



# LOOMS OF LADAKH NEWSLETTER

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## Jamyang Tsering Namgyal unveils Looms of Ladakh Centre of Excellence in Leh

-Lalit Shastri, Editor, Looms of Ladakh Newsletter

**Member of Parliament from Ladakh, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal said on Friday 26 August 2022 that Ladakh needs an organization like Looms of Ladakh, which is a movement, for ensuring sustainability and protecting its ecology, environment, and culture.**

Namgyal was speaking as Chief Guest at a special function organized here for the unveiling of Looms of Ladakh Centre of Excellence. Prime Minister Narendra Modi always encourages people by telling them to be “Vocal for Local” and lays emphasis on “Atm Nirbhar Bharat” (self-reliant India), he said adding we have to work keeping in sharp focus this message of the Prime Minister.





Namgyal was all praise for the entire team of Looms of Ladakh. He especially complimented Founder Director & Strategist Ms Abhilasha Bahuguna for building the cooperative movement in Ladakh. Looms of Ladakh is the fruit of collective perseverance of last 5 years and this he has observed very closely since his Councillor days, said Namgyal.

Ms Bahuguna told the Looms of Ladakh team, “we have to work with transparency and a business mindset”. Looms of Ladakh is working simultaneously on several aspects, including physical infrastructure, digital infrastructure and what is very important – human resource, she pointed out. Ms Bahuguna informed the audience that the Looms of Ladakh team had called on His Holiness the Dalai Lama the other day and they had reassured him that Looms of Ladakh is committed to ecology, culture, economy, transparency and democracy. This commitment should give them the strength to work toward achieving their goal, she observed.

Executive Councillor Sheep/Animal Husbandry Tashi Yakzee, Executive Councillor Handloom Ghulam Mehdi, Chairman All Changthang Pashmina Growers Society, Secretary ACPGS, COO ICICI Foundation Anuj Aggarwal, representatives from Nature Conservation Foundation, Earthling Ladakh, 17000 feet, Balipara Foundation, and Royal Enfield, along with member owners of Looms of Ladakh, were present. The CEO, Looms of Ladakh, encouraged the members to face every obstacle with confidence and single-minded dedication. Team Looms of Ladakh told the Changpa community of Eastern and South-Eastern Ladakh to send their women and daughters to their office in Leh for a week for product development. This would ensure direct transfer of Rs 1500-5000 per month to the accounts of the Changpa women through value addition. The Centre of Excellence is funded mainly by ICICI Bank and partially by Royal Enfield. Looms of Ladakh Women Cooperative office bearer Tsering Youdol and Milee Parmar hosted the event.





Team Looms of Ladakh with His Holiness Dalai Lama



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## Fashion Stories Series 2: Episode 1 featuring Abhilasha Bahuguna went live on Rukus Avenue Radio



Fashion Stories Series 2: Episode 1 was hosted by fashion designer and environmentalist Runa Ray featuring Kerry Bannigan, Executive Director, Fashion Impact Fund, and Abhilasha Bahuguna, Co-founder, Looms of Ladakh on 23 August 2022.

Kerry gave a sneak peek into series 2, a collaboration of Looms of Ladakh with the United Nations Conscious Fashion and Lifestyle Network, and the importance of amplifying the work of women changing the world.

Abhilasha shared her journey of building a democratic fashion brand that works with luxury animal fibers sourced in the Himalayas, nomadic herders, and the importance of preserving traditional methods of weaving.

Fashion Stories, powered by the Fashion Impact Fund, goes live on Rukus Avenue Radio every Tuesday at 3 pm PST and Wednesday at 11 am GMT.

Series 2, in collaboration with the United Nations Conscious Fashion and Lifestyle Network, showcases the voices of notable and progressive women making a difference in sustainable fashion and the role they play in impacting change for the future, echoing the ethos of social and environmental justice amongst the global South Asian community.



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# Sirengihening and Broad-basing Pashmina and Wool Value Chain in Leh, UT of Ladakh by NABFOUNDATION through Looms of Ladakh Women Cooperative (LLWC)

-Shri Devasis Padhi, CGM OFDD Mumbai, NABARD



One of the greatest challenges for Govt/semi Govt organizations working in the social sector is to ensure that the financial or non-financial support reaches the people for whom it is intended. In my entire career spanning 34 years, I have interacted with many well-meaning individuals and organisations who are very eager to support the target groups under their domain. But, although their intentions may be good, these individuals and agencies are not able to implement the projects in an effective manner and which can stand the scrutiny of the public at large, RTI activists, government agencies and the monitoring, review and evaluation of the funding agency itself.

There is therefore a need for capable and committed implementing agencies that can ground a project. There are many individuals who are committed, enthusiastic, honest and want to do a lot for the community. But, it is practically impossible for organizations like NABARD to support individuals in this regard and we therefore look for agencies or suitable stakeholders to implement the projects.

Another challenge is to reach out to a large number of people in a short span of time i.e., reach the so called 'target' beneficiaries. Hence, funding agencies try and design schemes that can deliver the results and reach the benefits to the largest number of beneficiaries in the shortest time possible. The biggest problem with such schemes is that, they are designed to be very rigid to ensure that there is no misuse or diversion of funds. In my view, the problem starts here.



Many funding agencies have a 'one size fits all approach' as they have an all-India presence. Further, India is a huge country where the language, religion, culture, landscape, practices, infrastructure etc., differ every few miles. Hence the economics of the project or scheme could vary from district to district or even within the district. Thus, a project which is good in one State, may not succeed in another. However, the schemes remain the same. The implementing agencies start making adjustments in the project to fit into the scheme, which ultimately harms the project and does not give the desired outputs.

Thus, the solution lies in designing projects which provide for flexibility. Flexibility in concept, costing and implementation. Flexibility is required both for the implementing agency and the funding agency that sanctions the projects. This is easier said than done because it needs deep knowledge and experience of the ground level situation and understanding the requirements of one other. In this backdrop, Off Farm Development Department, Head Office NABARD came out with a scheme known as Off Farm Sector Projects in DPR mode during 2021-22. This is a scheme which is flexible and instead of prescribing what to do, prescribes what cannot be done! The list of what cannot be done is very small. Thus, effectively it draws the contours within which the project has to operate. This scheme is proving to be extremely handy at the field level. Looms of Ladakh Women Cooperative (LL) empowers rural Ladakhi women by endowing them with skills necessary to add value to raw pashmina and woollen fibres to turn them into the high-end products perennially in demand.

Under the initiative, 150 uneducated, unemployed women from different and distant villages were brought together, formed in to a society and imparted training in spinning, weaving and knitting quality sheep wool and pashmina products to enhance their income earning potential through.

They required support towards strengthening of the Society by attaining scale of production by adding new members, skill building of new members, development of a cadre of master weavers, and setting-

up of infrastructure to provide better working conditions for the women producers, establishing marketing tie ups and thereby enhancing their income.

When NABFOUNDATION posed the project to us we realized that this could not be covered under our existing schemes like OFPOs (Off Farm Producers Organization) or skill development programme. The requirements and the challenges were very different. It required skill support, support for construction of a Common Service Centre, Support for marketing and so on.

However, we were impressed with the commitment shown by the founder director and the other elected artisan bearers. To do something for the UT of Ladakh was always in our mind. But the dream that the Ladakhi women could create a brand and instead of selling raw wool to the middlemen for a paltry sum, produce high quality items which could find a place in fashion shows was overwhelming. Hence, we decided to cover it under the above mentioned scheme of NABARD. Further, the fund requirements were also much higher. Thus, we decided to implement under NABFOUNDATION which being a subsidiary of NABARD and a Section 8 Company, has functional liberty. NABARD has sanctioned grant assistance of Rs. 107.50 lakh to NABFOUNDATION for the strengthening of the Society and benefiting 400 members engaged in the activity in 09 villages of Leh and Ladakh. NABARD's support is comprised of assistance towards HR cost, training and capacity building, setting of work studio cum training center including a crèche as the cooperative is 100% women managed and marketing interventions. In fact, it is for the first time that we have on our own initiative provided a small sum of Rs 50000 for a crèche in any of our projects keeping in view the special requirements of the young mothers who would be using the facility.

We are eager to see the dreams of the Ladakhi women take shape and succeed. I wish the very best to Looms of Ladakh Womens Cooperative Society Ltd.,. I will be watching you very closely and assure you that NABARD would always be willing to lend a helping hand.







# Technology to drive Supply Chain Effectiveness

-Vijaya Krishnappa and Ramki Kodipady, Kosha Designs



Over the last century, manufacturing has evolved from being a decentralized sector to centralized factories and very recently transformed into Giga factories to achieve economies of scale. It started with manufacturing using mechanization, then automation, and now robotics and industry 4.0 technologies that have contributed to centralizing manufacturing with heavy reliance on machinery and less reliance on humans and their skills. The textile industry is no different. In fact, textile is among the first industries to witness mechanization. The arrival of steam power during the early 18th century led to the beginning of mechanization that led to the textile industries in Manchester becoming the world's first center of mass production. As a result of mechanization, textile manufacturing switched from home to factories.

The traditional craft sector is skill-based. It remains and is likely to remain decentralized. Decentralized manufacturing has its disadvantages. Multiple sites require a larger investment of capital to set up and higher coordination costs resulting in higher per-unit costs than mass-produced products made at a central plant. Maintaining organization-wide consistency in products and processes is also a challenge when production involves multiple sites.

So, managing the decentralized supply chains need a technological solution that not only has to address challenges of industry structure but also infrastructure availability. Looms of Ladakh Women's co-operative is operating in the most challenging terrain at high altitude with limited mobility and telecom infrastructure. The supply chain management solution has been designed by Looms of Ladakh considering these challenges.

## **Some of the salient features of the solution are:**

1. **Mobile and Cloud Based:** The operations can be carried out over an android smartphone with data being stored in the cloud. So, there is no need to invest in hardware to store data.
2. **Offline Application:** The app can function even if the internet access is not reliable. This will help the operations in remote places. The information is synchronized with that of the central database when there is connectivity.
3. **Simple to operate:** Proposed solution is designed for simple operations requiring little training. The application is designed for use by the Centre leaders who would be required to key in all the transactions in their respective centres.
4. **Scalable and Flexible:** As an evolving organisation the production process can be configured for different products.
5. **Stock Management at Centre and Member level**



**The benefits of supply chain management platform are:**

1. Enhanced decision-making. The system will collect essential data at a single location for obtaining real-time, up-to-date information. Increased insight, visibility, and control will give the managing team the confidence to make trusted decisions. Since the society is in the expansion mode, the system will enable them to plan expansion based on the capabilities and also plan capacity building based on the needs.

2. Integrated information leads to collaboration: The system ensures prompt and clear communication between employees and members of the co-operative for better collaboration and greater productivity. Availability of information leads to better collaboration with the members of society. Manual systems e.g. payments are often not accurate and create challenges in communication with members. The new system will ensure payments on time.

3. Operational Efficiency: The tasks will be automated and information consolidated on a single platform, thus eliminating the need for revising, searching for and storing paper documents. Reduced errors would save time, and improve efficiency.

4. Better Inventory Control: Society is working with high-value fibers such as Pashmina. So the cost of materials being used for production is high compared to industry standards. The inventory management system can be used to monitor the internal and also external stock movements accurately and in real-time. The system would also enable companies to identify the most plentiful and under-marketable products so that they can manage purchasing and procurement more efficiently and bring innovation to the market.

5. Streamline Supply Chain: Supply chain management feature includes coordination, procurement control, stock management, and delivery of goods. By leveraging the system, society can ensure a smooth operation and timely client demand.

6. Reporting: The end-users can run their reports without relying on the members to generate accurate reports.

7. Improved trust level of the stakeholders: The improved visibility particularly with regard to the supply chain will provide an opportunity to improve the level of customer satisfaction and maintain exclusivity of the Looms of Ladakh products.



# Ladakh :The land at risk!

-Team Himalayan Institute of Alternative Learning



Ladakh has one of the most extreme climates known to mankind. It is cold and arid - with temperatures ranging from minus 30°C in winters to plus 30 °C in summers. Glacial melt is the only source of water here and many regions experience cold and dry howling winds periodically. Yet, the Ladakhis have not merely survived but thrived through indigenous wisdom and knowledge passed from one generation to another. Their architecture and building techniques are testimony to this.

Traditionally, the Ladakhi communities and villages would get together and build houses using material available in their immediate surroundings – their walls were built of stone or mud (rammed earth or sun-dried adobe bricks), roofs were made with beams of local poplar wood and willow shoots covered with grass, straw, mud or clay that also served as insulation. The doors and windows were small, walls were thick and solid, and the roof was used to store straw or animal dung thereby making the building design intuitively suitable for the extreme climate.

Though these buildings were the best for their times, they still were quite cold. In winters, for instance, all the members of the family would occupy just one room, mostly the chansa where the bukhari was kept to heat the room.

The so-called modern buildings now-a-days use materials, design and work force that are not alien to the region's peculiarities. Houses with a freezing indoor make them uninhabitable in winters. Therefore, people either become winter refugees or rely on extensive solid and fossil fuel for space-heating. Passive Solar Design – drawing energy from the nearest star! In an interesting contrast, the extreme cold climate of Ladakh and its high altitude is blessed with 300 sunny days every year. It receives some of the highest solar radiation in India. With passive solar design strategies this free energy can be used to meet space heating needs of the buildings with high efficiency. This would not only save hundreds of crores of rupees in foreign



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exchange but also help in maintaining quality of life of its residents while reducing the burden of greenhouse gas (GHG) and black soot emissions. Passive solar heating design strategies coupled with earthen construction techniques would put Ladakh on the fast-track mode to achieve the Prime Minister's vision of a Carbon Neutral Ladakh besides, it would also improve the health of its residents and provide basic facilities like tap water to every house.

Several organizations like Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG), Students & Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL), The Himalayan Institute of Alternatives, Ladakh (HIAL) and Sheshyon Innovations have been trying to promote this clean technology for decades. Sheshyon is there on the scene with 30 years of experience backed with extensive research on new construction materials and design to achieve new performance benchmarks that were beyond imagination in the initial stages! Sheshyon proclaims: "we prefer to use the free earth below our feet and the free sun above our heads to design and construct comfortable living spaces for all."

**PSH Earthen Buildings - A Boon for the Occupant and the Environment** Passive solar earthen buildings are simple, reliable, cheap, have a relatively longer system life and offer crucial basic facilities like optimum moisture control and year-round flowing tap water. The trick of the technology is in the effective design of the building and the correct use of different building construction materials. A passive solar building needs special designing skills and a trained site supervisor for flawless execution. We have successfully demonstrated that much can be achieved using commonly available local building and insulating materials. Research shows that the cost of Passive Solar buildings almost equals that of the conventional buildings. In fact, the cost of heating a conventional building in 10 years exceeds the cost of construction of a passive solar heated building. These buildings also remain naturally cool during the summer because of the same design features which help in heating in winters.

#### **How it works:**

These buildings are oriented towards the solar south (different from magnetic south) and have a double-glazed façade on the south for maximum heat capture from low-lying sun during winters. This heat is stored in the modified Trombe walls, other internal walls and floor (as applicable) made of concrete blocks and water bottles. The stored heat is slowly released into the interiors at night and cloudy spells. All the other surfaces are highly insulated, and all openings are airtight to prevent heat losses.

#### **Benefits and implications of PSH Buildings:**

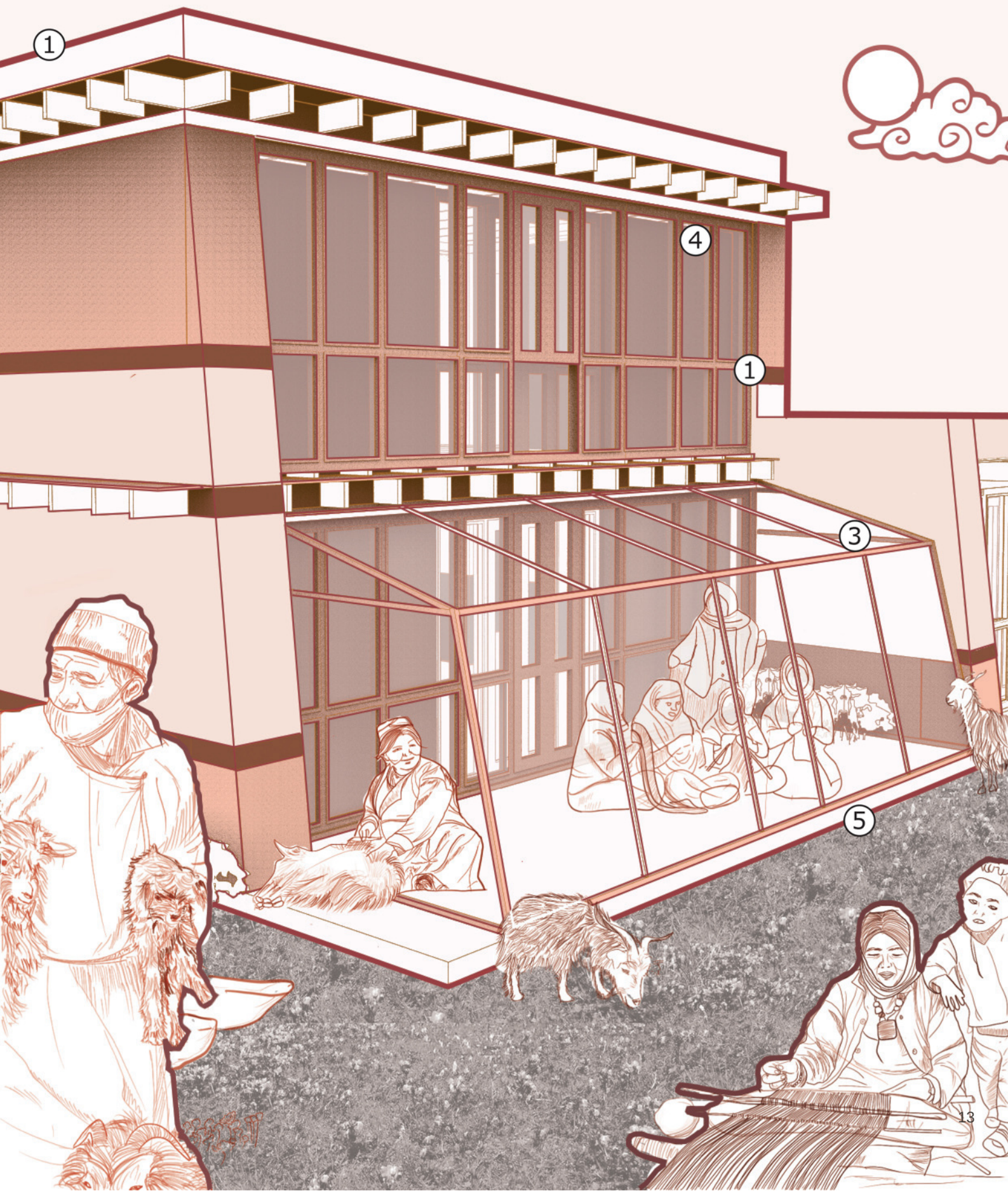
These techniques help to achieve an optimal temperature of +15 to 17 °C indoors even when the outside temperature is -14 to -20 °C, eradicating need for any artificial heating systems. This saves several tons of GHG emissions a year. And make passive solar heating a regenerative solution for the extremely fragile climate of Ladakh. An optimal comfortable indoor temperature during winters also helps boost the productivity of its occupants, which in turn helps boost the economic growth of the region. The adoption of Passive solar buildings by Looms of Ladakh is a step towards realising the vision of a carbon neutral Ladakh through 'Citizen movement' and an initiative towards "Sustainable Energy for all".

**Adoption of Passive solar buildings by Looms of Ladakh is a step towards realising the vision of a carbon neutral Ladakh through 'Citizen movement' and an initiative towards "Sustainable Energy for all".**





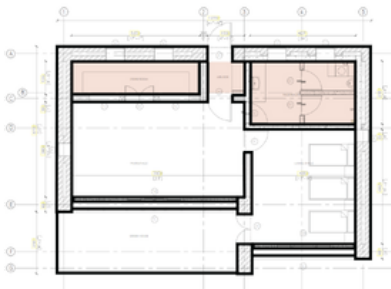






## Building features :

1.

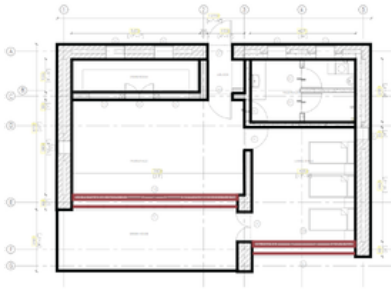


### North buffer

The entry of the building is kept through an airlock on the north side, to optimise the solar gain from the south.

Buffer zones such as Storage rooms and bathrooms have been located on the north, to further insulate the habitable spaces from the harsh northern winds.

2.

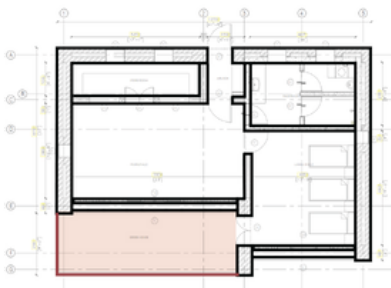


### Ladaki solar wall

This modified version of Trombe wall, is a crucial element of a PSH building.

The wall is oriented towards solar south, capturing and storing the solar radiation , which is then used for passively heating the building.

3.

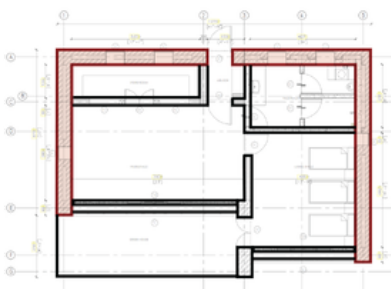


### Greenhouse

Greenhouse acts as a semi - open space , which can be used by the "amales" as a sit out working space.

This space is protected from winds, and is passive solar heated due to the greenhouse effect.

4.

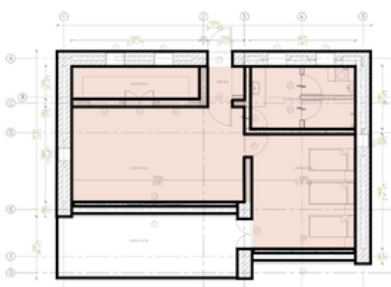


### Insulative walls

Insulative walls are needed on the north, east and west sides of the building to help retain the solar heat.

These comprise of waste pashmina wool ( procured locally ), sandwiched between local pagbu walls.

5.



### Insulative roof and floor

The building roof and wall together contribute to 45% of a building's heat loss,

Hence it becomes vital to provide insulative flooring and roofing system.

They can be insulated using Straw-clay bricks and waste pashmina wool.



# Summer internship at Looms of Ladakh: Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity

-Sudeshkumar C A, MA Social Entrepreneurship, TISS Mumbai

**“Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.” - Swami Vivekananda**



For me, a summer internship at Looms of Ladakh was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

In the first week of my internship, I attended the Looms of Ladakh Women Cooperative (LLWC) Annual General Meeting-2022 in Chushul, and there I interacted with NABARD, KOSHA, and HIAL teams which helped me to build my network with different background professionals.

In the second week of my internship, I engaged with the KOSHA team and learned about the application of blockchain technology in the fashion industry for the authenticity and genuineness of pure handmade products.

In the third week of my internship, I was assigned “Spinning Training” supervision, which helped me to showcase my teamwork, capacity building, and administrative skills.

In the fourth week of my internship, I worked on sales, which helped me learn about sales, monthly sales analysis, and report making. And I was also assigned to follow up on the LLWC headquarters construction at Kuzey, I engaged with different stakeholders involved in the construction, which helped me to learn how to deal with various clients at the same time.

In the remaining weeks of my internship, I was assigned to work on organizational change for LLWC. In this assignment, I initiated ESIC for LLWC members, introduced identity cards for LLWC members and employees, a daily worksheet for office bearers and employees to track the work record, an incentive structure for spinning members, ownership of the industrial tailoring team of LLWC, and a new LLWC showroom in Indira Gandhi International Airport (work under process), Delhi.

In the last week of my internship, I traveled to Kargil and Changthang regions to distribute raw materials for production and collect their finished products.





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During this, I understood the difficulties faced by Ladakhi people in such an uninhabited, harsh climate and how they are working to overcome them. It helped me to think and learn about the importance of the sustainable fashion industry.

I am grateful to Abhilasha Bahuguna, and the Elected Producer Leaders of Looms of Ladakh for giving me this opportunity.

I am thankful to Milee Parmar for her mentorship, and I truly appreciate everything she has done for me during my short period at Looms of Ladakh.

Needless to say, it was a great learning experience to work with different backgrounds, colleagues Nishant Raj, Saili Nagrale, and Amina Bano.

I also made great friends (Jigmid Minjur, Tsering Namgyal, and Jigmid Rinchen) for life in Ladakh, and during weekends I visited different tourist places such as Buddhist monasteries, ice stupa, and palaces in Ladakh, it helped me to learn about the history, culture, and climate of Ladakh.





# My experience working at Looms of Ladakh

-Amina Bano



I am a graduate student doing my masters through IGNOU. After my graduation I've joined Looms of Ladakh .And I am actually having a great experience with each and every members there. Its my first Job and I am learning a lot of new things from my senior staffs.

I have a lot of childhood memories with my mother and grandmother. And one of the best memory is My grandmother used to tell us stories when we were on bed. And my mother also does the same. Another memory from my grand mother is she gradually use to tell me one thing and that is always respect and love the work I am doing. I wanted become a Teacher when I was in School. I used to think being a Teacher you have all kind of respect and fun. And also I was inspired by my own school teachers.

I choose Humanities during my graduation. I chose Political Science and Sociology as a major during my graduation. The major I chose is because I was interested in Law as well as Civil service. I was also interested in learning social organization and cultural diversity etc. It also enhance the skill that are crucial to successful career. I actually don't know why Looms of Ladakh hired me, but whatever the reason is I feel lucky for being a part of looms of ladakh. I get a lot of chance to learn something new. Every member is so much supportive of me.

After joining Looms of Ladakh I've learnt a lot of new things, those are about handlooms, marketing, logistics, management, about our own products, etc. Another thing that learnt from Looms Of Ladakh is public speaking I was so shy to speak and include myself in a conversation but I 've improved myself from these by taking part in every conversation and by talking to a customers as well.

I don't need to teach anything to looms of ladakh team. It is all I am learning from them in these few month. Though I am not sure where I will be in next five year. But I will try my best to become one of the best team member of Looms Of Ladakh in those five year.





Looms of Ladakh is herder-artisan-led and owned luxury brand that brings farm to fashion design to a raw material economy of pashmina, yak, Bactrian Camel and sheep wool – upskilling traditional artisans and providing sustainable solutions at the intersection of economy, ecology and culture that appeal to global audiences

**Looms of Ladakh Women Cooperative LTD.**  
**registered under J&K self reliant cooperative act**  
**1999, 20 May 2017**

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