



Dining For Women Interim Report
"Designing Change, Stitch by Stitch"

Submitted by
Anchal Project

December 31, 2013

1. A brief description of what has been accomplished so far, including progress on the goals and objectives of the program DFW is funding. What impact has been made through DFW's funding?

Dining for Women's generous funding of forty nine thousand three hundred thirty seven dollars (\$49,337.00) has transformed the lives of marginalized and exploited women in India. With the Dining For Women funds we have employed over ninety women, sixty of which work full-time as Anchal artisans. This is twice the number of women we hoped to train! All of our artisans are given the opportunity to support themselves and their families through healthy, meaningful work and the option to leave the commercial sex trade. Anchal artisans are empowered through design training, health benefits, education workshops and financial security. DFW has allowed us to extend our reach to a larger community of women and restore confidence, independence and self worth in the lives of many. The impact that the DFW funding has made is measureable in the growth of our artisans. Whether it provides a new apprentice with training or a senior artisan with the opportunity to transition into a leadership role or an artisan with the tools to leave the sex trade permanently, DFW's funds have encouraged incredible change.

One such artisan, Nasine, is a hardworking mother of four from an extremely impoverished background who was struggling to put food on the table and care for her sick husband. She enrolled in Anchal's training program and quickly started creating a variety of beautiful products. When she received her first paycheck she broke into tears before she even knew the amount. She later expressed that she had never seen such a large amount of money much less received it. As an Anchal artisan, Nasine is now economically independent and can provide for her family. She is proud to call herself an Anchal artisan.



PHOTO: Anchal Designer, Maggie Clines, distributing thread during design training in February 2013

Senior artisan Nita endured years of domestic abuse from an alcoholic husband. Once Nita's divorce was final and with limited options, she entered the sex trade to support her children. When she joined Anchal three and a half years ago, Nita showed her commitment to a better life and moved to a leadership position. Her career with Anchal allowed Nita to leave the sex industry for good. Recently, Nita bought her very first home with the money that she earned from Anchal. Today she is a happy, confident woman who can enjoy her independence and stability.



PHOTO: Colleen Clines, Anchal's Co-Founder and Executive director, with Nita and the home she purchased with her earnings from Anchal. November 2013

2. Has anything changed in regard to the original program goals and objectives? If the budget has changed, please include the new program budget.

Our original goals and objectives remain the same as stated in our original proposal. Provide marginalized and exploited women in India with:

- a. Economic and livelihood alternatives;
- b. Restoration of self worth;
- c. Vocational training;
- d. Healthcare; and
- e. Education.

Our budget has not changed.

3. Have you experienced any significant challenges or obstacles in implementation? If so, how are you addressing them?

Many of the challenges Anchal encounter stem from working with the sex worker community. During our trip to India in February, we decided to pilot a small program in Jaipur's red light district in addition to our program in Ajmer. We trained 30 women, rented a workshop space, and provided full-time positions to 12 apprentices. During the subsequent months, the women struggled with fully committing to the project and we found it difficult to establish the trust necessary to move forward together. Ultimately this led us to close the program in Jaipur after 8 months.

When working with the commercial sex worker community, we have learned that unlike providing economic opportunity to impoverished communities, the CSW community already has access to money - quick money. Their choice to make change is driven more by status than by income. Anchal offers a new lifestyle that is not immediate but long lasting for the women and their children. By changing professions, they transform the cultural stigma of their entire family.

However, this change is difficult with only an economic alternative. A holistic approach is necessary. It must include counseling, a supportive community and outreach that educate women about health and women's rights. Because the Jaipur apprentices did not have a health program or counseling offered prior to the pilot project, unlike Ajmer's program, we learned that it is critical to have established local leadership, infrastructure, and trust before a job training program can be presented.

We plan to continue to work in partnership with Vatsalya, Anchal's NGO partner, to strengthen intervention that encompasses this holistic model that has proven so successful in Ajmer. At this time we plan to continue our emphasis in Ajmer's CSW community.

4. Has the timeline for the program changed from the original funding application?

Due to the high volume of enrollment, we delayed the commencement of the education workshops in order to focus on skills & design training. We have adjusted the artisan program accordingly and are excited to make the education workshops a priority this January. In addition, we have yet to fully train artisans to become Master Tailors. This too will become a priority in remaining months.

5. Has funding changed for this program? For example, have you received unexpected funding from another source?

The Funding has not changed.

6. How much of the original DFW restricted funds have been disbursed and how much remain?

We have invested \$33,610.04 of the funds provided by DFW into our program, \$15,726.96 remains.

The funds have transformed the lives of every one of our artisans, big and small. Our artisans are reminded of DFW's kindness on a daily basis, whether it is in the comfort of the home they can now afford or simple changes in their daily routine.

Nazia, for example, struggled to provide food for her family. Fruit was considered a luxury and was therefore out of the question. Knowing that she couldn't afford it but that her son would inevitably ask for it at the market, Nazia would carefully navigate the streets and avoid the fruit stands so not to tempt her son. Today, with the help of DFW, Nazia can afford healthy foods for her family and no longer has to feel ashamed for avoiding the fruit market. Often, the seemingly small, daily differences are what make the biggest impression and where DFW's impact is the most visible.



PHOTO: Anchal artisan, Nazia, with her son

7. Is your organization or program situation different than presented in the approved proposal? For example, new executive director, significant program staffing changes or NGO affiliation, loss of large funding, or other significant changes?

Co-founder Devon Miller no longer plays an active role as an Anchal staff member, however, she still remains involved on the Board of Directors.

8. Dining for Women member visit Anchal Project in November 2013

We had the pleasure of welcoming a group of DFW members travelling in India in November 2013. They had the opportunity to see our program in action, meet our artisans in Ajmer, and witness the direct impact the DFW funding has made in the lives of Anchal artisans. The group quickly bonded with the artisans through laughter, stories, and their new art.

One member of DFW, Tina, shared a conversation that she had with one of our artisans on her blog:

"One of the women's daughters is now doing post-graduate work and her granddaughters are still in private school—which wouldn't have been possible, if her mother was still in the sex trade business. It's a matter of stigma, not cash. If your mother is a sex worker, your status is lower than low—and your chances of being accepted into a good school are almost nil. One woman shared that she was orphaned at 11 and married shortly afterward to a man 16 years her senior. She's now the outreach project manager and has a good eye for women in need that want to make a change..."

Tina's thoughtful insight shared a part of Anchal that is not measured by numbers or dollars. While employment and economic stability is at the core of our program, the women are empowered not only by financial security but through creating meaningful, important work, lifting their status as a family, and providing opportunities for their daughters.

Also, for the first time, the artisans met women who were purchasing their products. The smiles, joy, and pride the artisans' displayed when standing next to the DFW member that purchased her work was truly incredible. They could not stop talking about how exciting it was to meet the group.

To read more personal accounts on the impact DFW visit had on our artisans, read co-founder Colleen's reflection. <http://anchalproject.org/dining-for-women-meet-anchal-artisans/>



PHOTO: Anchal artisans with Dining For Women members in November 2013

Thank you Dining for Women Members!