

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



WIGC FOR WEAKER SECTION

WOMEN'S INCOME GENERATION CENTRE (WIGC)

WIGC Complex, Thoubal Wangmataba,
Thoubal District, Manipur – 795138

Website: www.wigc.org Email: indiraoinam@rediffmail.com

Background

Established in 1994 at Thoubal Ningombam, Thoubal District, Manipur, the Women's Income Generation Centre (WIGC) has been working as a full service provider of programmes, products and services with the underlying objective for poverty alleviation by making self-sustainability livelihoods. The Organisation empowers people with self-employment prospects with its continuing life skill training programmes, horticulture and agro-based set ups, handloom and handicraft activities and mass social awareness on mobilization of natural resources.



WIGC, is registered under the Manipur Societies Registration Act, 1989 (Manipur Act 1 of 1990). There are some odd thousands of individual members and beneficiaries of whom the Organisation has been taking up over the years various economic activities. The job-oriented trainings programmes are extensively carried out in different parts of Manipur. In terms of revenue generation, WIGC is one of the leading establishments in voluntary



sector in Manipur in the field of making world-class handicrafts products specially Kouna and allied products, which are already acclaimed in domestic and international markets.

In short, WIGC forms a common platform for the people of Manipur to build a vibrant society and strengthen the community people through hard work and dignity of labour with a dedication to providing safe, rapid and highly specialized economic sustainability livelihoods.

The immediate beneficiaries and target groups of the Organisation consist of marginalized families, destitute women and children, hill tribes (STs), SCs, minority communities, and people living in difficult circumstances. To attain the desired results, WIGC closely works with both government and non-government agencies including local clubs, community leaders, Meira Paibis (women pressure groups), parents, guardians, senior citizens, community health workers, professionals, intellectuals, etc.

Objectives

The following objectives guide our way forward:

- To uplift lives socio-economically for self-reliance;
- To protect destitute women and children;



-
- To alleviate poverty with income generating activities with special attention to rural areas and unorganized sector;
 - To focus on groups which are disadvantageously placed in society, but having great potential for socially and economically productive activities; and
 - To support the rural and suburban poor especially the minorities, people in the hills and border areas.
 - To support and extend optimum service to people living in difficult circumstances.
 - To explore natural resources and human capital of Manipur through land development and agro-tourism.

Motto

Service, Equality, Peace and Development.

Mission/Vision

The welfare, upliftment and empowerment of weaker section of society, particularly the poor and the underprivileged, destitute women and children with a relentless effort to ensure a life with dignity and prosperity by strengthening human resource and their other capabilities through advocacy, improved knowledge and life skill education.



Strategy

The strategy of the organization involves

- a) Making short, medium and long term goals to establish a close relationship between the organization and its different stakeholder groups.
- b) Mobilizing human capital to explore opportunities for social enterprise/ proprietary initiatives.
- c) Addressing important stakeholder needs promptly and efficiently.
- d) The identification of the scope of the activities or programmes through which those goals and objectives are to be achieved.
- e) Emphasizing on outcomes, rather than outputs.

Achievements

- The UNDP Award (2000)
- The State Youth Award (2004).
- The District Youth Award (1997-98)

An Overview from the Year

This year, the special attention was given to the enhancement of the existing programmes and activities particularly in the field of plantation and land development. WIGC has made better inputs to strengthen the unorganized sectors such as Self-help groups, craftspersons and other underprivileged community people to identify their area-specific problems and remedial measures with need-based programmes being implemented by the organization.



In this regard, mention may be made that while executing various programmes, WIGC puts every possible attempt for the judicious usage of human resource as well as bio-resources available in Manipur. However, working in a land-locked hill state of Manipur which abounds with numerous socio-economic issues has never been a smooth sailing. It is rather a challenging task and there are blocks lying on the way to enhancing people's lives. The people, after all, deserve safety, peace and prosperity. Keeping this view in mind, WIGC has been consistently rendering painstaking efforts and best ever possible services for the welfare of the people.

PROGRAMMES

Children Home for Girls

The Children Home for Girls is run under ICPS Scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India through the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Manipur. With the intake capacity of 50 inmates, the Home (also known as Ashram for Children) provides accommodation and other support services for destitute girl children. It was set up within the framework of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2000, amended in 2006.



The Home prioritizes the improvement of the situation of the destitute girl children. It works more than a shelter home for a place for learning and development. Apart from formal education and vocational training, the inmates are extended with regular activities like meditation, martial arts (self-defense techniques), outing, drawing and other extra-curricular activities including games and sports to nurture the creativity the children and

help them in their all-round personal growth. Some of the inmates the Home are quite excel in extra-curricular activities. Some senior inmates are also sent for NCC camps in Imphal.

Swadhar Home

The Swadhar Home (also known as Ashram for Destitute Women) is located at Oinam, Bishnupur District, Manipur. The present Home is functioning as shelter home and a vocational training centre for the destitute women with a provision for the accommodation to the children of the inmates. The inmates of the Home consist of widows, divorcees, victims of domestic violence, physically challenged women, etc. they are provided shelter and other required services including counseling and behavioral training. In addition, they are also imparted vocational training programmes along with capacity building, socialization, spiritual classes, and the like.



The Home strictly adopts the basic principle to rehabilitate the inmates socio-economically as early as possible. Support services are also extended to the rehabilitated ex-inmates with formation of SHGs, micro-credit with banks, skill upgradation programmes, advocacy and awareness generation on various women social issues, etc. As a matter of fact, the socio-economic conditions of the rehabilitated women are fairly improved within short time. Hence, the role of the Home is not only providing shelter but addresses the specific needs of the women in difficult circumstances through a home-based holistic and integrated approach to empower them.



Apart from food and accommodation, the Centre also provides education, vocational training, health care and nutrition and extra-curricular facilities to the inmate children to ensure them a meaningful life with a reliable source of earning for self-sufficiency and no more dependent on others when they are grown-ups.

Craft-based Resource Centre in Cane & Bamboo Crafts

The Resource Centre has crossed six years of continuing service as a resource hub for cane and bamboo crafts. The Centre has been extending various services to individuals and groups of individuals as to this popular craft. The services of the Centre include imparting in-house training on skill designs, imparting field training through experts, domestic marketing of artisans' products, conducting awareness camps,





professional support for making projects for different projects, etc. The Centre also acts as a bridge between artisans/entrepreneurs and buyers. In fact, it is an information centre for the chosen crafts.

In addition, the existing Resource Centre has been working as a link among different players of the craft environment by acting as an incubator for different developing enterprises for cane and

bamboo and allied crafts. With the increasing awareness and concerns in all fields, the Resource Centre is more than just depositories or distribution centers of information materials. Rather, the Center can actually take on a more proactive role to create substantial resources and to improve access to information. Hence, Resource Centre has strengthened the in-house and field trainings of skill development, soft skill development, design and technology with proper expertise and tools and equipment.

Plantation of Bamboo for the Resource Centre

Bamboo plantation has been a regular activity for WIGC, particularly for the Resource Centre. The raising of bamboo nurseries has been taken up in WIGC Complex. The bamboo species include Kenokiya, Catabas, Catas, Moubi, Unan, Maribop, Shaneibi, Khokwa, Nonga, Oui, Utang.



WIGC Agri-Project:

Agro-based Tourism Centre under WIGC Agri-Project

Under this initiative, an area of around 21576000 sq. ft. has been covered in the areas of Thoubal and Lishamlok village under Village No.19, Yaithibi, Thoubal Khunou, District, Manipur. The main activities taken under this Agro-based Tourism Centre are:

1) Plantation of Kouna

In true sense, Kouna is synonymous with WIGC, for over a decade, the plantation of Kouna has been an integral part WIGC for revenue generation activities with eco-friendly plants. WIGC has expanded Kouna plantation work to other areas in and around the agri-project site at Thoubal Khunou (SC) village and foothills of surrounding ST villages. Hence, the plantation is carried out with fishery. Evidently, the growth of the fishes is quite good.



The growth of the present Kouna plantation is much better than that of the previous year. Quality of the

crop is also better for making diversified products in large scale. With the rise on the volume of production of Kouna raw-material, it is quite certain that WIGC can supply, to a larger extent, the required raw-material for Kouna crafts for the entire area of Manipur. Moreover, abundant raw-material can ensure a ceaseless production all the year round.

As a matter of fact, there has been a tremendous increase in the demand of Kouna raw-material in Manipur primarily because of the demand of Kouna products in domestic and global markets. It is evident that the Kouna artisans and entrepreneurs have difficulties in supplying bulk purchases of Kouna products due to shortage of Kouna raw-material. Hopefully, this deficiency can be minimized to a certain degree with the present Kouna plantation of WIGC.

Kouna and Kouna Crafts: A WIGC Part



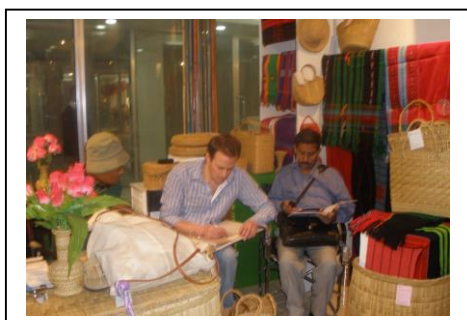
Kouna craft has a unique place in the global handicrafts market. Kouna, which is locally called, is a class of reed growing wild in the shallow lakes and marshy land, ponds, canals, along the river and lake beaches in the valley area of Manipur. During the last two decades, Kouna craft has become a highly potential craft in national and international markets.

This craft has now been taken up by many individuals, artisans and entrepreneurs as a gainful economic activity by a large number of artisans/entrepreneurs. As a clear result, both the plantation of Kouna and mass production of Kouna-made items are on the rise. A good number of farmers have developed new Kouna plantation farms to meet the ever-increasing demand of Kouna raw material.

Evidently, the flourishing Kouna craft has made people more aware of the potential of Kouna plant in handicrafts sector. It is true that the surging demands for Kouna products surpass the current production in the state.



In the meantime, WIGC, as usual, has a firm determination to contribute its share in maintaining ecological balance and promoting eco-friendly products. This is the primary reason why WIGC has taken up the Kouna plantation project with its own resources with an additional objective to boost the overall Kouna productivity and to generate more employment among women of poor families.



At present, WIGC is producing a good number of diversified Kouna products for which the Organisation is working with a large of artisans, especially women belonging to various communities of Manipur, both hill and valley. They are qualified trained artisans of

WIGC for internationally acclaimed items. The artisans are also provided support services with special arrangements with nationalized banks for micro-credit.

2) Plantation of Trees

A wide plantation of trees started a few years back as a part of the undergoing development works of Agro-based Tourism Centre. Apart from the collective plantation of medicinal plants in the area, several varieties of tree species are grown. The main tree species are namely *Usoi*, *Wang*, *Uningthou*, *Taimaren*, Pine, Teak, *Tera*, *Uyung*, Banyan tree, etc.



1) Mixed Plantation



Plantation of vegetable items includes *Yendem*, Chilly, *Napakpi*, Arum, *Komprat*, *Samaroi*, Mustard, Pumpkin, *Torbot*, Tongningkhok, *Nakpupi*, beans, etc.

It may be mentioned that WIGC always prioritizes the socio-economic development of the surrounding people of the project area in taking up projects. Hence, the optimum benefit first goes to the surrounding villagers.

Working Women Hostel with Day Care Centre

The Hostel is located inside WIGC Complex, Thoubal Wangmataba, near Thoubal College. With a 100 intake capacity, the Hostel has also Day Care Centre. It serves as a home-away-home for those working women and girls of various walks of life. The peaceful environment and lively atmosphere around the Hostel with paddy fields, Kouna farms, nearby hillocks – represents a closure look with natural beauty with fresh air. Presently, craft persons, working women and students are staying in the Hostel with safety and comfort.



Rural IT Youth Development Centre (RITYDC)



The RITYDC works as a network for rural youths extending youth-oriented facilities like computer education, the Internet, library and information channels by providing newspapers and other periodicals. In short, the primary objective of the Centre is to facilitate opportunities for full

participation of rural youth in the overall development of the nation right from the community level with the spirit of voluntarism.

Handloom Activities

Since inception, WIGC has put considerable efforts to develop more weaving units with special attention to upgrade their technical and design inputs of the weavers. To generate more employment among women, particularly rural and hill tribes, and being a part of the promotion of the handloom industry in Manipur, WIGC has renovated its looms with new design and technology inputs.



Tie-Dye



Tie-dye has been a traditional practice in Manipur with natural dye methods. Different types of clothes and traditional attires are normally dyed in this practice. To preserve the tradition with the new scientific inputs, the process of bio-dye or natural-dye is actively taken up by WIGC. It has a good effect when it applies to handicrafts products too, especially Kouna products. Buyers of coloured items are on the rise in global markets. Presently, locally available plants such as Heibung (*Garcinia xanthochymus*), Heinoujom (*Averrhoa carambola*), Kusumlei (*Carthamus tinctorius*), Yaingang (*Curcuma domestica* Valetton), Ureirom (*bixa orellana*), Yongchak (*Parkia roxburghii*), Kuhi (*Pasania pachyphylla*) etc. are used in dyeing process.

Shoe Making

The Kouna shoe making as a crafts taken up by WIGC has its own popularity among the shoe makers in Manipur. Right from the raw-materials used in the making of shoes up to the designs, WIGC has applied various innovative methods to make the products more attractive and user-friendly. While making the shoes, it maintains to use eco-friendly material as far as possible. Since Kouna shoes are quite new in this type of production, the products are successfully sold in local and domestic markets. Interestingly, this craft has benefited a large number of women. The comfort and durability of the products have made it popular amongst the crafts.



Doll & Toys Making



Dolls and toy making is a newly developed craft of the Organisation. Above 16 Nos. of women have got engaged in the craft. Most of the young girls are highly interested in the crafts. Items of this crafts include both traditional and modern design products. Most of items made are small items and even the training programmes can be conducted in a small room.

Promotion of Self Help Groups (SHGs)

Self-help groups take an active role in socio-economic empowerment of women in Manipuri society too. The group efforts of SHGs are of great importance in grass-root level economy. WIGC has been a patronage for promoting SHGs over the years. It is true that however illiterate they are, women can be organized as an active work force and social mobiliser. It needs to streamline the potential of women's groups in socio-economic development initiatives. All the programmes taken up by WIGC, particularly credit-based and skill-enhancement-oriented poverty alleviation programmes are fulfilled through SHGs.



The Organisation has already established SHGs at various parts of Manipur particularly at Lilong (Minority), Kabrang (ST), Lishamlok (ST), Oinam (OBC), Phoude Keiranbi (OBC/Minority). This year also, new locations for the formation of SHGs are identified specially at Phayeng (SC), Sandang Shenba Maring village (ST) and Phunal Maring village (ST).

As a part of promotional activities, support services are extended to SHGs including motivation, formation, capacity building and life skill trainings with micro credit facilities, etc. The undergoing activities have promptly addressed various issues faced by the women from time to time.

Interestingly, the SHGs under WIGC have got rapid stride in their economic activities. Apart from micro-credit facilities with SBI, members of the groups are also benefited with health insurance, registration with M & SEC, Imphal, field exposure, etc. As a matter of fact, the women in groups have come forward to take part in social activities vis-à-vis their onus in the family, which is leading to self-sustainability.

Welfare Programme for Hill People

WIGC strongly believes that Manipur can be fully developed as and when the hill areas of the state, which occupies 90 % of total geographical area. It is evident that a large portion of Manipur, particularly hills, has long been deprived of basic needs and infrastructures. The living condition of the people in interior hill areas is gruesome. They are facing lots of problems such as lack of health and hygiene, absence of power supply, limited sources for regular income generation, communication standstill, horrible roads, inaccessible routes, and what not. Under such situations the people have little options for promoting basic economic activity. As a result, the socio-economic growth in the hills is apparently slow or static for a long time. Worst, people are not able to come out of their humble livelihood and poor living standard due to meagre income.



Hence, the need for economically viable and environmentally sound development programmes and their effective implementation are clearly the major concern of hills development strategy. In this regard, WIGC has put every possible effort for the development of the hill people of Manipur. It is to mention that the socio-economic development of the people in hills will be another major achievement in the developmental history of Manipur. Therefore, WIGC is bringing out various welfare programmes such as life skill trainings programmes including handicrafts training, plantation of new cash crops, etc. in association with the villagers. In addition, WIGC also conducts awareness generation programmes in the hill villages.

Celebration of the 23rd Foundation Day/ Children's Day Celebration



WIGC celebrated its 23rd Foundation Day Celebration on the 7th November, 2019 with great joy and cheerful gathering. Distributions of certificates, children's variety programmes, etc. were the main items of the programme. Also, during the programme, felicitations and gifts were offered to widows, old women and children.

SPECIAL ONE-DAY PROGRAMMES

- Awareness Programme on HIV/AIDS
- Awareness Programme on Wasteland Development
- Promotion of Eco-friendly Products
- Awareness Programme Dry-flower making
- Awareness Programme Nursery Plantation
- Awareness Programme on Medicinal Plants
- Awareness Programme on Entrepreneurship Development

-
- Seminar on the Role of Youth in Nation Building
 - Open Discussion on Employment generation through handloom and handicrafts
 - Awareness Programme on Socio-economic Development in the hills.
 - Awareness Programme on the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000.
 - Awareness Programme on the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005.

GENERAL PROGRAMMES (Days of Observance)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Khongjom Day | • Road Safety Week |
| • May Day | • National Youth Day |
| • Gandhi Jayanti | • Mother's Day |
| • World AIDS Day | • World Environment Day |
| • Vigilance Day/Week | • Patriots Day |
| • International Volunteers Day | • Independence Day |
| • International Women's Day | • Irawat Day |
| • Martyr's Day | |

Conclusion

It is rightly said that a journey of thousand miles starts with a single step. The rest is the progress. So is the case with the journey of WIGC. We have a long way to go. Its name is anonymous with women empowerment and children in need of care and protection. Life is beautiful here in WIGC where both biological and spiritual needs are met with. It is the common platform for wholesome development of the people with a holistic approach. Here, we work together for a stronger generation.

