

# Meetings between EPCH representatives and various organisations in NER -April 2024

## **Meeting with IIE (Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship), Guwahati; 18 April 2024**

A meeting was convened with Dr. Santanu Mohan Deka, Associate Faculty Member of IIE Guwahati, to delve into the progress of the SFURTI Cluster initiative. Under this program, EPCH serves as the Technical Agency overseeing 25 clusters. The meeting aimed to assess the ongoing activities within these clusters in alignment with the prescribed guidelines.

In-depth discussions were conducted to evaluate the status of various tasks and ensure compliance with the project requirements. Through a comprehensive review, it became evident that concerted efforts are needed to expedite the completion of activities across the clusters.

Following a thorough examination and analysis, a pivotal decision emerged. It was unanimously agreed that within the forthcoming three months, a minimum of 15 clusters would undergo a rigorous selection process. This strategic move is poised to streamline operations and enhance efficiency in the project's execution.

To facilitate this ambitious undertaking, collaborative efforts between the teams from IIE and EPCH will be instrumental. Together, they will meticulously devise a roadmap delineating the sequential steps required to accomplish the identified objectives. Moreover, the roadmap will encompass a structured plan for transitioning the clusters to their respective Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs).

## **Meeting with Deputy Director, O/o DC (Handicrafts) NER, Guwahati; 19 April 2024**

EPCH representatives visited the Office of the DC (Handicrafts), NER Office to meet with Mr. Deeptanshu Halder, DD NER. During this meeting, they engaged with Mr. Deeptanshu Halder, the Deputy Director of the NER. The primary agenda was to explore avenues for implementing schemes devised by the Office of the DC (Handicrafts) within the NER region.

After a comprehensive exchange of views, the Deputy Director recommended that EPCH formulate and submit a proposal for the establishment of a Mega Cluster in Nagaland. Emphasizing specificity, he advised focusing the proposal on the Mon District of Nagaland, while also encompassing two adjacent districts for comprehensive coverage. This strategic recommendation underscores the Deputy Director's insight into optimizing resources and targeting areas with the greatest potential for impact. EPCH acknowledges the guidance provided and commits to preparing a detailed proposal aligning with these directives.

## **Meeting with NEC (North Eastern Council), Shillong; 18 April 2024**

A significant meeting took place at NEC Shillong, where Shri Som Kamei, IPoS, Planning Adviser at NEC, and representatives from EPCH convened to explore potential collaboration in bolstering the handicraft sector's development in NER. The meeting aimed to leverage synergies between EPCH's expertise and NEC's resources to foster sustainable growth.

EPCH provided a comprehensive overview of its ongoing activities within the NER, highlighting its commitment to uplifting local artisans and promoting indigenous craftsmanship. Recognizing the importance of collaboration, NEC was earnestly requested to contribute its support and expertise to further enhance the sector's potential. During the insightful discussions, the Planning Adviser proposed a strategic approach to address the sector's challenges effectively. It was suggested that a detailed proposal be meticulously crafted, focusing on crucial areas such as capacity building and market expansion. EPCH was encouraged to identify specific areas where its interventions could bridge existing gaps, while NEC's involvement was deemed pivotal in providing the necessary backing and resources.

Furthermore, to streamline the proposal submission process and ensure efficient coordination, it was recommended to route the proposals through NECBDC, Assam. This strategic decision aims to facilitate seamless communication and expedite the implementation of collaborative initiatives.

## Meeting with Officials of North East Cane and Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC), Byrnihat, Assam; 19 April 2024

Shri M.C. Omi Ningshen (IRS), Managing Director of the Northeast Council Bamboo Development Centre (NECBDC) located in Byrnihat, Assam, extended a warm invitation to Ms. Jesmina Zeliang, Regional Convenor, and officials representing EPCH. The purpose of this invitation was to convene a comprehensive discussion centered around the myriad opportunities available for establishing robust marketing linkages. These linkages are intended to provide invaluable support to entrepreneurs spanning the expanse of the Northeastern Region (NER) through the facilitation provided by the Northeast Council (NEC).

In attendance at this significant meeting was Mr. T. Lowgvah, Manager of NECBDC, alongside a cadre of other officials. Their collective presence contributed substantially to the stimulating and productive deliberations that ensued.



## Meeting with Regional Director, O/o DC (Handloom) at WSC, Guwahati; 19 April 2024



A dedicated meeting took place at the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms) in Guwahati, wherein Mr. S. Bangopadhaya, Regional Director of the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts & Handlooms), and Mr. D. Halder, Deputy Director representing the Northeastern Region (NER) at the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), were present. The primary objective of this meeting was to delve into strategies aimed at providing comprehensive marketing support to artisans and entrepreneurs operating in the region.

The discussions centered around leveraging various activities organised by EPCH within India and abroad. Additionally, there was deliberation on the formulation of upcoming activities tailored specifically for SFURTI clusters. These efforts were perceived as crucial steps towards bridging the gap in soft interventions within the sector.

The meeting fostered an environment conducive to exchanging ideas and formulating actionable plans. The collaboration between EPCH and the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts & Handlooms) signifies a concerted effort to empower artisans and entrepreneurs, thereby contributing to the growth and sustainability of the handcraft industry in the region.

## Visit to Chaiduar Artistic Textile Craft Cluster, Biswanath; 20 April 2024

A field visit was conducted to the Chaiduar Artistic Textile Craft Cluster in the Biswanath District to closely examine the progress of ongoing activities. The meeting venue was set at the newly constructed Common Facility Center (CFC) situated in No. 2 Naharani Village, with representatives from the Implementing Agency (IA) actively participating in the discussions.

During the meeting, significant emphasis was placed on the timely completion of the retendering process, with the IA directed to finalize it within the week. Additionally, there was a clear directive to ensure the operational readiness of the cluster by June 2024. This timeline underscores the urgency and importance attached to the project's successful implementation.

Furthermore, the team seized the opportunity to visit one of the project villages, allowing for direct interaction with the cluster artisans. This engagement not only facilitated a deeper understanding of their needs but also provided an opportunity to collect samples for the development of new and innovative products.

Overall, the field visit served as a valuable platform to assess progress, address challenges, and reinforce commitments towards the advancement of the Chaiduar Artistic Textile Craft Cluster.

