

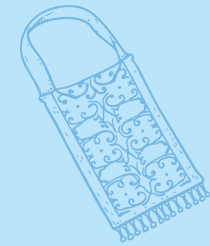
Strengthening Women-Led Enterprises in the NorthEast

Empowering artisans across Assam, Meghalaya, and Tripura through skills, branding, market access, and enterprise growth.





Program Introduction



Accelerating Women Micro Entrepreneurs of Northeast India

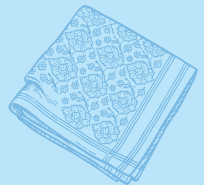
In the culturally rich states of Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura, women entrepreneurs in the handloom and handicrafts sector are not only preserving tradition, but also shaping local economies through their skills, creativity, and determination. Their enterprises reflect the spirit of the Northeast—deeply rooted in heritage, yet full of potential for growth. However, many of these women-led businesses continue to face barriers such as limited digital access, lack of formal business systems and restricted market opportunities.



To address these challenges and unlock new possibilities, Nasscom Foundation, with support from L&T Technology Services (LTTS) and in partnership with the Women Entrepreneurship Platform of NITI Aayog, launched the Accelerating Women Micro Entrepreneurs of Northeast India initiative. This 12-month acceleration program aims to digitally transform and strengthen 100 women-led micro enterprises in the creative economy sector, enabling them to build stronger, more sustainable, and scalable businesses.

The program followed a structured three-stage acceleration model, designed to support women entrepreneurs at different levels of business readiness.

The first stage focused on building awareness and strengthening fundamentals for all 100 selected entrepreneurs. Through mentoring and training, participants were introduced to digital literacy, financial literacy, branding, and relevant government schemes. They were also supported in understanding business registration, compliance processes, and formalisation requirements. Recognising the growing importance of digital presence, the program also equipped them with skills in digital marketing, social media engagement, and e-commerce.



In the second stage, 50 high-potential entrepreneurs were shortlisted for deeper support under the Adoption phase. Here, the focus shifted to product innovation, financial inclusion, and stronger business planning. Participants received guidance on improving product design, building business canvas plans, managing cash flows, and onboarding onto e-commerce platforms, helping them integrate digital tools into their enterprise journey.



The final stage, Acceleration, identifies 25 entrepreneurs for intensive mentoring and market expansion support. These women receive one-on-one guidance from experts, exposure to valuable networks, and support in adopting digital technology tools. They are also connected to online and offline market opportunities that can help them expand their customer base and scale their businesses.



By the end, the initiative aims to strengthen entrepreneurial knowledge, improve business practices, enhance market access, and support income growth.



More importantly, it seeks to create an ecosystem where women entrepreneurs of Northeast India can grow with confidence, resilience, and opportunity.



Portraits of Strength & Resilience



Hamari Debbarma



Manashri Debbarma



Nirangkha Roy Sarkar



Heinida Manki Kanai



Monlang Terongpi



Rekha Das



Doli Nath



Charchita Das



Himashree Dekka



Kanaklata Kalita



Jesmin Sultana



Monalisha Baruah



Karishma Das



Dhanada Kalita



Bimala Kalita



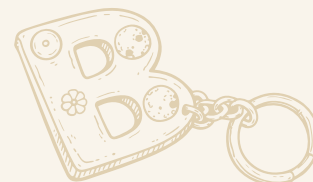
Handicraft

Hamari Debarma



Resin work needs patience. Many times, I had to start again to get it right.

With better guidance and learning, I have also understood how to shape this work into a proper business.



Hamari Debarma represents a new generation of young entrepreneurs reshaping handicrafts through creativity, experimentation, and modern design. Based in Tripura, she began her entrepreneurial journey two years ago, entering the craft economy with fresh ideas and innovative resin-based products.

Her interest in resin art grew from a curiosity about handcrafted decorative items. Since resin is a relatively modern craft medium, it requires constant experimentation with materials, colors, and techniques. Hamari started by making simple products such as keychains, small décor pieces, and personalized gift items. These products appealed to local buyers seeking unique handmade alternatives to mass-produced goods. Over time, she improved the quality, finishing, and durability of her work through trial and error.

An important turning point in her journey was the shift from creative exploration to business understanding, especially after leaving her government job. Entrepreneurship development programs helped her strengthen practical business skills such as financial management, cost estimation, pricing, and customer engagement. She also learned the importance of packaging, product display, and communication in shaping customer perception and improving market acceptance.

Equally valuable was the confidence she gained through interaction with fellow entrepreneurs. Hearing others discuss similar early-stage challenges broadened her perspective and encouraged her to think about long-term growth strategies with greater clarity.

Looking ahead, Hamari hopes to expand production, diversify her product line, participate in exhibitions and craft fairs, and use digital platforms to reach wider markets. Her journey reflects how creativity, continuous learning, and persistence can help young women turn artistic interests into sustainable livelihoods while redefining the future of handicraft entrepreneurship in Tripura with confidence, purpose, and entrepreneurial courage. Her story shows that creative experimentation, supported by business learning, market exposure, and peer networks, can help emerging artisans build stronger products and stronger belief in their ability to grow as entrepreneurs over time.

Handicraft

Manashri Debbarma



There was no business background in my family, only the wish to do something with dignity.

Step by step, this work has made me trust myself more.



Manashri Debbarma's entrepreneurial journey reflects the determination of a first-generation business owner who pursued enterprise creation despite limited exposure to business environments. Coming from Khonai in Tripura, she grew up in a modest household where entrepreneurship was not a traditional path, yet she was determined to build a livelihood that could offer financial independence.

Her interest in entrepreneurship began during her student years, when stories of strong and independent women entrepreneurs inspired her to imagine a different future for herself. Around eight years ago, she transformed that inspiration into action by starting a small enterprise focused on handcrafted products. Without any family business background, she had to learn through experimentation, persistence, and careful use of limited resources.

In the early stages, Manashri balanced production costs while working to maintain the quality of her products. Building a customer base was another challenge, but she remained committed. Gradually, positive feedback from customers within her community and word-of-mouth recommendations helped her expand her network of buyers and strengthen the visibility of her work.

Participation in entrepreneurship training programs later played a key role in deepening her business knowledge. Through these programs, she learned about financial planning, record keeping, cost estimation, and marketing strategies. This exposure helped her move from seeing her work only as an income-generating activity to viewing it as a business with potential for growth.

Today, Manashri continues to strengthen product quality and customer engagement while building her enterprise with greater confidence. Entrepreneurship has not only supported her financial independence but has also helped her develop leadership skills and self-belief. Looking ahead, she hopes to reach new markets, expand production, and inspire more women in her community to see entrepreneurship as an empowering and achievable path toward independence, confidence, leadership, and long-term growth for women seeking dignity, purpose, and self-reliance today.

Handicraft

Nirangkha Roy Sarkar



What began from a corner of my home with clay and simple ideas has become work that feeds more than one household.

The exposure and learning I received gave me the confidence to grow it in a bigger and better way.



Nirangkha Roy Sarkar's entrepreneurial journey shows how a skill-based enterprise can grow into a platform for community livelihood creation. Her story began in 2016 after marriage, when she started looking for ways to develop her own income source while managing household responsibilities. During this time, she attended a training program on soft clay craft, which introduced her to techniques for making decorative handmade products and inspired her to begin experimenting from home.

In the beginning, Nirangkha produced small handcrafted ornaments and gift items, selling them through local networks. Although production was limited, encouraging feedback from buyers motivated her to continue refining her craft. For several years, the enterprise remained home-based, allowing her to strengthen her skills while steadily building a customer base.

A major milestone came in 2022, when she established a dedicated workshop. This new space helped her organise production more efficiently and experiment with larger volumes. As demand increased, she began involving other women artisans in the production process. Today, her enterprise creates livelihood opportunities for fourteen women, some working from home and others contributing directly at the workshop.

This collaborative model has created an inclusive environment where artisans with different abilities can contribute meaningfully. By sharing knowledge and training other women, Nirangkha has helped build a skilled network of craft workers within her community. Her enterprise has therefore gone beyond individual income generation to create wider social and economic impact.

Looking ahead, Nirangkha hopes to expand production further, explore new market opportunities, and continue strengthening the collaborative model that defines her work. With support from entrepreneurship training, she aims to keep building both her business and the women around her. Her journey demonstrates how entrepreneurship, when rooted in skill and community, can create collective growth, dignity, and sustainable livelihood opportunities in rural settings for women and families.

Organic Soap

Heinida Manki Kanai

Heinida Manki Kanai's entrepreneurial journey shows how natural resources can be transformed into innovative livelihood opportunities through creativity and entrepreneurial learning. Based in Meghalaya, her enterprise reflects a strong connection between ecology and craft-based entrepreneurship.

Her interest in soap making began with a desire to create products using natural ingredients available around her region. She first learned the technical basics through a training course, though it mainly focused on chemical-based soap formulations. While the training gave her a useful foundation, it inspired her to explore alternatives that better represented the ecological richness of her region.

Motivated by this idea, Heinida began experimenting at home with different formulations. Her efforts resulted in two variants: one alcohol-based and another made entirely from organic ingredients derived from natural plant extracts. Rather than rushing to market, she took a careful approach by distributing samples, gathering customer feedback, and refining the products based on fragrance, texture, and effectiveness. This process helped her improve quality before expanding production.

Entrepreneurship training later helped her think beyond technical production and focus on branding, packaging, financial management, and customer engagement. She began to understand how product identity, consistency, and presentation contribute to building a sustainable enterprise. By highlighting the natural origin of her ingredients, Heinida positioned her soaps as environmentally friendly alternatives for conscious customers.

Continuous learning remains central to her enterprise as she explores new combinations of herbs, fragrances, and formulations. Looking ahead, Heinida hopes to increase production, participate in exhibitions, and build stronger market linkages for her products. She also wants to collaborate with organisations that support eco-friendly enterprises. Her story reflects the growing importance of sustainable entrepreneurship and shows how traditional knowledge, resources, and innovation can come together to create livelihood opportunities in rural settings. Her enterprise stands at the intersection of nature, craft and sustainability.



Meghalaya



The forests and plants around me always felt valuable. I only wanted to turn that into something useful.

When people appreciate my soaps, it feels like my place and my effort are both being seen.



Handloom

Monglang Terongpi



Meghalaya



The loom did not become my friend in one day. It took time, mistakes, and a lot of practice.

Somewhere in that struggle, I found my own strength.



Monglang Terongpi's journey into entrepreneurship is a story of resilience and transformation. After losing her parents at a young age, she grew up in difficult circumstances and faced hardship early in life. Despite these hardships, she remained determined to build a stable livelihood and create better opportunities for her family.

After marriage, Monglang initially focused on household responsibilities. With encouragement from members of her community, she began exploring ways to learn skills that could contribute to the family income. It was during this time that she was introduced to handloom weaving. Learning to operate a handloom was not easy. She struggled in the beginning with thread alignment, pattern creation, and maintaining fabric consistency. Yet she approached the process steadily, and through practice and guidance from experienced weavers, she gradually mastered the craft.

Over time, weaving became more than a skill; it became a source of identity and empowerment. As her confidence grew, Monglang began producing handwoven textiles that reflected the traditional weaving heritage of her community. Her dedication and attention to detail helped her build a reputation for quality work.

Her journey took another important turn when she began sharing her knowledge with others. Recognising her skill and experience, she went on to become a master trainer in handloom weaving. In this role, she trained other women interested in learning the craft, contributing to skill development within the community.

Today, Monglang manages her own loom enterprise while also engaging in a small food-processing activity to supplement her income. This diversification helps her manage uncertainty while maintaining livelihood stability. Looking ahead, she hopes to apply the learning gained through entrepreneurship training in her business and continue sharing knowledge with others. Her story shows how resilience, continuous learning, and community contribution can transform traditional skills into meaningful livelihoods, confidence, and stronger communities.

Handloom

Rekha Das



I have lived with weaving for years, just as others live with their daily routine.

The training helped me look at my work not only as tradition, but also as something that can be managed and grown with more thought.



Rekha Das belongs to Sualkuchi in Assam, one of India's most important handloom weaving clusters and widely known as the Silk Village of India. For Rekha, weaving is not merely a profession but a tradition that has shaped her life and livelihood for more than fifteen years.

Working from home with two looms, she has developed strong technical skills in producing traditional silk textiles that reflect the craftsmanship and cultural identity of her region. Over the years, her experience helped her build confidence in production, but like many artisans in traditional craft sectors, she focused mainly on weaving while depending on local markets and intermediaries to sell her products.

As markets began to change, Rekha increasingly recognised that preserving traditional craftsmanship also required stronger entrepreneurial capabilities. Her participation in entrepreneurship development programs became an important step in this transition. Through the training, she gained exposure to financial planning, pricing strategies, and cost management. These learnings helped her better understand how to calculate production costs, price her textiles appropriately, and manage her work more sustainably.

The programs also introduced her to the importance of market outreach, product presentation, and branding. These ideas encouraged her to think beyond her immediate locality and explore ways to connect with wider customer groups. For Rekha, this marked a significant shift from being only a skilled artisan to becoming a more strategic entrepreneur.

Looking ahead, she hopes to expand her market reach while continuing to create high-quality handwoven textiles that preserve the heritage of Sualkuchi. Her goal is to ensure that traditional weaving remains a sustainable livelihood for artisans like herself. Rekha Das's story reflects the balance between skill, heritage, and adaptation, showing how traditional artisans can strengthen their future by combining craftsmanship with business knowledge, market awareness, and a willingness to grow with changing times.

Handloom

Doli Nath



As a child, I saw weaving as part of home life, nothing unusual.

Only later did I realise that the same skill could give me my own identity.



Doli Nath's journey reflects the experience of many women artisans who inherit traditional skills from their families and gradually begin to see those skills as entrepreneurial opportunities. Based in Assam, where handloom weaving is deeply rooted in cultural traditions, Doli has been associated with weaving since childhood.

Growing up in a household where weaving was part of everyday life, she learned the craft naturally by observing elders operate looms and create traditional textiles. Over time, weaving became a familiar household activity rather than something she initially viewed as a business. Today, she manages four looms from her home and produces handwoven textiles valued in local markets.

Her work involves preparing threads, setting up the loom, and producing fabric patterns that reflect regional weaving traditions. These processes demand skill, patience, and consistency, all of which she developed through years of practice. Despite her strong production capabilities, the scale of her enterprise remained limited because sales depended largely on personal contacts and word-of-mouth recommendations.

Participation in entrepreneurship development programs gave Doli a new perspective on her work. Through these programs, she began to understand weaving not only as a household contribution but as a business venture with growth potential. The training introduced her to branding, financial planning, and customer engagement. It also encouraged her to think about building a recognisable identity for her products and maintaining quality consistency.

Interactions with other women entrepreneurs during the training were equally valuable. Listening to their experiences helped her realise that many artisans face similar challenges around market access and business management. These exchanges encouraged her to explore new ways of promoting her work.

Looking ahead, Doli hopes to improve the branding of her textiles, build stronger market linkages, and participate in exhibitions or artisan platforms. Her journey shows how traditional skills can evolve into entrepreneurial opportunities through learning, confidence, and wider exposure to new possibilities.

Handloom

Charchita Das



The sound of the loom has always been part of my home.

I do not want this tradition to remain only inside the house; it should travel further and find new value.



Charchita Das represents a younger generation within Assam's weaving communities, entrepreneurs who are working to preserve cultural heritage while adapting to modern business realities. Coming from a second-generation weaving family, she grew up surrounded by looms and the detailed processes involved in producing handwoven textiles.

In her household, weaving is not only an occupation but also a shared family enterprise. With more than seven looms operating at home, textile production forms a central part of the family's livelihood. From a young age, Charchita observed every stage of the process, from thread preparation to weaving and finishing, and understood the skill and coordination required to sustain such work.

At the same time, she recognised that the handloom sector was changing. Competition from power loom products and shifts in consumer preferences meant that traditional enterprises needed to adapt in order to remain viable. This awareness encouraged her to think beyond production and explore ways to strengthen the family enterprise.

Participation in entrepreneurship development programs played an important role in shaping this perspective. Through these programs, she gained exposure to financial planning, product diversification, digital marketing, and market positioning. One key insight was the need to view traditional weaving through a business lens. Rather than focusing only on output, she began to consider product presentation, design innovation, and ways to connect with customers more effectively.

Charchita is especially interested in using digital platforms to promote handwoven textiles. She believes that social media and online marketplaces can help artisans reach customers who value handcrafted products. At the same time, she remains committed to preserving the authenticity of the traditional techniques that define her cultural heritage.

Looking ahead, she hopes to improve production efficiency and market outreach so the family's weaving legacy can continue to thrive. Her story reflects a wider transition in the handloom sector, where younger entrepreneurs are revitalising traditional crafts by combining heritage, innovation, digital thinking, and stronger business approaches.



Handicraft

Himashree Deka



Himashree Deka represents a young generation of women who are exploring entrepreneurship while continuing their formal education. Her journey shows how exposure to entrepreneurial learning can inspire youth to see traditional skills in new ways and imagine broader possibilities for their future.

While pursuing her graduation and continuing with athletics, Himashree is also engaged in producing crochet and hook work within her household. This practical involvement has helped her understand important aspects of the craft, including thread preparation, fabric finishing, and the discipline required to maintain quality in handmade products. Her experience reflects a growing connection between education, skill development, and livelihood aspirations.

Participation in entrepreneurship development programs introduced her to business dimensions she had not considered before. Through the training, she gained exposure to communication skills, customer interaction, and the role of digital platforms in marketing products. One significant outcome of this learning was her understanding that technology can transform how crafts are promoted and sold.

The program helped her see that products can be listed online, promoted through social media, and shared with customers beyond local markets. For artisans, restricted market access often remains a major barrier. Himashree now believes that digital tools can help bridge that gap by allowing handmade products to reach wider audiences who value traditional craft.

Her educational background has also given her a broader perspective on entrepreneurship. She sees education and traditional skills not as separate paths, but as complementary strengths that can support innovation and growth within the craft sector. This mindset positions her as part of a younger generation redefining how heritage-based work can connect with contemporary markets.

Looking ahead, Himashree hopes to continue developing her digital knowledge and explore more opportunities to promote her products online. Her story highlights youth-driven entrepreneurship and shows how young artisans can bridge traditional skills and modern systems through learning, confidence, and openness to change.



My studies are important to me, but so is the craft I am learning through my own hands.

I carry both with me because both matter for the life I want to build.



Handloom

Kanaklata Kalita



For Kanaklata Kalita, entrepreneurship began with a deeply personal source of inspiration: the memory and resilience of her late mother. Growing up, she witnessed her mother's determination to support the family despite hardships, and those lessons in perseverance, dignity, and independence left a lasting impression on her life.

Her entrepreneurial journey grew from a simple but powerful idea—to create sustainable livelihood opportunities using the resources and skills available within her community. She recognised that many women around her had valuable abilities but lacked access to markets, financial resources, and structured opportunities. This understanding motivated her to build an enterprise that could support not only her own livelihood but also collective empowerment.

In the early stages, the enterprise faced several challenges. With limited capital, Kanaklata relied on careful planning, hard work, and resourcefulness. She began on a small scale and took responsibility for nearly every aspect of the business, including production, sourcing, marketing, and sales. Despite these constraints, she remained determined to expand her work and create something sustainable.

Over time, support from entrepreneurship-focused initiatives helped strengthen the foundation of her enterprise. Through training in business management, financial literacy, and market development, she gained practical tools to improve product quality, strengthen packaging, and participate in fairs and exhibitions. These learnings expanded the reach of her products and improved the stability of her business.

One of the most significant shifts in her journey came when she began involving other women in production and related activities. For many of them, it was their first opportunity to earn a steady income. Kanaklata's enterprise gradually became both a business and a support network, helping women develop skills, confidence, and economic independence.

Today, she continues to grow her enterprise while mentoring others. Her story shows how personal inspiration, community commitment, and entrepreneurial learning can come together to create meaningful economic change.

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My mother never spoke big words, but her life taught me what courage looks like.

Maybe that is why I cannot think only about myself while building this work.



Handicraft

Jesmin Sultana



Jesmin Sultana's journey shows how entrepreneurship support can help women artisans transform traditional skills into more structured livelihood opportunities. A handicraft artisan from Assam, she grew up where creativity and craftsmanship were part of everyday life. Like many women in her community, she possessed strong skills in handmade products but had limited exposure to business practices, market positioning, and financial planning.

Before joining an entrepreneurship development program, Jesmin's products were mostly sold in local markets at low prices. She had little understanding of costing, pricing strategies, or how to build a stronger identity for her work. As a result, her income remained inconsistent and the value of her craftsmanship often went unrecognised.

The training program marked a turning point. One key area of change was financial management. She learned bookkeeping, cost calculation, and pricing methods that helped her track expenses, measure profits, and price products more sustainably. She is now beginning to apply these learnings by maintaining simple records and becoming more mindful of raw material costs and labour value.

Another important shift came in her understanding of digital engagement. Earlier, her work depended entirely on offline sales. Through the program, she was introduced to social media platforms and online marketplaces. Though still in the early stages of this journey, she is gradually adapting to digital spaces as new channels for growth.

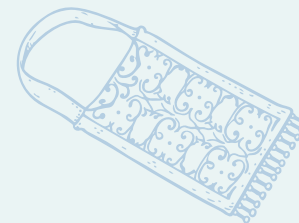
The program also helped her recognise the value of communication and customer engagement. She is now working to present her products more effectively by sharing the craftsmanship, effort, and cultural meaning behind them.

Looking ahead, Jesmin hopes to strengthen her financial practices, improve her digital confidence, and build a more structured business. Her journey reflects how traditional artisans can move toward enterprise growth when supported with knowledge, confidence, and opportunities, stronger visibility, fairer value, and sustainable futures ahead.



I used to sell my products without thinking much about their true worth.

After learning more about pricing, presentation, and planning, I have started seeing my work very differently.



Handloom

Monalisha Baruah



When women sit together and work, something more than fabric gets created.

There is support, confidence, and the feeling that none of us has to move ahead alone.



Monalisha Baruah's journey demonstrates how entrepreneurship can reshape livelihoods when it is rooted in inclusion, community support, and traditional skill. A handloom artisan from Assam, she began by producing woven textiles that reflected cultural heritage while working largely within local markets and community networks. Although her craftsmanship was strong, her market reach and income opportunities remained limited.

Her involvement in a community centre became an important step in her journey. It offered a shared space where women artisans could work together, access support, and build confidence. Yet like many artisans, Monalisha initially lacked a structured understanding of scaling a business, building a brand, or reaching customers beyond informal channels.

Participation in an entrepreneurship development program marked a significant turning point. The program helped her shift from seeing weaving mainly as a household or community activity to recognising it as a viable enterprise with room for growth. Through structured training, she was introduced to pricing, financial planning, customer segmentation, market analysis, and business development.

One of the most important changes was in the way she began to think about market access. Earlier, her sales depended mostly on word-of-mouth and occasional local opportunities. The training helped her understand the importance of diversifying sales channels and building a more consistent market presence. Exposure to digital platforms also broadened her outlook, though she is still adopting those tools.

The program strengthened her role within the community centre as well. She now encourages collaboration among artisans and promotes better alignment between production, quality, and market demand. She is also experimenting with ways to combine traditional weaving with contemporary design.

Looking ahead, Monalisha hopes to strengthen market linkages, improve her digital skills, and create broader opportunities for women artisans through the community network. Her journey shows how inclusive entrepreneurship can support both individual progress and empowerment.

Handloom

Karishma Das



Karishma Das's journey reflects how home-based work can gradually develop into a more structured enterprise. She learned handloom weaving from her mother at a young age. Like many women in Assam, weaving was initially part of household life and cultural practice rather than something viewed as a formal business. Over time, she developed strong skills and continued producing traditional textiles from home.

After marriage, Karishma carried on weaving with the support of her family. That support allowed her to continue her craft while managing household responsibilities. Although her work contributed to the family income, it remained informal and limited in scale. Most of her products were used within the family or sold occasionally to buyers in her known network.

For a long time, her enterprise remained confined to home-based production with little market exposure. Sales were irregular, and she had limited awareness of pricing, cost calculation, or the larger market potential of her products. A significant shift began when she participated in an entrepreneurship development program. The experience introduced her to a new way of thinking about her work as a business opportunity.

One important area of learning was financial understanding. She began to see the value of maintaining records, tracking costs, and setting prices more appropriately. Another major shift came in her awareness of market linkages. Earlier, she had little connection to formal markets, but the program encouraged her to think about connecting with buyers, participating in exhibitions, and expanding beyond immediate circles.

Karishma is also becoming more open to networking and collaboration. While she continues to work from home, she is building confidence in speaking with buyers and presenting her products to wider audiences.

Looking ahead, she hopes to strengthen her financial management and pursue market linkages. Her story highlights how entrepreneurship development can help home-based artisans shift mindsets, build confidence, and move toward sustainable and visible livelihoods over time.



My weaving started inside the home, quietly, alongside everything else a woman has to manage.

Even so, this small beginning has shown me that home-based work can also grow with care.



Handloom

Dhanada Kalita



Dhanada Kalita has spent several years engaged in handloom weaving, producing traditional textiles that reflect the cultural identity of her region. Like many artisans, she worked mainly from home and on a small scale. Although she possessed strong weaving skills, her income remained irregular because of limited market access and the absence of structured business planning.

Before joining an entrepreneurship development program, Dhanada depended mostly on local buyers, occasional orders, and word-of-mouth referrals. This made her earnings unpredictable and left little room for planning or expansion. She had limited understanding of how to align production with demand, estimate capacity, or increase income through wider market engagement.

Participation in the training program marked an important change in her journey. One of the most valuable areas of learning was business planning. She began to understand the importance of setting goals, estimating production capacity, and preparing for market demand instead of producing only when orders arrived. This shift helped her move from a reactive approach to a more planned and confident mindset.

The training also strengthened her financial awareness. She learned basic practices such as tracking expenses, understanding production costs, and pricing products more effectively. These learnings are helping her gradually create better returns from her work.

Another major shift has been her openness to exploring new income channels. The program introduced her to the possibility of reaching beyond local buyers and engaging with wider markets. She was also introduced to online platforms as a way to expand her reach. Although she is still in the early stages of digital adoption, she has begun using mobile-based tools to share product images and communicate with buyers.

Looking ahead, Dhanada hopes to strengthen her business planning, improve her financial practices, and access both offline and online markets more effectively. Her story demonstrates how training and support can help artisans move toward stable, diversified, and sustainable livelihoods.



For a long time, I worked only according to whatever order came my way.

The training helped me think ahead, plan better, and see how this work can support my family more steadily.



Handloom

Bimala Kalita



I come from a way of working where buyers were known faces and markets were nearby.

The world is changing, and I am learning that my handloom can still hold its place in it.



Bimala Kalita has been associated with handloom weaving since childhood. Over the years, she developed her craft by producing traditional textiles deeply connected to cultural practices and local identity. For much of her life, her work remained within nearby markets, where products were sold to known buyers or through familiar local channels.

Having worked through the 1990s and early 2000s, Bimala's experience was shaped by an entirely offline system. Sales depended on personal relationships, local demand, and occasional market interactions. While this system offered some stability, it also limited her ability to expand her customer base or increase income. Her products, though rich in skill and authenticity, remained largely unseen beyond her immediate surroundings.

Over time, Bimala began noticing changes in the way goods were marketed and sold. The rise of mobile phones and digital platforms introduced the idea of a marketplace that extended beyond physical boundaries. For her, this was both unfamiliar and promising. The possibility that her handloom products could reach customers outside her locality opened a new perspective.

A key turning point came when she participated in an entrepreneurship development training program. Through this experience, Bimala was introduced to digital markets and online selling. The program helped her understand that market access was no longer limited to physical spaces. She learned about showcasing products online, communicating with customers digitally, and exploring new income channels.

The training also exposed her to business practices such as pricing, product presentation, and customer engagement. These ideas encouraged her to think more strategically about production and market potential. Rather than weaving only for known buyers, she began considering how her work could appeal to broader audiences.

Looking ahead, Bimala hopes to build confidence with digital platforms and gradually expand into online markets. Her journey highlights how artisans shaped by traditional systems can adapt to changing times and build sustainable futures by bridging heritage with emerging opportunities.





#TechForGood #InclusionForAll