



برنامج تعليم ونقل مهارات حياكة السدو  
Sadu Weaving Skill Sharing Program



# Weaving Continuity:

## The INSIJ Program

A Model for Safeguarding and Transmitting  
ALSadu Weaving in Kuwait and Beyond



## Overview

The **INSIJ Program**, developed by AlSadu Society in Kuwait, is a community-centered initiative designed to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of **Al Sadu weaving**. Through a **five-level progressive curriculum**, side courses in dyeing and decorative stitching, and a mix of mentorship and outreach, INSIJ fosters **intergenerational skill transfer** while strengthening cultural identity and creating pathways for economic empowerment.

Since its launch in 2021, the program has trained **over 400 participants in Kuwait and the wider region**, developed **seven expert trainers**, and reached hundreds more through short-format workshops and social outreach.



## Overview

Beyond Kuwait, INSIJ has expanded to **Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE**, where women now operate weaving production units — linking heritage safeguarding with sustainable livelihoods.

INSIJ demonstrates that living heritage thrives when transmission is **participatory, adaptive, and rooted in community practice**. It offers a replicable model for NGOs seeking to safeguard intangible cultural heritage in meaningful and evolving ways.



*Sadu House, based in Kuwait City, servers as a hub for cultural preservation and artisan training*



# Introduction

Al Sadu weaving, historically practiced by Bedouin women across the Arabian Peninsula, is characterized by bold geometric patterns and rich symbolism. Beyond its beauty, it reflects the values, resilience, and shared identity of desert life.

AlSadu Society, established as a cooperative in 1991 with roots in a 1978 community initiative, is Kuwait's leading institution for safeguarding textile heritage. **Training in Sadu weaving has been a core initiative since the early 1980s, when community workshops first began transmitting skills to new generations. In 2021, these long-standing efforts were formalized and revitalized under the INSIJ Program, with a modernized curriculum, updated teaching tools, and structured learning pathways.**





# Introduction

In 2020, the Society played a significant role in the joint UNESCO nomination of the Art of Al Sadu Weaving by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, leading to its inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

This recognition affirmed the cultural value of Al Sadu — but it also underscored that safeguarding requires living practice, not only documentation. **INSIJ was designed as a modern, structured program to ensure the continuity, relevance, and vitality of Al Sadu weaving for generations to come.**





*Experienced weavers pass on skills to new generations through structured, hands on instruction.*

# The INSIJ Program: Structure & Methodology

## *Curriculum*

- » Five progressive levels (10 hours each), each focused on a key Sadu pattern: Dhalla, Hubub, Uwairjan, Midhkhar, and Shajarah.
- » Side modules in **natural dyeing**, **Ragoum** and **decorative stitching** expand creative and technical skills.
- » **Custom-designed tabletop** looms replicate the mechanics of traditional floor looms, preserving authenticity while improving accessibility.



# The INSIJ Program: Structure & Methodology

## *Pedagogy*

- » Oral instruction and demonstration from expert weavers.
- » Guided mentorship and peer-to-peer learning in group settings.
- » Individual experimentation, supported by printed manuals, audiovisual aids, and take-home kits.

This blend respects traditional transmission methods while accommodating diverse modern learning styles.



*INSIJ offers multi-level training in traditional Sadu weaving.*





# Defining Community Through Craft

INSIJ welcomes all participants aged 18 and above, regardless of background or prior weaving experience. Community is defined not by skill level, but by a shared commitment to preserving Al Sadu.

- **AlSadu Express:** *two-hour public workshops across Kuwait, introducing weaving to newcomers in an accessible, engaging way*
- **Monthly Diwania gatherings:** *spaces where learners practice, share, and sustain dialogue across generations.*
- **Social media campaigns & cultural influencer partnerships:** *broadening visibility and inspiring wider participation.*

This dual strategy — structured training alongside broad outreach — ensures both depth and breadth in safeguarding.

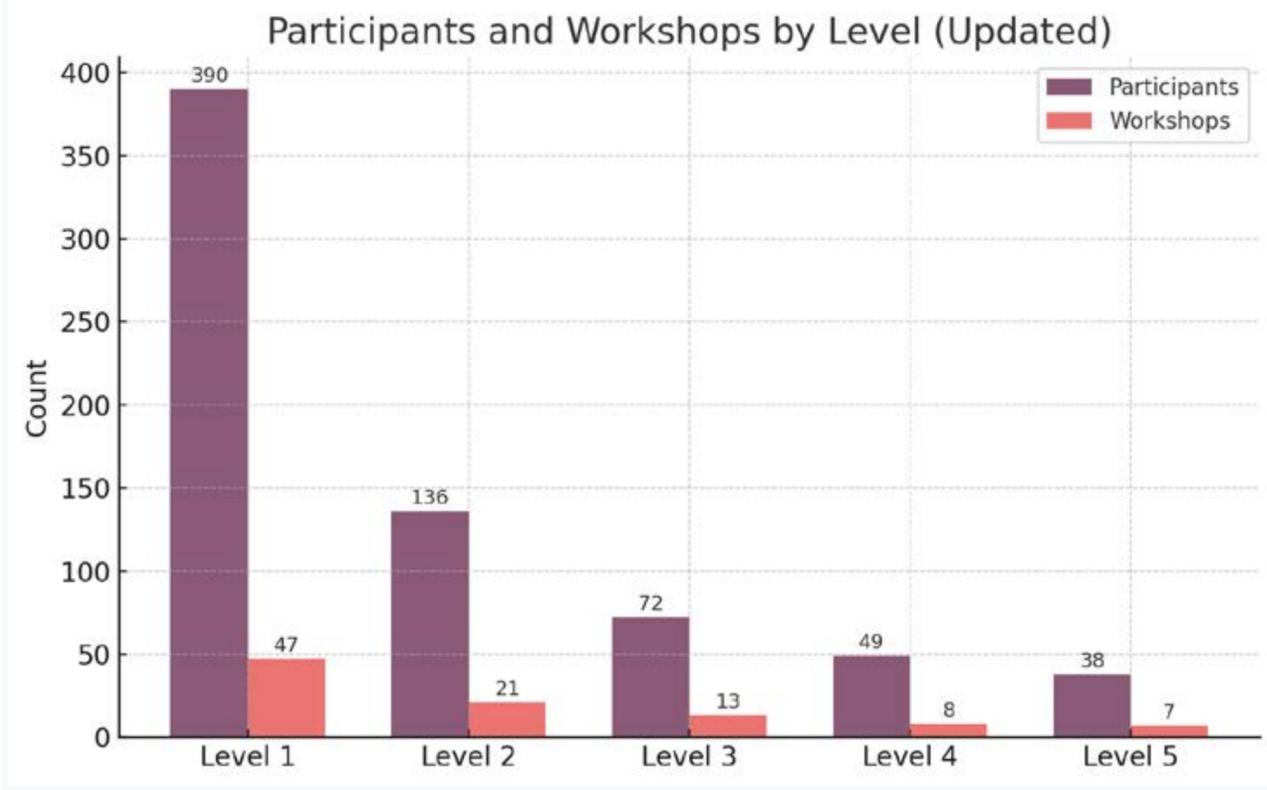








*Monthly diwaniya sessions foster intergenerational exchange and peer learning.*



# Measurable Impact

*(2021–Mid 2025)*

## *In Kuwait*

- Level 1: 390 participants
- Level 2: 136 participants
- Level 3: 72 participants
- Level 4: 49 participants
- Level 5: 38 participants
- 7 expert trainers developed



## ***Public Outreach***

- **32 AlSadu Express workshops** → more than **500 individuals** introduced to weaving

## ***International Training (78 women)***

- Alexandria, Egypt: 15 participants
- Madinah, Saudi Arabia: 24 participants
- Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: 10 participants
- Sharjah, UAE: 29 participants

Many international graduates now operate **production units**, weaving for local markets and contributing to economic empowerment.



*INSIJ has expanded across the region, training woman artisans and building sustainable income models.*





# Recognition and Showcasing

Every two years, INSIJ culminates in a **juried competition and exhibition at Sadu House**. Participants submit works in two categories:

- **Traditional Sadu**
- **Innovative Applications of Sadu**

Winning pieces are displayed and sold at Sadu House, offering graduates recognition and real income-generating opportunities.







*More than 390 participants in Kuwait alone have completed INSIJ levels, and many return as trainers or members.*



# Lessons Learned

From its early years, INSIJ demonstrates key principles of effective safeguarding:

- **Participatory:** Learners evolve into mentors and cultural custodians.
- **Inclusive:** Open access, adaptable across contexts.
- **Adaptive:** Structured yet flexible for local application.
- **Economically viable:** Links heritage safeguarding with livelihood opportunities.

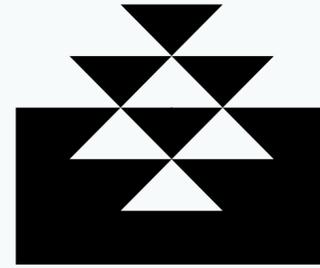
The **INSIJ Program** proves that safeguarding intangible cultural heritage requires more than preservation — it requires **continuity, creativity, and community agency**. By combining structured training, inclusive outreach, and opportunities for economic empowerment, INSIJ ensures that **Al Sadu weaving remains a living, evolving practice**.





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