the community.
- Very few women visited the centre unless there was a workshop or vocational skill training.
- Everyone felt that the Internet was important for some reason or the other.
- The weaver card of a number of weavers had been confiscated by the master weavers and the weavers were keen to take the centre coordinator's help to get it back.
- Community members felt that the Baank-e-Loom centre offered more services at an affordable rate as compared to the local CSC.
- Community members gave an average rating of 7.5 on a scale of 10 to the relevance of the centre for them; but gave a rating of 10 for the relevance of the centre for their children.
- Community members hope that the centre would be able to increase the demand for their products.
- The weavers felt that they would be more excited about digital designing if the training could result in an increase in the orders.
- A number of weavers are happy that Baank-e-Loom has given them a platform to showcase their products at the national and international level.
- A few weavers were scared to work with Baank-e-Loom's production team due to the fear of their master weavers.
- Youth weavers were happy that their products are now available online.

Baank-e-Loom staff

- There are four staff members at the Baank-e-Loom staff; two trainers, one coordinator and one government services facilitator.
- All staff members, except for the coordinator, have been associated with Digital Empowerment Foundation for the first time and are from the local community.
- The opportunity to serve the community with relevant skills and services is what attracted the staff to join Baank-e-Loom.
- The male coordinator and male trainer enjoy their community mobilisation drives a lot, they feel it gives them a sense of purpose.

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- The woman trainer and the woman government services facilitator feel providing access to education and entitlements can pull the community out of cycles of poverty.
- They feel the Internet has relevance for everyone, irrespective of their age and occupation.
- They feel the centre has led to improved digital literacy levels.
- The staff pointed out that a lot of girls have never been to school, other than the local madrasa that teaches them Quran, but now they are learning computers as an aspirational subject.
- The staff rated the support from head office at 8.5 on a scale of 10.
- Their family members are happy about their job, its vision and their salaries.
- The staff feels that training on financial planning and sale of service could help them become better entrepreneurs.
- The staff is motivated to start more vocational trainings and film screenings as paid services to increase the revenue at the centre.
- The staff would require some handholding and financial support for six more months before they become financially self-sufficient.
- The staff understands the role of DEF and Ericsson pretty well.
- They thought p3 required some efforts at the time of updation but it is a very useful and transparent tool

Internet Users

- Most users of the wireless broadband service were happy with the service
- They felt the speed was good and the connectivity was seamless
- The centre coordinator fixed the problem almost immediately whenever the Internet was down.
- Many users felt that their neighbours did not want to buy the wireless connection because of the free Jio service, even if it's slow, it's available for free.
- Most of the wireless broadband users had been using the connection for a year, some had subscribed the connection less than six months ago.
- Everyone realised the importance of the Internet for themselves, their families, their friends and their community.
- Smartphone users were trained in the Internet usage.
- In several households, boys had upgraded their smartphones or bought a new one after the father agreed to buy the Internet connection.

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- In most households, girls relied on their brothers' phones to access the Internet
- Almost all wireless Internet users actively used Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and PayTm