



PROJECT REPORT

REGIONAL WORKSHOP:
"Central Asian Handicrafts and Sustainable Development".

ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN
NOVEMBER 25-29, 2002



This report presents the results of the Central Asia Crafts Support Association's (CACSA) activity in organizing the regional workshop "Central Asian Handicrafts and Sustainable Development" for artisans from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, which took place in Almaty from November 25 to 28, 2002. The project was financed by the Regional UNESCO Office in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. CACSA expresses its gratitude to:

Ms. Anjum R. Haque, Head of the Regional UNESCO Office in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan

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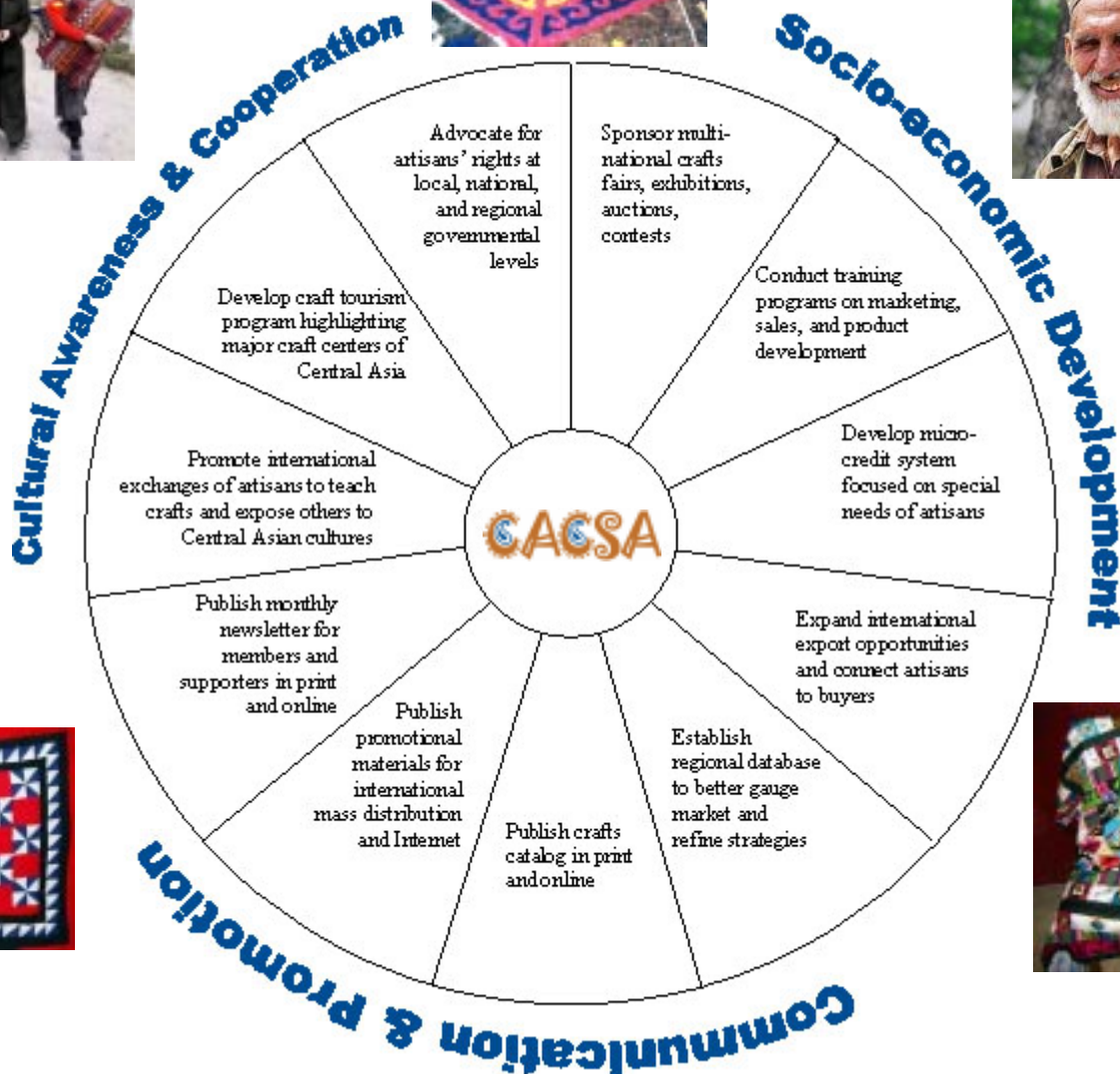
Website: www.catgen.com/cacsa

CACSA ACTIVITY:

The Central Asia Crafts Support Association (CACSA) is a non-governmental organization founded in 2000. CACSA members include 26 artisan communities in the five countries of the region: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. CACSA goals are to preserve and develop the cultural heritage of Central Asian people, expand interaction and strengthen mutual understanding between the various cultures, and protect artisans' economic, civic, and social interests.

CACSA's activity includes organizing competitions, exhibitions, crafts fairs; creating a regional information database on traditional cultures; organizing regional and international symposiums, seminars, master classes, and research projects; publishing catalogues, booklets, and cards; and developing craft tourism.

Some of CACSA's long term goals are to lobby for the interests of artisans on the legislative level; expand the cultural connections between Central Asian countries; and continue to organize and further develop exhibitions, competitions, seminars, information support, and publishing activities.



Background

This project was designed as a follow-up to the UNESCO workshop “Central Asian Skills Development Workshop for Women in Crafts and Entrepreneurship” held in Bishkek in 1999. This new project allowed UNESCO and participants to come together in another workshop to evaluate the handicrafts situation in Central Asia compared to conclusions drawn from the 1999 meeting, and focus more on technical aspects, such as natural and indigo dyes and design innovation.

Central Asian artisans need to revive their communal knowledge of natural dyeing. A rich range of natural resources exist in the region from which artisans can derive high quality natural dyes. These dyes should replace synthetic dyes that local artisans currently widely use. Through practical training on natural dyeing using local materials, it is possible to show artisans the importance of creating ecological products. Another major issue is helping artisans create new crafts design adapted to the contemporary international market. Workshops such as the one proposed in this project facilitate Central Asian artisans’ mutual understanding, influence craft production using natural materials, and support sustainable craft development in the region.

Project goals

- To demonstrate the links between crafts development and sustainable development
- To make artisans aware of market tendencies for ecological products

Project tasks

- To acquaint artisans with the wide range of local natural resources available for natural dyeing and train them how to use them
- To discuss the importance of producing ecological products
- To learn how to create new crafts samples
- To acquaint artisans with the basics of marketing crafts
- To create a video and manual on natural dyeing
- To publish an informational leaflet about Central Asian artisans

Project activity

- A four-day program for the workshop was developed and consisted of three sessions: Natural Dyeing, Design, and Marketing.
- The participants list was created. Eighteen artisans from five countries were invited to participate in the workshop. A majority of them were just beginners in the business of crafts. CACSA member, Center of Applied Arts “Bahyt,” organized visa support for Turkmen participants. The following artisans came to the workshop:

Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Aliza Suleeva Galiya Razvodovskaya Jandarbek Sugurov Karlygash Balapanova Kulzira Turgymbaeva Kunsuluu Juzeeva	Bakhtygul Asanalieva Elmira Adylova Jazmira Davletalieva	Viloyat Boltueva Mahbuba Mahmudova	Elmira Guseinova Korpogul Hudaiberdieva Leila Haidova	Dina Mailybaeva Fazilat Kadirova Raisa Syrtsova

- Workshop trainers included the following qualified specialists:
 - Luydmila Kiseleva, specialist in natural dyeing known for her ability to create over 300 different colors, professional carpet weaver, Turkmenistan
 - Tatyana Vorotnikova, designer from the Gallery “Tumar” in Bishkek, participant and winner of various national, regional and international competitions, Kyrgyzstan
 - Aijan Bekkulova, marketing specialist, owner of Gallery “Assia” considered one of the best craft galleries in Almaty, Kazakhstan
 - Ainura Bozgunchieva, marketing specialist who has worked extensively in craft export, Kyrgyzstan
- Trainer assistants were the following:
 - Gulmira Kutueva, CACSA designer, trainer assistant in Natural Dyeing
 - Anna Petuhova, student in the Design Department of the Architecture and Construction Academy in Almaty, trainer assistant in Design
 - Yuliya Samul, student in the Design Department of the Architecture and Construction Academy in Almaty, trainer assistant in Design
- Each trainer prepared handouts for their programs. Kyrgyz artisan, Gulmira Akmatova, made special felt embroidered folders, which were distributed to all participants. They held all workshop handouts, program itinerary, participants’ list, information on CACSA and UNESCO, and other information. Specifically, handouts included:
 - Natural Dyeing Session: description of seven natural resources with detailed instructions on preparation and dyeing techniques for different materials; information on how natural resources influence human health and the surrounding environment
 - Design Session: basic rules and demands of design
 - Marketing Session: materials on contemporary market demands on crafts, such as assortment, quality, design, service, pricing, sales, and promotion; the characteristics of local, regional, international customers
- The scenario of the video manual was developed.
- Certificates of participation, the workshop itinerary, and additional information were published at “Print House” in Bishkek.
- Almaty College of Applied Arts was chosen as the workshop location. Two training halls were rented and an agreement was signed with a café in the building to supply lunch, dinner, and coffee-breaks.
- Accommodations and breakfast were arranged at Hotel “Manas,” which is near the college. The training halls were supplied with all the necessary equipment and decoration, some of which was brought from CACSA’s office in Bishkek. All special equipment for the Natural Dyeing and Design sessions was also supplied.
- The opening of the workshop was on November 25, 2002. Meeting and transportation to the hotel for all participants was organized. Florent Le Duc, Culture Officer of UNESCO, opened with greetings and wishes for a successful workshop for all. Dinara Chochunbaeva, CACSA President, introduced the goals and tasks of the workshop and presented the trainers. Then all participants introduced themselves.
- The workshop itinerary was designed in the following manner. The first and second day were practical classes where the participants were divided in two groups:

(9 artisans) – Natural Dyeing section	(8 artisans) – Design section
Dina Mailybaeva Galiya Razvodovskaya Jandarbek Sugurov Karlygash Balapanova Korpogul Hudaiberdieva Kulzira Turgymbaeva Leila Haidova Raisa Syrtsova Viloyat Boltueva	Aliza Suleeva Bakhtygul Asanalieva Elmira Adylova Elmira Guseinova Fazilat Kadirova Jazmira Davletalieva Kunsuluu Juzeeva Mahbuba Mahmudova

- Natural Dyeing session: All materials used were local natural plants except indigo and cochineal, which give blue and pink colors that are impossible to reach using local resources. The artisans were taught how to reach different colors using madder root, dry cochineal (cactus beetle), pomegranate peels, walnut bark, sawdust from mulberry, apricot, oak, and walnut trees, and different mushrooms. Trainer Luydmila Kiseleva talked about the rich range of natural recourses in the region, and explained to the group the importance of using natural dyes instead of synthetic for regional products made of natural materials such as cotton, wool, felt, silk, etc. Participants learned more about the contemporary craft market's tendency toward ecological production. They also learned the process of using mordant and fixing dyes using natural materials instead of the popular chemical acids. All participants took an active part in the dyeing process and learned through practice. The result was several different materials died eight separate colors. Whole working process of the section was taken on video by invited specialists from Children Media Center – Nuriya Junushbekova, film editor and Artem Pogrebeshkin, camera man.
- Design session: Great attention was paid to the issue of new craft designs adapted to contemporary market demands. Trainer Tatyana Vorotnikova explained why it is important to create ecological products and discussed the various at-



- tributes of different natural materials, such as wool, felt, silk, leather, and cotton. The session was executed in an interesting way, in that artisans were taught how to work creatively and find new ideas for new samples. Everyone participated in the creative process, which resulted in a new line of samples of about 30 items. Assistants Anna Petuhova and Yuliya Samul made helpful suggestions thanks to their unique view on felt possibilities.
- Marketing session: All participants took part in this session. Trainer Aijan Bekkulova shared her own experience in organizing the sales and promotion of crafts. In layman's terms, she explained the basic rules of marketing and specific difficulties. She offered valuable advice on how to regulate or escape these problems. By visiting her gallery, considered one of the best in Almaty, participants could see these marketing theories in practice. Trainer Ainura Bozgunchieva talked about the demands of the contemporary market on craft production: assortment, quality, design, service, and pricing. As a marketing specialist with experience in craft exporting from Kyrgyzstan, she explained the market categories of local, regional, and international customers.
- Each group presented the results of their practical work on November 28, 2002:
 - Galiya Razvodovskaya, Kazakh artisan from NGO "Organization-Mobilization," presented the results of the Natural Dyeing session. She showed each natural dye in wool, felt,

and silk, and stated that they exceeded their initial expectations. Each participant received a sample sheet of the dyed materials.

- Aliza Suleeva, professional tapestry weaver from Almaty, presented the Design session. She showed all the new samples and explained their material content, functions, etc. Design session participants made small sample gifts for the rest of the workshop participants.
- Anna Petukhova and Yuliya Samul, students at the Almaty Architecture and Design Academy, also prepared a demonstration of their felt works—“A Contemporary, Fresh Look at Felt”—which was interesting and inspired the artisans.
- In the afternoon according to the program there was organized the visit of all participants to the best craft galleries in Almaty: “Tengri Umai” and “Assia.” The idea of these visits was to show to the artisans crafts of the highest quality and design, inspire them, and demonstrate to them that the creative process is endless. During these visits the artisan had an opportunity for free dialog with the each other and with the owners of the gallery.
- On the 28th November eve at the farewell dinner all participants got the certificates and albums with photos taken during the Workshop.
- The 29th of November was the departure day. The transportation of all participants to the airport and bus and railway stations was organized. The bus transportation of Kyrgyz and Tajik participants and training equipment was also organized.
- The work of project was continued after the workshop. The taken on video, material (6 cassettes) was examined with the aim of creating the video manual. The work of the Children Media Center was hold under control of Luydmila Kiseleva, trainer and author of the text and Dinara Chochunbaeva, supervisor of the project.

The test of the video manual was created, the author text prepared in Russian and English. The agreement on circulation of the video manual is signed. The sketch of the book manual on natural dyeing was designed by Urmat Osmoev. The author of the text of manual is Luydmila Kiseleva (Turkmenista) under the supervision of Dinara Chochunbaeva. The circulation of the manual is 500 copies. It is designed as a small table book. The information leaflet about Central Asian artisans is published in English at “Manas Publishing House” the circulation is 1300 copies. All photos taken in the process of the Workshop by Victor Gorbunov, professional photographer from Kazakhstan are places on CD.

Project results

As the result of this project

- the participants of the Workshop became aware of the necessity of the ecological aspect in protection of the producers, buyers, and the environment
- the participants learned the positive side of natural dyeing and the negative one of using synthetic dyes and materials. They learned how to use natural resources of local origin
- the participants learned how to create new designs using local natural materials
- the participants learned about the demands and tendencies of the contemporary craft market regarding assortment, services, pricing, sales and promotion etc.
- video manual and book-manual, which will be distributed among the artisans of the region will assist them in their transition from synthetic dyes use to natural ones using
- information leaflet in English will serve as the promotional tool for the production of artisans of the region to the international market

The special questionnaire was worked out and distributed among the participants of Workshop with the aim to receive feedback on the workshop and to make a more informed and true assessment of the workshop. According to the questionnaire results, most felt the right people had been invited to participate in the workshop. All participants were satisfied with the trainers' presentations and handouts and the content of the workshop. All recognized the necessity of the information they received during the workshop. The participants expressed their gratitude to the sponsor and organizers of the workshop, and proposed

the idea of organizing similar workshops and training programs on a regular basis, especially in distant rural areas of the region. Each participant is expected to share this newly gained knowledge with their colleagues in their respective crafts groups. The video manual and book-manual will serve a value support in their work. During the next spring annual crafts fair of Central Asian artisans in Almaty in May 2003 the specially worked out questionnaire will be distributed among the participants of the Workshop with the aim of summarize the results of their work in distributing gained knowledge at the Workshop.

Recommendations:

- *To continue the series on natural dyeing at a national level for rural women.*
- *To support a project to provide Central Asian artisans with natural dyeing resources not found locally, such as indigo and cochineal.*

To create opportunities for exchanges between the Central Asian trainers

