

# Spinning A Yarn of Dreams



Faiyaz Ali spinning yarn

**W**hile preparing his yarn for the manufacturing process, Faiyaz Ali, a carpet weaver from Masari village, Mirzapur District, Uttar Pradesh ensures that his eldest son who turned 12 this year goes to school. He is a hardworking parent, who only wants the best for his children.

Seeking a way to curb the financial challenges faced by his family, Faiyas Ali started his carpet weaving business over a decade ago. Although he faced many ups and downs in running this business, he made sure, with his skills and hard work that the business grows steadily. In 2017, Kaun Banega Business Leader was organised in his village, which led him to join the Work4Progress programme.

Under the programme, he learned about marketing and received capacity building training, which help him in growing his business. Also, he was granted a sum of INR 25,000/- with which he bought a tufted machine to manufacture carpets faster. Although Covid-19 impacted the carpet-weaving market severely, the demand for carpets is slowly rising. Now, his business has scaled, and he currently employs 18 craftsmen permanently, who come from nearby areas.

Ali informs that most of the people engaged in carpet manufacturing these days are over the age of 40. A large population of the younger generation does not prefer to continue the tradition of carpet weaving and is looking out for other livelihood opportunities. The intergenerational disconnect is increasing as the youth feel that the craft provides insufficiently. Thus, they look for jobs elsewhere.

In past 3-4 years, he has motivated some of his extended family members and neighbours to start their own businesses such as tea stall, stationery shop, kirana store, etc. On the main road, which connects the village and Mirzapur city, shop owners informed that Faiyaz Ali helped them in understanding the importance of secondary sources of income for the wellbeing of their families.

As Ali watched his eldest son walking with his friends to school, he told us, *“Everyone has a dream, I too dream that one day my business will sustain well, and all my children will be able to finish their studies and achieve their goals. I do not want them to experience the struggle I had. For that future, I will work hard.”*