



**STATE-SPECIFIC ISSUES RELATED TO CAPACITY BUILDING
OF HANDLOOM CO-OPERATIVES
IN NORTH EASTERN REGION**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE OF THE STUDY

State-Specific Issues Related to Capacity Building of Handloom Co-Operatives in Northeastern Region

Introduction

India is a country with many distinct cultures that coexist peacefully. Each community's culture reflects traditions and legacy passed down from generation to generation. Handloom is a cultural asset that has been used in our civilization for centuries. Indian handloom goods are known across the world for their eye-catching designs and exquisite craftsmanship.

The northeastern region of India is a compelling cultural patchwork, rich in tradition and wildlife. The linguistic variety, as well as different traditions and heritage, are represented in handloom products from the Northeast. Northeast handloom goods are endowed with excellent artistry that differs from tribe to tribe. Each tribe in the Northeast Indian states excel at weaving. Each state has a centuries-old handloom heritage that teaches how to weave colourful, beautiful, and intricate handloom patterns. Northeast products have magnificent designs and patterns that symbolize each state's cultural identity. While Northeast Handloom textiles are an important cultural treasure, they also play an important role in economic growth.

Traditional weaving techniques are used across the Northeast. It is one-of-a-kind in terms of spinning and weaving techniques. The hill people weave on tiny 'loin looms'. Some Brahmaputra Valley tribes, including as the Dimasa Kachari, Bodo Kachari, and Mishing's, utilize a type of 'fly-shuttle loom.' Weaving is the only monopoly of the womenfolk among all tribes in the region. The region's textile goods include loincloths, shawls, skirts, sashes, jackets, bags and rugs. The Naga shawls and loincloths, for example, and the Mizo, Garo, Mishmi, and Adi skirts all have distinguishing characteristics.

Study Objective

The objective of the present study is aimed at sustainable growth of handloom co-operatives in NER states by enhancing various elements of capacity building. This involved detailed study of current status of the Primary Weavers Cooperative Society (PWCS) covering their Structure, Governance, Member Weavers, Resources, need Skill & Technology upgradation, Design & Diversification, Use of IT Digital Marketing, utilization of Govt. Schemes, extent of Value Addition, natural dye usage, Market intelligence, Business decisions & SWOT analysis.

Methodology

This report has been prepared after a detailed study of all the above aspects on the ground in all the eight north eastern states by undertaking primary field visits to all the respondents, stakeholders and backed by comprehensive research from secondary literature sources. Primary survey was conducted using pretested & approved format / structured questionnaires. Survey methodologies included face to face interaction, Group discussion. Qualitative interviews with domain experts and senior Govt officials.

Report Structure

The first chapter provides a comprehensive overview of NER Status in Handloom Sector. The second chapter details methodology adopted for carrying out the study. The third chapter delves into state wise detailed findings of weavers' & PWCSs survey. The fourth chapter covers extent of usage of government schemes & interventions/ training initiatives. The five chapter provide an overview of handloom clusters. The sixth chapter presents successful case studies - critical success factors. In the seventh chapter detailed SWOT analysis has been carried out. The eight chapter provides state wise recommendations highlighting concern areas / strength. The ninth chapter outlines detailed recommendations and actionable plans.

The first chapter of the study utilized secondary research data to understand the current status of the handloom sector of north east states compared to all India average. Indicators studied are, state wise number of handloom households engaged in the sector, average number of working days, average income of the households, extent of utilization of various government schemes etc. Key highlights being.

- Weavers' Population in Assam accounts for 69% of the weavers in entire NER commensurate to its population.
- Significantly NER states have achieved Geographical Indications (GI) for specific handloom products (Registered Handloom Products under GI ACT, 1999 (as on 10th June, 2024)) as detailed below

Table 1: Registered GI Products of NER

States	AP	AS	MN	MZ	ML	NL	TR
No. of GI Products	8	8	3	5	1	1	2

This Second chapter outlines the approach & methodology adopted including sampling plan. Primary survey was conducted using pretested & formally approved format / structured questionnaires. Survey methodologies included face to face interaction, Group discussion. Qualitative interviews with domain experts and senior Govt officials. Stratified random sampling technique was used to finalize sample size for each state. Primary survey was carried out covering 179 PWCS, 1185 weavers across 52 districts of all 8 NER states and more than 100 stakeholders including Government officials.

Table 2: Respondent Wise Study Coverage

	Sampling Plan	AP	AS	MN	ML	MZ	NL	SK	TR	Total
1	No of PWCSs covered	12	88	18	18	13	12	7	11	179
2	No of districts covered	5	17	7	5	5	4	5	4	52
3	No of weavers covered	66	620	124	104	84	65	37	85	1185
4	No. of stakeholders covered	10	34	10	10	10	8	10	8	100

The third chapter present field study findings of all 8 states separately. An exhaustive 17 number of parameters / indicators were considered for member weavers and 20 parameters analysed for Primary Weavers' Cooperative Societies. Key findings are:

- Current weaving technology is dominated by frame looms and throw shuttle looms. Loin loom is used primarily in the hilly terrains.
- For better productivity, frame looms fitted with Jacquard / Dobby are suggested as also there is urgent need for more productive Maina looms.
- Traditional training methods are dominant in most of the states (Sikkim and Manipur being the exceptions).
- For yarn sourcing limited awareness levels & limited use of e-dagha as well as most importantly lower numbers of NHDC' Warehouses / depots are attributable for majority sourcing from open market.
- Very few entrepreneurs and master weavers are using natural dyes due to limited dissemination of the process know how.
- Tenure of PWCS Management Committee (MC) members vary from state to state (normally 3 to 5 years) and their structure is mostly informal.

The Fourth Chapter describes the extent of utilization of various government schemes / other interventions including training facilities. Roles played by Weavers Services Centres (WSCs), HEPC, NEHHDC are elaborated with data. Training Institutions such as Institute of Cooperative Management (ICM), Indian Institutes of Handloom Technology (IIHTS), Assam Textile Institute are covered with annual trainee data. Details of Government initiative on training, Samarth (Scheme for Capacity Building in Textiles Sector) is also briefly presented.

The Fifth Chapter briefly outlines benefits of CDP (cluster development programme), being smaller in size and limited stakeholders' involvement is expected to speed up execution process. Performance analysis of clusters is also presented in this Chapter.

The Sixth chapter covers case studies of fairly larger Co-operative Societies (21 PWCSs) and successful entrepreneurs (13 No's) across all North Eastern states. Also, presented are few successful case studies of other states to emulate their key learnings. The detailed analysis of case studies and learnings led to development of critical success factors for both PWCS as well as entrepreneurs which is expected to provide guidelines for growth and sustainability.

In Chapter Seven SWOT analysis is covered wherein State wise analysis identifies internal strengths and weaknesses as well as its external opportunities and threats. It also reveals market niche of the handloom sector in which the respective states have competitive advantages.

The Chapter Eight is dedicated to comprehensive suggestions for individual state(s). A matrix designed consists of 18 parameters / indicators comprising survey findings, and identified gaps. While, suggestions for specific gap areas of states are included, common concern areas are detailed in Chapter Nine.

In Chapter Nine, exhaustive recommendations for handloom sector as a whole and specifically for primary co-operative society is detailed. These recommendations are classified into three broad areas –

- Capacity Building of Primary Weavers Co-Operative,
- Important components of Growth for Handloom sector of NER States
- Longer-term interventions.

Regarding PWCS important suggestions include formal MC structure, training of MC members, skill upgradation of member weavers, technology upgradation, Evaluation framework for PWCS, Capital incentivization scheme. The study also suggests roles & responsibilities of the stakeholders for some of the identified initiatives like Raw Material Supply Scheme (RMSS), Govt Schemes (Atal Amrit Yojana, Ayushman Bharat , Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana(PMJJBY) , Mudra scheme ,Scholarship for Weavers children) and use of Natural Dye.

Major steps which are likely to have far reaching impact like development of Common Branding of NER products, move towards Producer company, encashment of new initiatives announced by ministry of cooperation, model Data base / Management Information System-MIS for PWCS (eventually will facilitate to move to Enterprise Resource Planning- ERP) which will help monitor the ground realities on real time basis, are presented in this Chapter.

Also, guidelines for starting and running garment manufacturing in NER states and Profitable & Sustainable Framework for Handloom Sector is outlined covering various aspects concerning the handloom sector.

Annexures cover among other details, Case Studies of NER Co-Operative Societies, Local Entrepreneurs, Success Stories of Other States, digitization initiative like KOSHA & Bangladesh Garments' success story.

We hope that the analytical findings derived from the comprehensive primary survey of each state and recommendations therein will aid policy makers, both at State levels as well as at Central level, in determining the appropriate interventions required for improving the growth of primary co-operative societies as well as overall handloom sector of the north-eastern region.