



CRAFTING CULTURAL FUTURES:

A study on the Artisanal Economy in Nagaland under PM Vishwakarma





About the Publication

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Published in Kohima, Nagaland, India.

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Printed by: Zuni Studio



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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full form
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSDCI	Construction Skill Development Council of India
DHEW	District Hub for Empowerment of Women
DIC	District Implementation Committee
DoESDE	Directorate of Employment, Skilling and Entrepreneurship
DUDA	Department of Under Developed Areas
EDP	Entrepreneurship Development Program
EPCH	Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
GP	Gram Pradhan
GST	Goods & Services Tax
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
I&C	Industries and Commerce
IDAN	Investment and Development Authority of Nagaland
IIE	Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
MoMSME	Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSE-CDP	Micro and Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programme
MSDE	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
MSM	Mobile Skill Morung
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NEDFi	North Eastern Development
NHDDC	Nagaland Handloom and Handicraft Development Corporation Limited
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHDP	National Handicrafts Development Programme
NSRLM	Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission
NTTC	Nagaland Tool Room and Training Centre
ONDC	Open Network for Digital Commerce
PAN	Permanent Account Number
PM	Pradhan Mantri
PMS	Procurement and Marketing Scheme
PMV	Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma
PTP-NER	Promotion of Tribal products from North-eastern Region
RAMP	Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP)
SANKALP	Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion
SFURTI	Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries
STH	Sumi Totimi Hoho
TRIFED	Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India
VLE	Village Level Entrepreneur



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Preface



DIRECTOR
Industries & Commerce
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The PM Vishwakarma (PMV) Scheme, launched under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME) by the Government of India, seeks to empower traditional artisans and craftspeople through a holistic approach that includes skill development, financial support, and market access. In support of these objectives, the Department of Industries and Commerce, Government of Nagaland, undertook a focused market survey to gain deeper insights into the demand, consumer preferences, and sales potential for products and services offered by Vishwakarma beneficiaries in the state.

This report presents key findings from the survey and highlights emerging opportunities and challenges while aligning traditional trades with current market needs. The insights generated through this effort are intended to guide future planning and implementation of the scheme, focusing on enhanced market linkages, value addition, and sustainability of artisan-led enterprises.

The Department extends its appreciation to all contributors and stakeholders whose efforts and insights have informed this report. It is hoped that the findings will serve as a valuable resource for shaping strategic interventions aimed at strengthening the economic foundation of traditional artisans in Nagaland.

(P. Tokugha Sema)
Director of Industries and Commerce
Government of Nagaland







Executive Summary

This report presents key findings from a market survey conducted under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme in Nagaland, led by the Department of Industries and Commerce with the support of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India. The survey covered the status of trained artisans across 9 districts and included a parallel customer preference assessment and institutional support. It aimed to bridge the existing market readiness gap by understanding supply side challenges, customer demand, and institutional support ecosystem.

Key highlights include:

- 66% of trained artisans practice their trade and 33% received full toolkits.
- Only 1.5% sells their products on social media channels
- 60% of artisans face issues in product design
- 55% of artisans are not confident in quoting a price for their product
- 28% sell their products from their homes, which was found to be the highest form of marketing from the survey, however this contrasted with customers preferring to purchase handicrafts in local markets and in store.
- Customer preferences are shaped by emotional and cultural value, with strong demand during gifting seasons and a price comfort range between Rs 500 to Rs 1500
- Woven baskets, wooden crockery, and small furniture were the most sought-after products
- However, local awareness of using digital platforms as a viable sales channel remains extremely low. Most artisans and consumers rely on word-of-mouth or offline marketplace for transactions. This digital disconnect represents a key constraint to scaling artisan business and accessing wider markets.

The report outlines structural gaps and proposes actionable steps in areas such as digital literacy, product development, packaging, branding, and last mile sales channels. Insights are drawn from both field level data and institutional feedback.



1. Introduction

The PM Vishwakarma Scheme is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME), Government of India aimed at recognizing and supporting traditional artisans and craftspeople, commonly referred to as Vishwakarmas. The scheme provides an integrated support framework that includes formal recognition, skill training, toolkits, credit access, and market linkages for individuals engaged in 18 traditional trades.



As part of the implementation efforts in Nagaland, the Department of Industries and Commerce undertook a targeted Market Survey to assess the market potential of products and services offered by Vishwakarma beneficiaries. The objective of this exercise was to generate actionable insights into current consumer preferences, pricing trends, distribution channels, and opportunities for enhancing the visibility and competitiveness of traditional trades in local and regional markets.

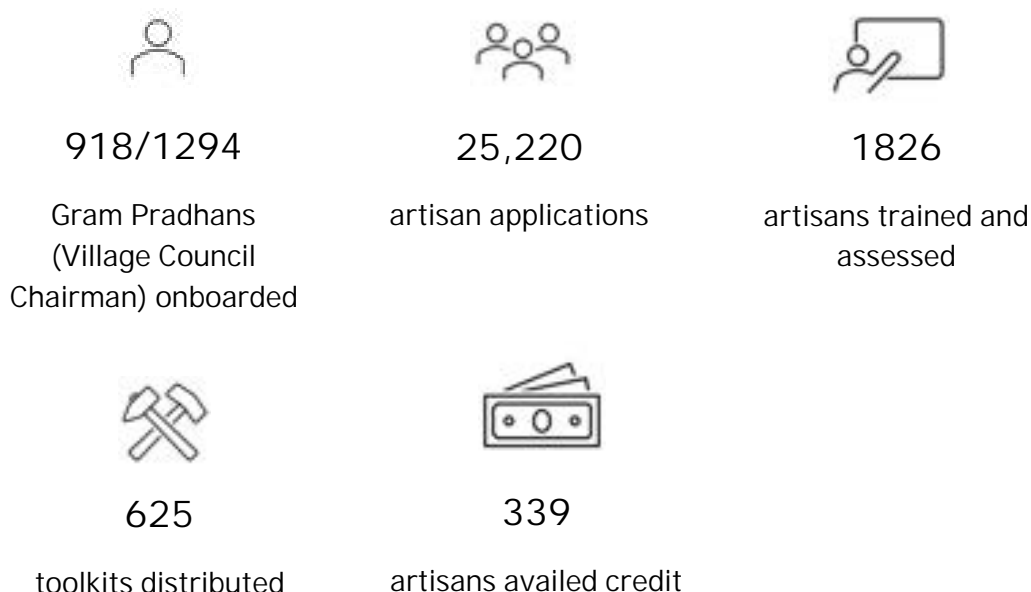
The survey also aimed to identify sector-specific challenges faced by artisans in marketing their products and accessing commercial platforms. The findings are expected to inform policy direction, program design, and capacity-building initiatives under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme to ensure that artisanal livelihoods are economically viable and market-responsive.

The chapters that follow present detailed observations, thematic analysis, and strategic recommendations based on field-level data and stakeholder engagement conducted across multiple districts in Nagaland.

Status Update and Strategic Initiatives

Since the launch of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme on 17th September 2023, the state of Nagaland has made steady progress in implementation through the coordinated efforts of the Department of Industries and Commerce and its partner agencies. As of the reporting period in November 2025, the following achievements have been recorded:





Top trade applications in the state: Basket weaving, Carpentry, Tailoring and Barber

These achievements reflect the expanding reach of the scheme and the proactive mobilization efforts undertaken at the grassroots level. To further strengthen outcomes, initiatives at both the national and state levels have been undertaken to promote e-commerce access and entrepreneurial growth.

National-Level Initiatives

At the national level, the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises has taken proactive steps to enhance market access for PM Vishwakarma beneficiaries, including:

- Signing of MoUs and partnering with digital platforms such as Meesho, Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to support the onboarding of artisan products onto mainstream e-commerce channels.
- Enabling access to wider digital markets by linking artisans with online buyers and removing traditional sales barriers.

State-Level Initiatives in Nagaland

In parallel, the Department of Industries and Commerce, Government of Nagaland, has launched several initiatives aimed at strengthening local market and entrepreneurship development. These include:



- Signing of an MoU¹ between the department and ONDC, with Ilandlo Service Private Limited (hereafter referred to as Ilandlo) as the agency to enable integration of digital sales for small businesses, farmers, artisans, and entrepreneurs across e-commerce ecosystems.
- Identifying and engagement of local stores such as Myki under the Department of Women Resource Development and other institutions as implementation partners to facilitate last-mile service delivery, onboarding, and community outreach initiatives.
- Organizing Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) in collaboration with institutions such as the Investment and Development Authority of Nagaland (IDAN), to build entrepreneurial capacity, business planning skills, and digital literacy among artisans.
- Conducting district-level campaigns and exhibitions to promote awareness, showcase Vishwakarma trades, and encourage local consumption of handmade and traditional goods.

Grassroots Mobilization and GP Onboarding

To ensure effective last-mile delivery of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme and facilitate wider access among eligible artisans, the Department of Industries and Commerce organized a series of targeted Gram Pradhan (GP) onboarding Campaigns across all districts of Nagaland.

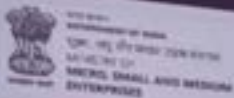
A total of 27 GP onboarding camps were conducted across the state during January to March 2025, strategically covering various locations to ensure broad geographic outreach. During these camps, the GP or Village Council Chairman (VCC) as referred in the context of Nagaland were formally onboarded and oriented on the objectives, benefits, and implementations processes of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme. Their involvement was instrumental in mobilizing local artisans, validating beneficiary information, and facilitating community-level awareness.

These camps played a crucial role in:

- Strengthening local governance involvement in scheme implementation.
- Enhancing trust and awareness at the village level.
- Accelerating registration and verification of eligible beneficiaries.
- Building a decentralized network of support through the Village Councils and District Implementation Committee (DIC) of PM Vishwakarma, headed by the District Commissioner (DC).

¹ MoU signed between Industries & Commerce and ONDC | Industries & Commerce. (2024). IndustryNagaland.com. <https://industryNagaland.com/mou-signed-between-industries-commerce-and-ondc/>





Honouring
Vishwakarmas in New India

PM Vishwakarma

● Benefits of Scheme

Vishwakarma
sisters
lo

Toolkit upto ₹1



2. Background and Context

Prior to initiating the market survey under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme, gaps were observed that highlighted the need for a systematic assessment of market dynamics, product viability, and consumer behaviour in relation to traditional artisan trades in Nagaland. These insights served as the foundation for designing the survey and guided its objectives.

The key gaps identified were:

- a. Limited Market Intelligence: There is a lack of real time data on consumer preferences, pricing trends, and demand for artisan products at the state level. This made it difficult for artisans to align their production with market expectations.
- b. Artisans' production trends: Artisans do not produce products in bulk, and their production is on an order basis. This causes challenges to build an inventory model and fulfil bulk orders.
- c. Weak Market Linkages: While many artisans have completed skill training and received toolkits, a significant number still lacked access to structured marketing channels or digital platforms, resulting in low product visibility and limited sales opportunities.
- d. Absence of Branding and Packaging Standards: Products made by Vishwakarma beneficiaries are often sold without standardized branding, packaging, or quality control, which affected their competitiveness and perceived value in broader markets.
- e. Low Awareness of E-Commerce Opportunities: Despite national level efforts to integrate artisans into digital commerce ecosystems, awareness about platforms such as ONDC or Meesho are very low among local beneficiaries.
- f. Underutilization of Local Retail Ecosystems: Potential partnerships with local stores and retailers to serve as last mile sellers or collection points for artisan products had not been systematically explored or formalized.

2.1 Handicrafts in Naga Culture: History and Cultural Significance

The culture of handicrafts in Naga history has been shaped by the region's social and agricultural background. For the Nagas, handicrafts serve as a secondary source of income, primarily pursued after the jhum cultivation and harvest seasons. This seasonal availability allows villagers to engage in various handicraft activities (VandenhelskenM., 2018)

Naga art is deeply intertwined with rituals, where art forms and ceremonial practices are mutually reinforcing. Specific baskets are essential for agricultural rituals; for instance, the Khamniungan Naga's ceremonial basket, *mao*, is used in rice planting rituals, while the Chang Nagas perform prayers for good harvests using a ceremonial rice plate, *lah phaou* highlighting the significance of handicrafts in their cultural practices (Odyuo, 2013).

Historically, pottery was restricted to the Changki dialect-speaking group, which held a monopoly on earthen pot production for the Ao community. These pots were primarily used for cooking. While Blacksmithing, possibly introduced by migrants from Assam, is not a traditional Naga craft. In the early 1960s in Kohima village, a small number of men were observed to



practice smithing, producing agricultural tools such as daos (machetes) and axes. (Zopianga, 1961) Villages without blacksmiths often procured tools from Wakching village in Mon District, a hub for iron implements.

Some of the crafts were also gendered in practice such as weaving for women and basket and mat making for men. The latter was traditionally a male domain and a skill that every man was expected to possess for domestic purposes in the olden times. While there were no specialized basket-making groups, the craft was integral to male identity. Today, basket weaving has become inclusive, practiced by all genders and has evolved to use of alternative materials beside bamboo, the traditional material used by the Nagas.

2.2 Policy and Initiatives undertaken so far

There has been an active push from the central and state governments to implement skilling and capacity building initiatives for several crafts and services including those under PM Vishwakarma.

- The Directorate of Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (DoESDE), Government of Nagaland under the Craftsmen Training Scheme is providing training for Carpentry, Mason, Hair & Skin Care and Dress Making.
- Under the Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion ("SANKALP"), a programme of the Ministry of Skill Development with loan assistance from the World Bank; various initiatives have been undertaken by the DoESDE such as collaboration with Lidi Kro-U, a registered non-profit organisation with the objective to revive and preserve traditional skills among rural Naga youth, thereby enabling them to explore sustainable livelihood opportunities. Through this initiative, 80 participants were trained in basket making and weaving (Directorate of Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2025)
- With support from the Mobile Skill Morung (MSM) vans under SANKALP and the State-funded program, Access to Skill Development for Youths of Aspirational Blocks, brought targeted training opportunities to rural youths of the three Aspirational Blocks identified by NITI Aayog namely Akuhaito, Thononkyu and Khongsa. Through this initiative 90 youths - 30 from each block were trained in the trades of Electrician and Mason.
- DoESDE is establishing a dedicated Skill Training Center for the Construction Sector in Dimapur, in collaboration with the Construction Skill Development Council of India (CSDCI). This center will offer specialized training in key job roles, including BIM Modeler, Mason tiling, painter and Interior Decorator and Dry Wall and False Ceiling Installer.
- In collaboration with the District Hub for Women Empowerment (DHEW), Sakhi One Stop Centre, Wokha, NSRLM, Wokha and The Nagaland Tool Room & Training Centre (NTTC), Dimapur, skill training programs on Banana fibre extraction and Handicraft Development were conducted where the participants were trained in basket weaving.



This initiative is under the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Similarly, Shamator District is also providing basket weaving training under this initiative.

- The Department of Women Resources also conducts trainings in fashion apparel and beauty services.
- The Department of Development of Underdeveloped Areas (DUDA) works with self-help groups in promoting handicraft and handloom activities for the six eastern districts in the state: Kiphire, Longleng, Mon, Noklak, Shamator, Tuensang. They also collaborate actively with the Department of Tribal Affairs in implementing state and central government schemes.
- Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission (NSRLM) is working with self-help groups in all the districts in skilling, capacity building and connecting markets for artisans including several of the PM Vishwakarma trades.
- Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Toys and Naga Tribal Jewellery Cluster of Dimapur, Nagaland, under Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI), (MSDE, 2024) includes developing a Common Facility Centre with modern machinery to assist cluster artisans in diversifying from traditional toys and dolls to the manufacturing of educational toys for preschool children. Additionally, the cluster will promote Naga tribal jewellery and accessories, including necklaces, tassel earrings, bead earrings, brass bracelets, hair accessories, and contemporary fusion beadwork in jewellery. The implementing and technical agencies are Native Products Industrial Co-Operative Society Ltd, Dimapur, Mind Blowers Club, Dimapur, and Bhavisya Learning India Pvt Ltd.
- Bamboo Handicraft and Naga Traditional Dress Cluster in Dimapur District is implemented by Naga Women's Welfare Society, technically guided by Export Promotion Council House (EPCH) and IIE as the Nodal Agency. Through the project, a Common Facility Center equipped with modern amenities, tools, equipment and upgraded handlooms, loin looms and bamboo handicraft machineries has been commissioned for use by the artisans.
- Under the Marketing and Logistics development for Promotion of Tribal products from North-eastern Region (PTP-NER) of the Ministry of Tribal affairs, tribal skills and products are being promoted through skilling, procurement, logistics and market linkages. The scheme is open to individual producers as well as group producers working along the broad categories of metal craft, textiles, jewellery, cane and bamboo, terracotta and stone pottery, gift and novelties.



3. Objectives of survey

The primary objectives of the survey are:

- 1) Assess the status of trained artisans in Nagaland and identify challenges related to product design, compliance and e-commerce participation.
- 2) Gauging customer preferences and purchasing behaviour for artisanal products.
- 3) Map existing markets and institutions available for artisans in the state.
- 4) Provide recommendations for market convergence, capacity building and strengthening of craft economy

4. Methodology

The survey was carried out through a combination of primary and secondary data collection methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of artisan's realities, customer perspectives and institutional initiatives for marketing of artisan products. The timeline of data collection was between June-July 2025.

Respondents	Sample size	Tools used	Focus areas
Artisan	994 trained artisans across all 10 districts of Nagaland (<i>Refer Figure 1</i>) where training was conducted, covering 67% of the total target of trained artisans as of 14 July 2025	Telephonic interview and questionnaire through Google form.	Trade status and challenges faced
Customer	823 respondents across 16 districts of Nagaland (<i>Refer Figure 7</i>)	Qualitative and quantitative structured questionnaires through Google form.	Interest in artisanal products, price and product design preference, modes of shopping and gifting occasions
	6 government departments, 1 Corporation and Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, 1 NGO, 2	Qualitative structured questionnaire and in-person discussions with government departments	Existing markets and initiatives in convergence of 18 PM Vishwakarma trades under the government



Institutional	private enterprises. These stakeholders were identified based on their existing work with artisans in convergence with the PM Vishwakarma trades	institutions and private enterprises
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5. Scope and Limitations

- As there is limited state data on the 18 trades covered under PM Vishwakarma and the markets for these trades, the survey was conducted as an independent study.
- Survey for the other 12 trades (beside Barber, Basket weaving, Carpentry, Doll and Toy Making, Mason and Tailor), could not be conducted as training is yet to be undertaken for these trades in the state.
- The customer survey was conducted for respondents residing within Nagaland which could limit the understanding of the needs of product preferences outside of the state. Future research could investigate these factors to gain a deeper understanding of consumer preferences for artisanal products.





6. Insights from Artisans

6.1 Status of Trained Artisans



*At the time of the survey in June-July 2025



Key Takeaways:

- 60% of artisans stated they struggle with product design
- It was found that 63% of the artisans are self-inspired and have no specific reference for product design.
- Traditional designs scored only 4.45% as a source of product design inspiration, indicating a lack of traditional influence on designs.
- Interestingly, 70% of the artisans voted 'No' for challenges faced in branding and packaging. This could be due to a lack of knowledge of the value of this component as 34% of customers surveyed stated they value branding and packaging while purchasing an artisanal product.
- 56% of active artisans make products for personal consumption only. It was observed that the artisans had little knowledge about where to market the products and hence, made them only for domestic use.
- 28% of them sell these products through direct or home-based sales. 8.63% sell their products in their own stores along with other products, while 5.68% sell their products in stores owned by others.
- Only 1.5% of the artisans sell on social media channels, where none of them sold on e-commerce platforms.

A total of 994 trained artisans were surveyed across the districts where training was conducted (*Figure 1*). Telephonic interviews were conducted with the artisans guiding them through the questionnaire. The top respondents were from Mon and Kiphire Districts. Basket weavers followed by Carpenters were the top respondents trade-wise. The trade and district wise participation of artisans in the survey is given below in Figure 1:



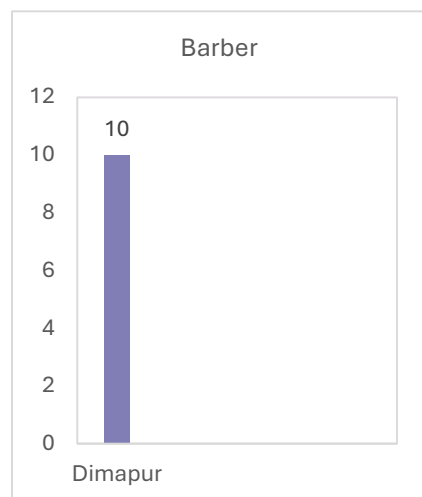
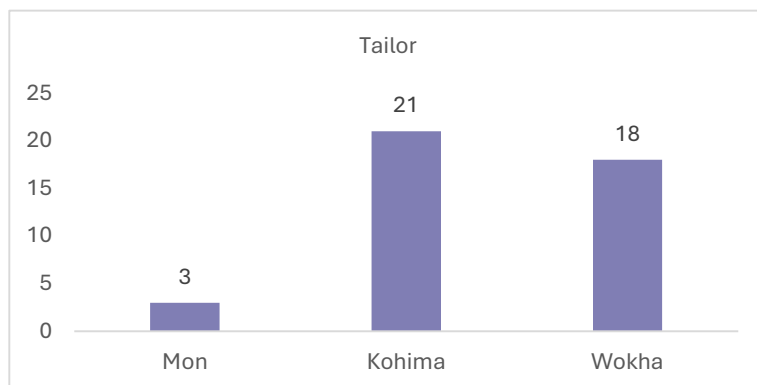
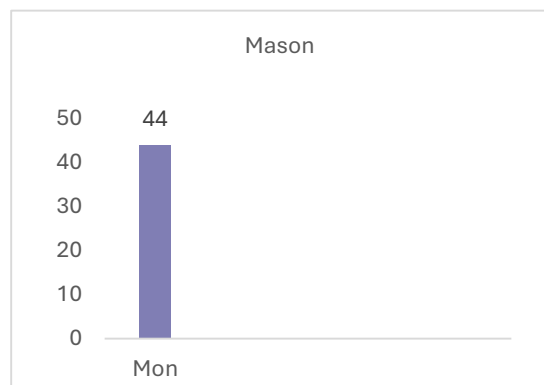
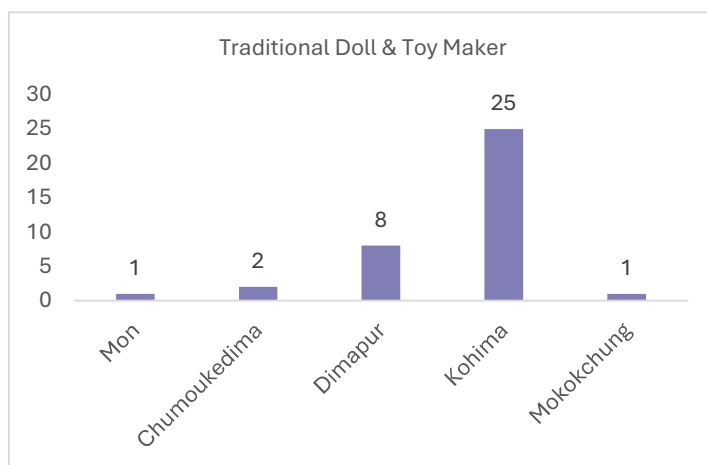
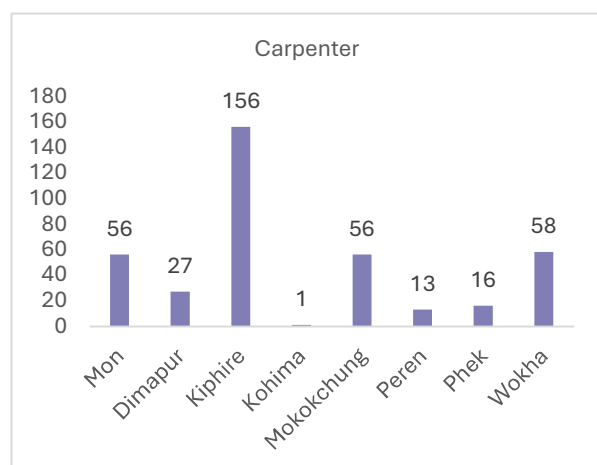
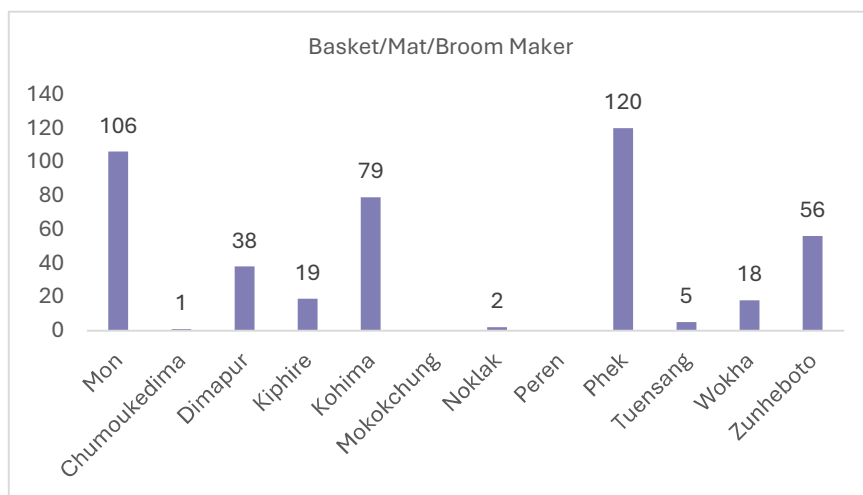


Figure 1: District and trade wise trained artisans' participation in the survey



In terms of gender wise participation, females were the top respondents at 52% and males at 48%. The labour force participation rate (LFPR) for females in Nagaland stands at 66.3%, which is higher than the national average of 45.2. The LFPR for males in the state is 86% (MoSPI,



2024). In terms of age group, most of the artisans at 47% belonged to the group of 28 to 38 years² (Fig 2).

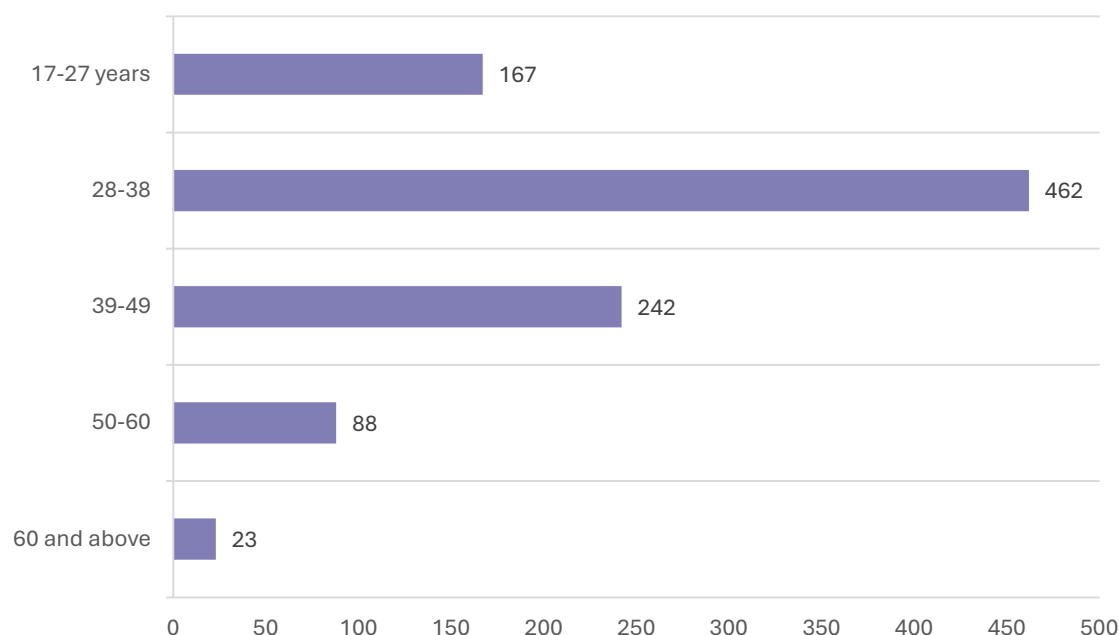


Figure 2: Age group of PMV trained artisans

6.1.1. Active status

An important objective of the survey has been to analyse the activeness of artisans in practicing their trades and to understand if there is a seasonal demand for their product/service and to determine if there are structural challenges that inhibits their activeness.

It was found that 66% (632) of artisans practice the trade in which they have been trained for (Table 1). Out of the 358 artisans that do not practice the trade, 22% (217) stated the non-receival of toolkits as a primary reason.

In terms of service-based trades, particularly barber and masonry work, 76% were found to be actively practicing the trade as compared to product-based trades. The nature of their employment is largely group based, with 70% operating in associations. Peak demand for their service was noted from the months January to March and October to December, with earnings ranging from ₹10,000 to ₹30,000.

Service design challenges were reported at 21.63% exclusively by barbers. Among the most in-demand services for barbers were hair cutting and hair coloring, and for masons, it was construction of homes and retaining walls.

² 12 artisans did not specify their age in the survey.



Table 1: Status of PMV artisans practicing the trade

	Do you practice the trade?			
	No	Often	Yes	Total
Barber	1	3	6	10
Basket weaver	164	180	100	444
Carpenter	124	119	140	383
Mason	3	6	35	44
Tailor	26	5	11	42
Traditional doll and toy	40	7	20	67
Total	358	320	312	990

6.2 Product design

This section aims to highlight the sources of inspiration for product design and challenges faced by the artisans while crafting products. Product design through motifs, use of colors and symbols has been deeply embedded in Naga architecture, handloom and handicrafts. Morungs are traditional social institutions made of thatched straw, bamboo and wooden structure where unmarried young men were taught techniques in traditional arts such as basket weaving, customs, folklore, culture and military training (Kahmei, 2021). The Morung is adorned with various symbols and motifs distinct from each tribe. The carvings of human figures and animals on Morungs symbolize their traits. For instance, the images of tigers, elephants, and human heads conveyed strength and aggression in battle, while those of the mithun and python symbolized wealth, and the hornbill represented beauty. Head hunting also had its influence in traditional art as shown by the carvings of human heads on the beams and pillars of the houses of warriors and the Morung, along with the paintings of human heads on the white median band of *Tsungkoteptsu*³ shawl and village gates. (Odyuo, 2013)

For basket weaving, particularly in Ao villages, three common patterns of basket weaving are found: Check, Twill, and Hexagonal (Zopianga, 1961). The baskets used by warriors were intricately decorated. The Konyak tribe known for their headhunting prowess carries a hip basket known as (dangsa), which is richly adorned with carved wooden human heads, monkey skulls, boar tusks, and cane balls to signify their warrior status (Odyuo, 2013).

The demand for cultural baskets and artefacts is in a revival phase in the market today, wherein their relevance is recalled during traditional events or cultural functions. However, the art of preserving this knowledge and tradition in handicrafts remains imperative. Through the survey,

³ The shawl *Tsungkoteptsu* or *Mangkoteptsu* is worn by Ao men only. The black and red shawl with a white strip in the middle depicts the valour and prosperity of the wearers through the symbols used in this portion. (Robin, 2013)



it was found that 60% of basket weaving artisans faced a challenge in product design (*Figure 3*). During the training, the artisans were taught in weaving plastic baskets except for Dimapur, Kiphire and Phek District where few of the batches were taught using bamboo, which is the material used for traditional woven baskets. The current market in Nagaland is saturated with woven plastic baskets and has become a go-to accessory for womenfolk as shopping and everyday utility bag. This saturation also comes with a double-edged sword as the artisans highlighted that the types of baskets available in the market are similar in style. The techniques of weaving may differ, but product design plays a significant role in influencing the customer's choice as reflected in this survey (*Fig 14*) where visual presentation of a product was valued the highest.

Besides Masons, more than 50% of artisans from all the other trades also faced issues in product design. The Doll and Toy maker artisans in the state have opted to use cotton, wool and acrylic yarn to make crochet dolls and accessories keeping in line with the local market's taste.

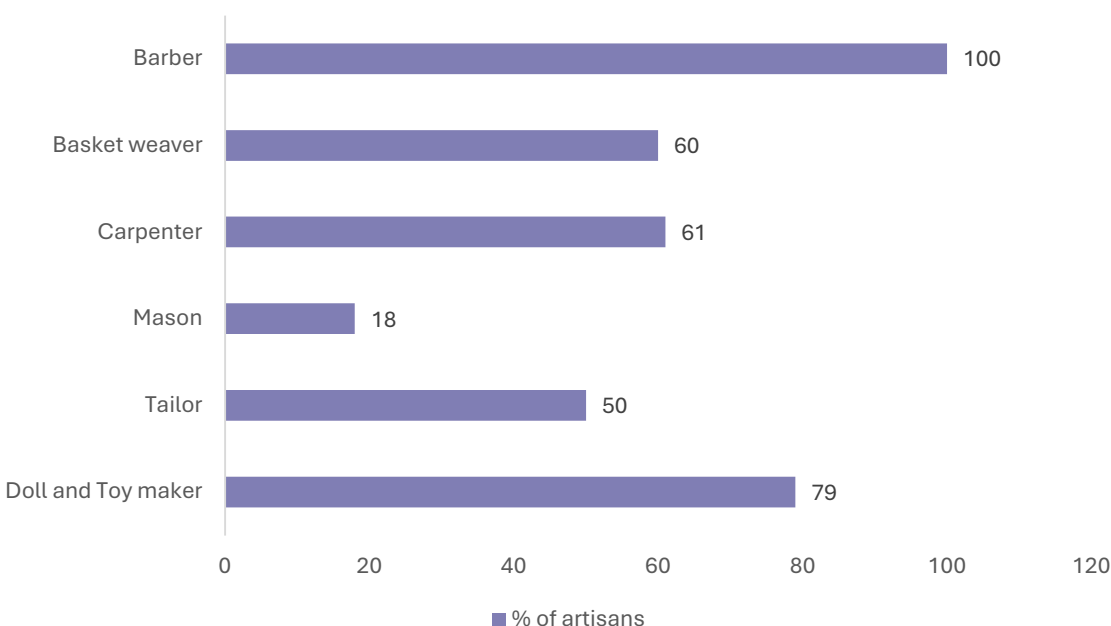


Figure 3: Percentage of PMV artisans facing issues in product design

To understand the sources from where the artisans take inspiration for their products/service, they were given multiple choice options (*Figure 4*). It was found that 63% of the artisans are self-inspired and have no specific reference for product design. This was followed by the internet at 14.53% and Community at 9.36%. Community here refers to the everyday environment (people, home, etc.) around the artisan which could serve as an inspiration.



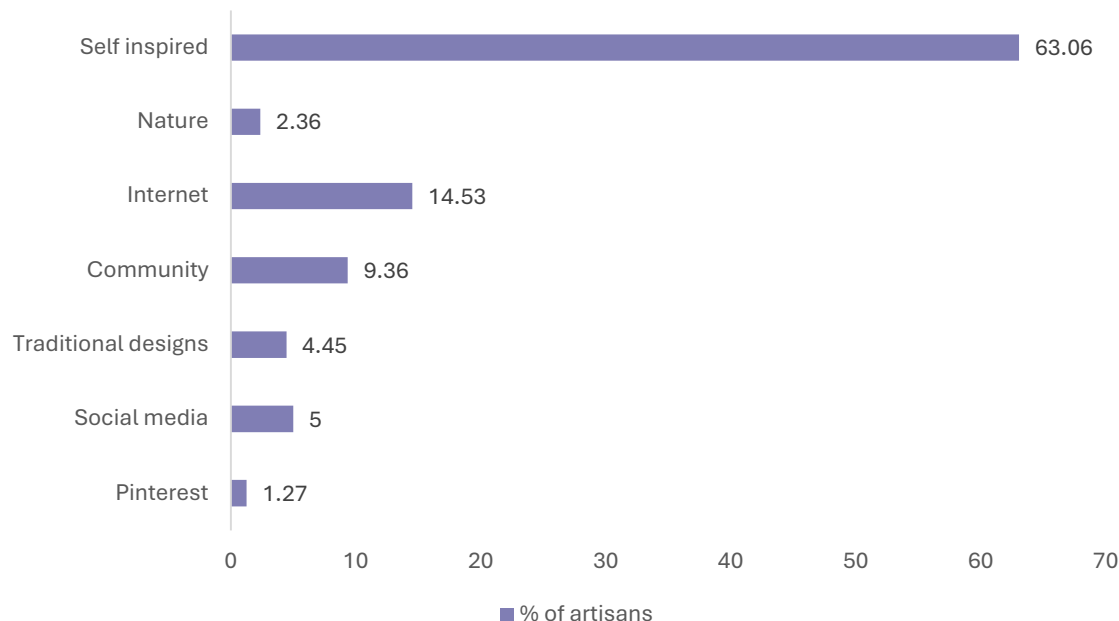


Figure 4: Sources of product design inspiration for PMV artisans

6.2.1 Traditional Designs and Influence

Traditional designs scored only 4.45% as a source of product design inspiration, indicating a lack of traditional influence on designs. There is however the growing concern of misrepresentation of cultural designs in the guise of “modernity” and “representation”. Recently in June 2025, the Sümi Totimi Hoho (STH), the apex women’s organisation of the Sümi Naga community issued a directive restricting unauthorised creation or modification of traditional Sumi attire and ornaments. *“Unauthorized modern adaptations of the traditional attire and ornaments are posing a threat to the traditional attire and ornaments thereby creating confusions, loss of authenticity and a gradual erosion of the Sümi cultural heritage,”* it stated. (Dutta, 2025)

Similarly, there have been instances of misappropriation of traditional motifs, local terms, origin (Rhakho, 2021) and inappropriate use of traditional garments without understanding the significance of the garment (Desk, 2020). For example, the Tsüngkotepsü shawl of the Ao Nagas are to be worn only by men and the warriors who valiantly fought and wore it as a mark of honor. The Akehda Sangtamlarü Thsingmüjang (United Sangtam Women’s Association) has also in the past raised concerns over misappropriation of Sangtam tribal motifs. (Express, 2014)

At present, there is no regulating body in the state that has governed or established a framework or guideline within which inspiration can be taken from traditional designs at the intersection of cultural attribution, creativity, and design. Efforts are at the level of the individual tribal apex bodies who monitor and protect the cultural designs of their respective tribes. Authenticity innovation represents a modern approach to conveying the genuine nature



of products to consumers while preserving their traditional qualities and features. This innovation is essential for increasing the value of handicrafts and reducing the effort consumers make in finding authentic items. (Shafi, 2021)

6.3 Branding, Packaging and Quality Certifications

Branding and Packaging have become an indispensable aspect of marketing a product. Consumers mainly prefer innovations that do not harm or compromise with the traditional nature of handicraft products, namely, authenticity, packaging, value-adding, product improvement, product design innovation, and quality materials, (Shafi, 2021)

Interestingly, 70% of the artisans voted 'No' for challenges faced in branding and packaging. This could be due to a lack of knowledge of the value of this component as 34% of customers surveyed stated they value branding and packaging while purchasing an artisanal product. According to a NEDFi survey, 47% of respondents reported that they were unaware of local handloom and handicraft products from NER, while 17% indicated they had some awareness. (NEDFi, 2022)

The use of labels or hang tags attached to products can influence customers' perceptions of authenticity; moreover, consumers often rely on various certifications and labels to assess whether a product is genuine. (Kühne B., 2010) Additionally, narratives about a product's origin and distinctive names enhance consumers' views of authenticity. (Youn H., 2017)

Central initiatives are concentrating efforts in improving the branding and packaging aspects of MSME products through schemes such as the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP), Market Development Assistance (MDA), Micro and Small Enterprises Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP), Promotion of Tribal products from North-eastern Region (PTP-NER), National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP).

As for certification labels, they signify that products are authentic and adhere to traditional characteristics or specific standards, such as origin, quality, and production methods, which help them compete against inexpensive imitations (WIPO, 2023) (WIPO, 2023). Remarkably, a significant 94% of MSMEs in the handloom and handicraft sectors did not undergo quality testing or obtain certifications, while only 6% pursued these measures (NEDFi, 2022). Most MSMEs believed that quality testing and certification were irrelevant to their products, which led to their decision not to pursue them. Additional factors included a lack of awareness about these processes, insufficient testing facilities, and the non-mandatory nature of such procedures. Focused guidance should be provided for artisans in accessing the service of certifying bodies for quality checks. If unaddressed, it could be a systemic risk for product development which further impacts the chances of the customer buying the product as well as the potential of exporting the product.



6.4 Marketing

For the marketing of handicrafts, Nagaland has three common channels: first, directly from producer to customer, second from middlemen to independent retailers and then to customers, and third from products to wholesalers, then to retailers and customers. (Odyuo, 2013)

- Producer to Customer:** These are those artisans who sell directly to customers in their homes, through word-of-mouth and local markets
- Producer to Middlemen:** For artisans who do not have direct access to markets, they sell their products through middlemen who curate these handicrafts and further sell it to other retailers or clients.
- Producers to wholesalers to retailers:** Large scale production for export or bulk demand are taken through government agencies, cluster body or private enterprises

The survey findings state that out of the 66% artisans that practice the trade, a majority of them at 56% make these products for personal consumption only (*Figure 5*). It was observed that the artisans had little knowledge about where to market the products and hence, made them only for domestic use.

28% of them sell these products through direct or home-based sales. 8.63% sell their products in their own stores along with other products, while 5.68% sell their products in stores owned by others. Only 1.5% of the artisans sell on social media channels, where none of them sold on e-commerce platforms. The reasons for low presence of marketing on online platforms were attributed to lack of know-how on the approach to sell online and especially the gap in use of language (English) for marketing. A negligible percentage of the artisans reported that they did not use a smartphone.

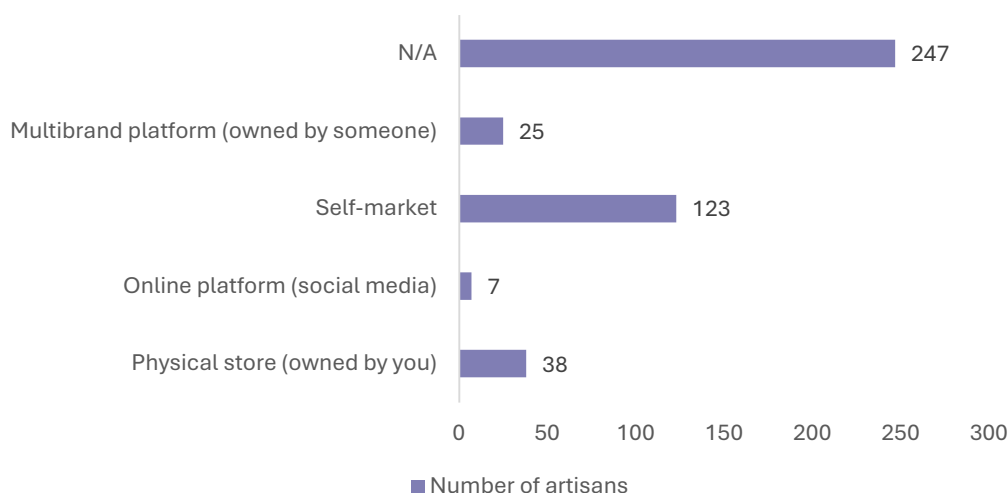


Figure 5: Marketing channels for PMV artisans



A separate study highlighted the low participation in fairs, exhibitions and festivals by Handicraft MSMEs in Northeast. Only around 6% of the MSMEs in Northeast participated in fairs, exhibitions and festivals to sell their products where 73% of them participated within NER. The remaining 27% participated in fairs, exhibitions etc. organised in Delhi and Kolkata primarily. (NEDFI, 2022).

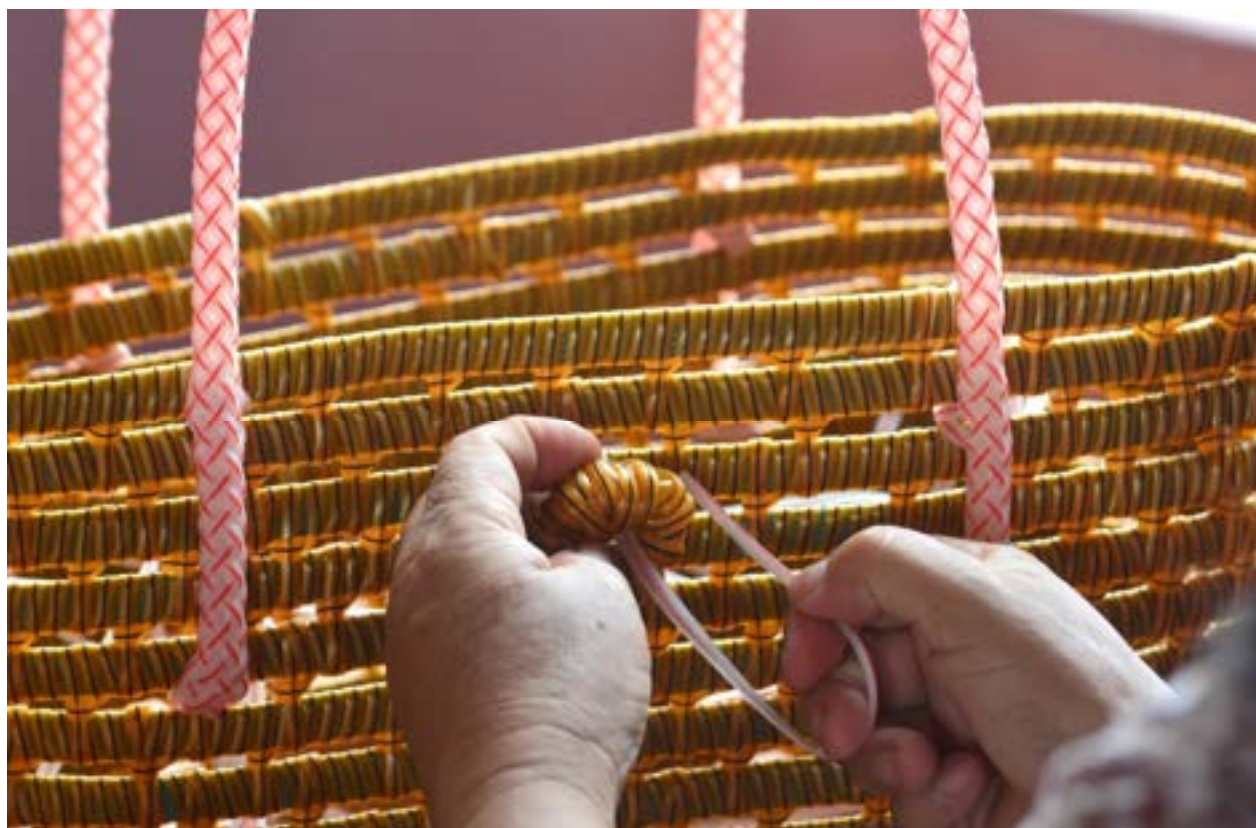
Generating awareness and visibility of such events and particularly of those MSMEs participating would create a word-of-mouth effect across clusters which has been observed to take place among the trained artisans, wherein a group receiving a benefit encourage the other groups to actively engage and follow up on actionable steps to receive the same benefits.



7. Insights from Customers

Key highlights:

- 57% of customers surveyed preferred to gift handmade or locally crafted items with most purchases concentrated in the Rs 500 to Rs 1500 price range.
- Customers highly prefer local artisan shops and markets for shopping artisanal. This is in contrast to 28% of artisans who self-market their products and sell them from their homes.
- Customers ranked 'Visual presentation' the highest while shopping for artisanal products
- They also ranked quality and pricing highly among factors that influence them to purchase artisanal.
- There is a growing demand for well crafted, affordable, and meaningful artisanal products among students and working professional segments in both urban and semi urban settings.



7.1 Demographic and Purchase Behavior Insights

The customer survey conducted as part of the PM Vishwakarma Market study in Nagaland revealed clear patterns in consumer demographics and motivations. The survey was conducted among 823 respondents across 16 districts (*Figure 6*).

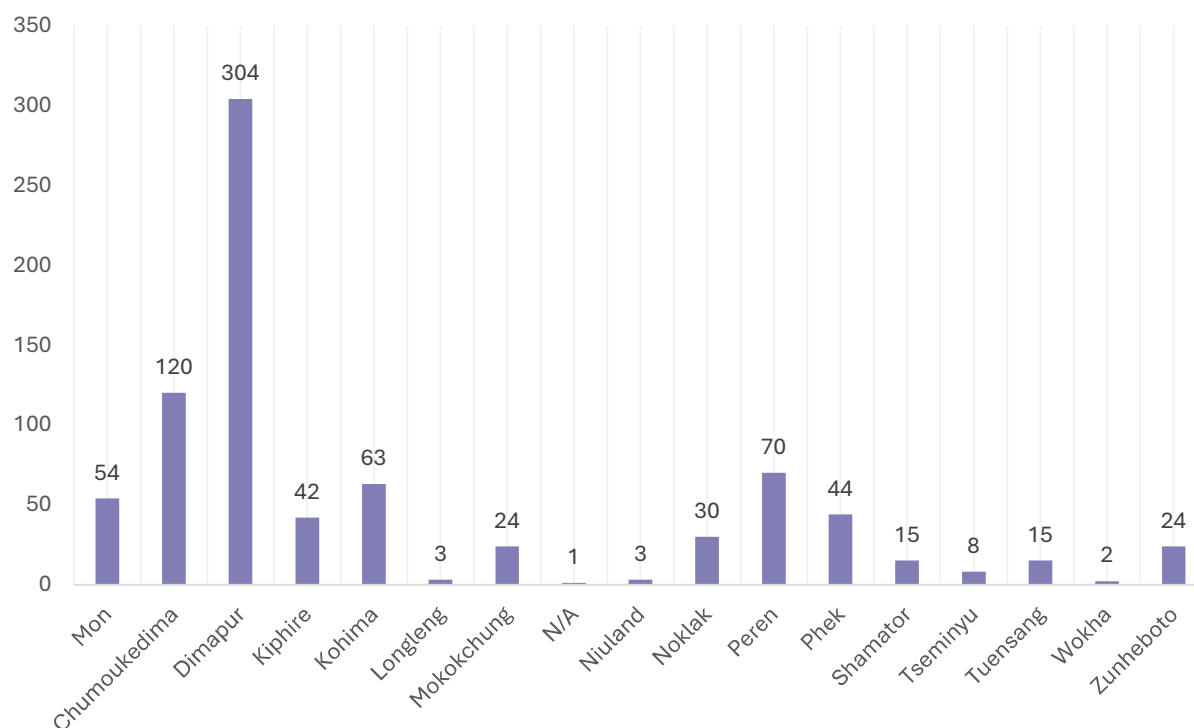


Figure 6: District wise participation of customers in the survey

Respondents were characterized, on average, in the age group of 25-34 followed by 16-25 years. Contrasting this with occupational status, it was found that 37.5% of the respondents are unemployed. Nagaland stands fourth in the country in unemployment rate at 7.8% (PLFS,2024)



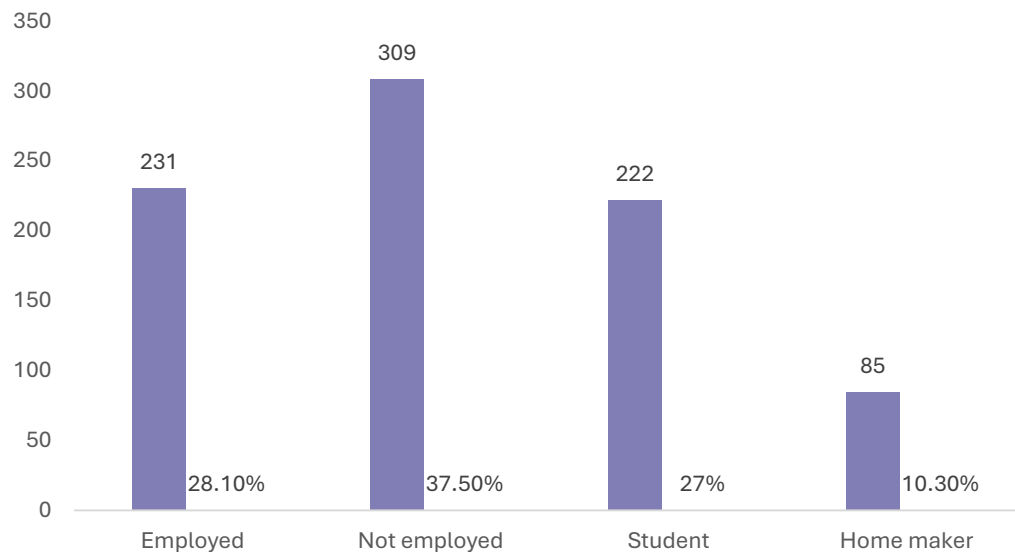


Figure 7: Status of occupation among customers who participated in the survey

A majority of respondents expressed interest in purchasing artisanal products, particularly for gifting purposes. Notably, 57% of customers surveyed preferred to gift handmade or locally crafted items (Fig 8), with most purchases concentrated in the Rs 500 to Rs 1500 price range (Fig 9).

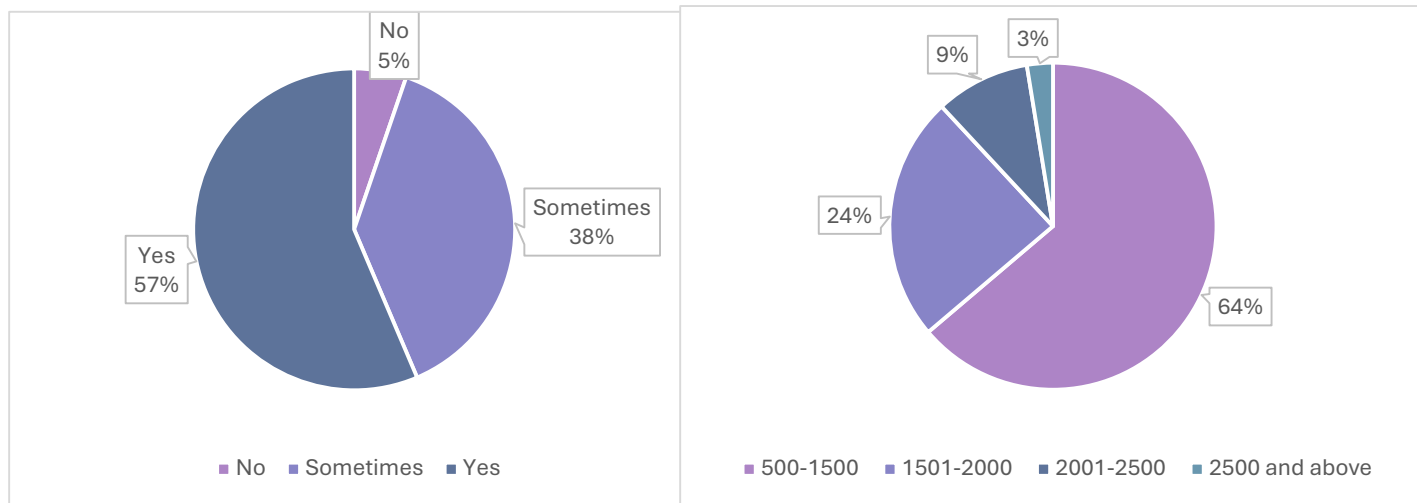


Figure 8: (Left) Preference of customers to opt artisanal products for gifting

Figure 9: (Right) Preferred pricing range for purchasing artisanal products



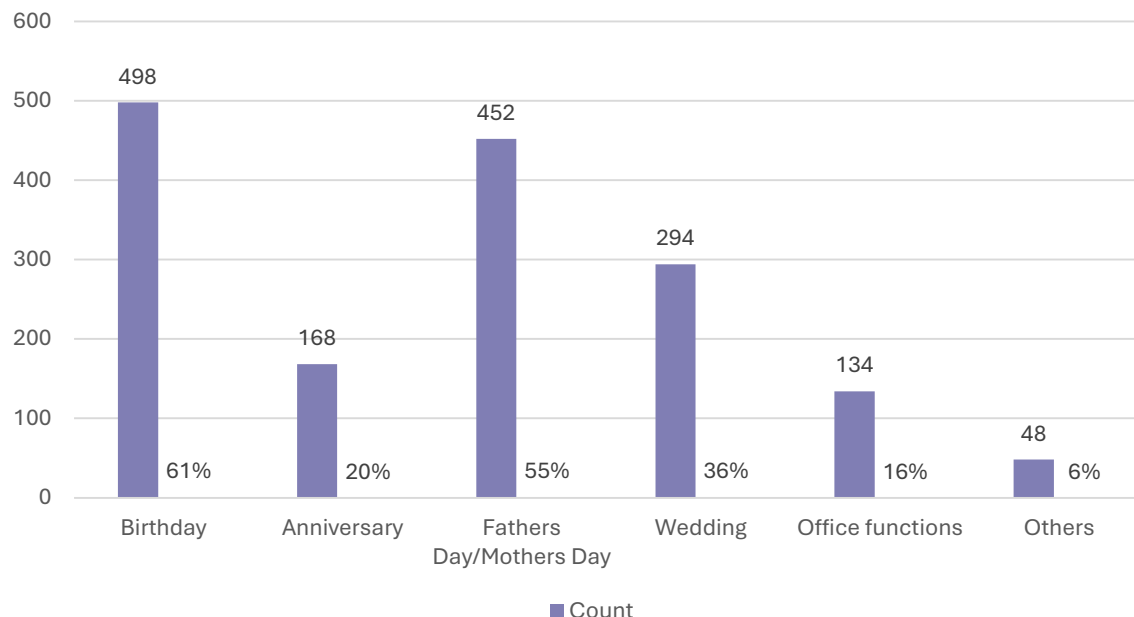


Figure 10: Top occasions for gifting

Key gifting occasions (Figure 10) identified included birthdays, Mother's and Father's Day, and weddings, with customers indicating that they were most likely to purchase handcrafted products that carried emotional significance, cultural value, or a compelling story behind creation. Father's and Mother's Day are important occasions celebrated in the state with active participation led by churches. Wedding seasons in Nagaland are usually between the months of October-March.

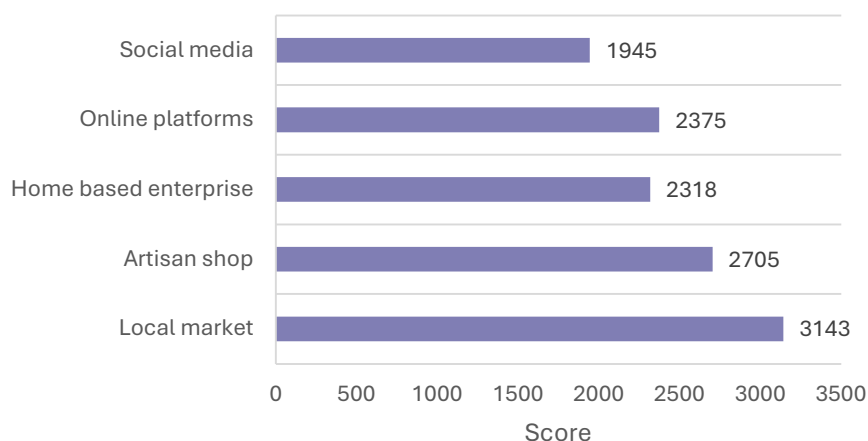


Figure 11: Mode of platforms for purchase of artisanal products

To identify the marketplaces where customers prefer buying artisanal products, the respondents were asked to rate each of these factors at a level of 1 to 5 with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest. The highest preference was for local markets followed by artisan shops,



and online platforms (*Figure 11*). An interesting observation here is that based on the artisan survey conducted, 28% self-market their products and sell them from their homes, however the preference of customers for buying products from home-based artisans is low.

The experience of navigating through a physical store of handicrafts is valued by the customers and there is a preference of “*touch and feel*” element with handcrafted products that defines the purchase journey of the customer. These findings suggest a growing demand for well crafted, affordable, and meaningful artisanal products among students and working professional segments in both urban and semi urban settings.

“I buy handicrafts because each piece is unique. It is not only the story behind the product, but it feels special and personal to own something that has been creatively designed and made by hand. Additionally, since I cannot make crafts myself, I am often awed by interesting pieces and feel a strong desire to buy them”

G. Naro, 29, PhD student



7.2 Product Preference and Gaps

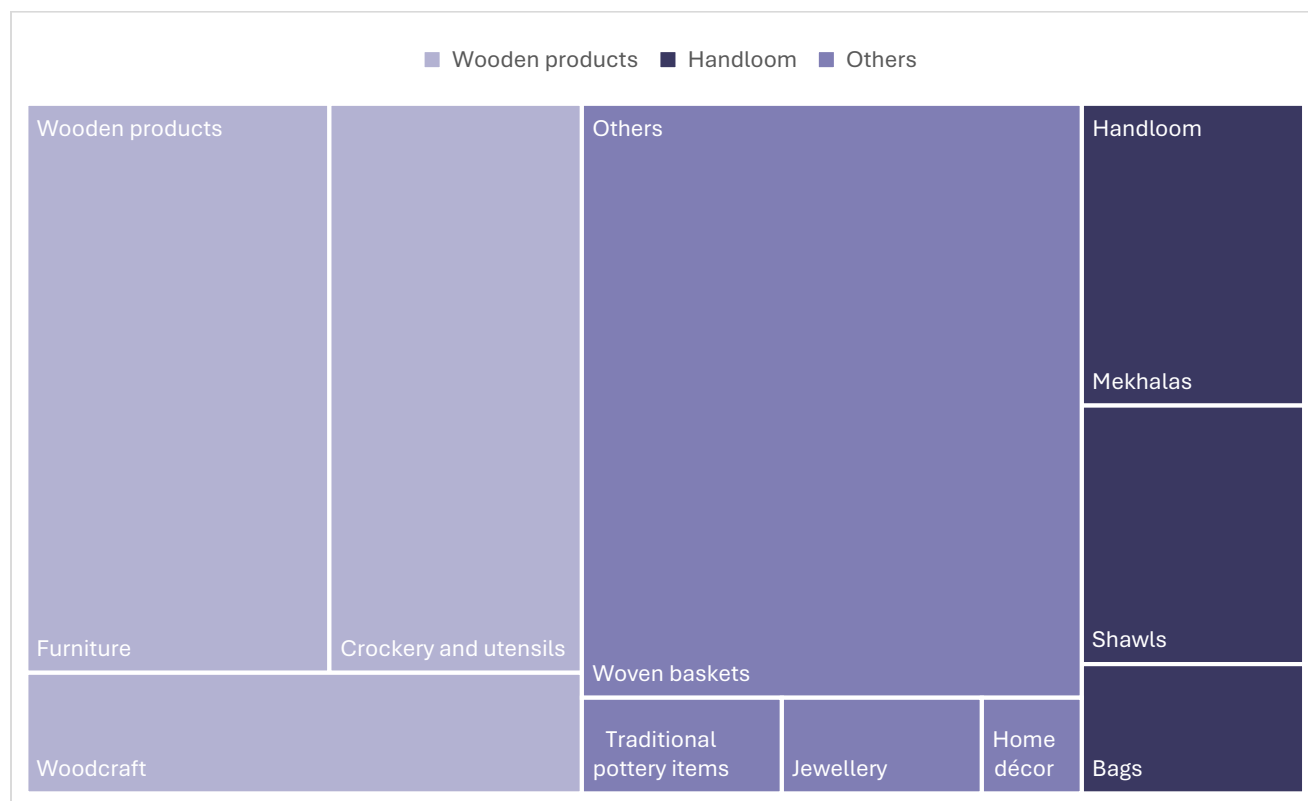


Figure 12: Top handicraft products preferred by customers

Among the types of products purchased, woven baskets emerged as the most popular category, accounting for 31% of responses, followed by wooden crockery (15%) and wooden furniture (13%). However, products such as traditional decorative items, pottery, and traditional bags saw relatively low traction, indicating the need for better positioning or adaptation to contemporary preferences.

Several respondents highlighted the lack of options in child friendly designs, portable furniture, and products that offer a modern traditional fusion. These unmet demands underscore the need for product innovation and design improvement tailored to modern lifestyle while retaining traditional craftsmanship.

7.3 Key Drivers of Purchase

Based on existing secondary research, the following factors were identified as key drivers influencing customer decisions when purchasing artisanal goods online:

- Ease of Purchase (especially through local or digital platforms)



- Cultural or emotional connection
- Uniqueness of design
- Knowledge of the artisans or the product's backstory
- Packaging and perceived value

The customers were also given the option to choose “All the above” and it emerged as the top factor. As an individual factor, quality was ranked highest followed by pricing and ease of shopping (Figure 13).

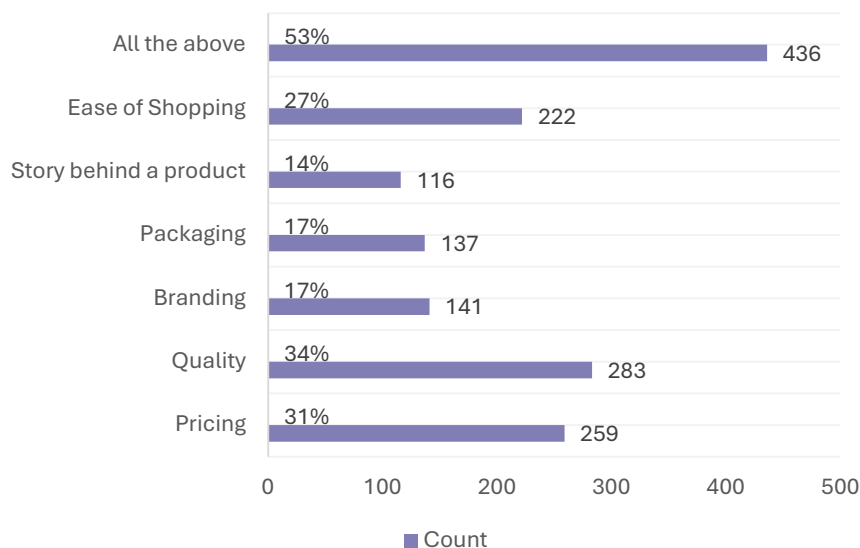


Figure 13: Factors influencing customer's choice while shopping artisanal products

The survey also assessed what a buyer values while gifting artisanal products. The respondents were asked to rate each of these factors at a level of 1-4 with 1 being the highest and 4 being the lowest. The cumulative score was highest for visual presentation, hence re-emphasizing the importance of product design. Utility ranked the second highest followed by price and narratives. (Figure 14).



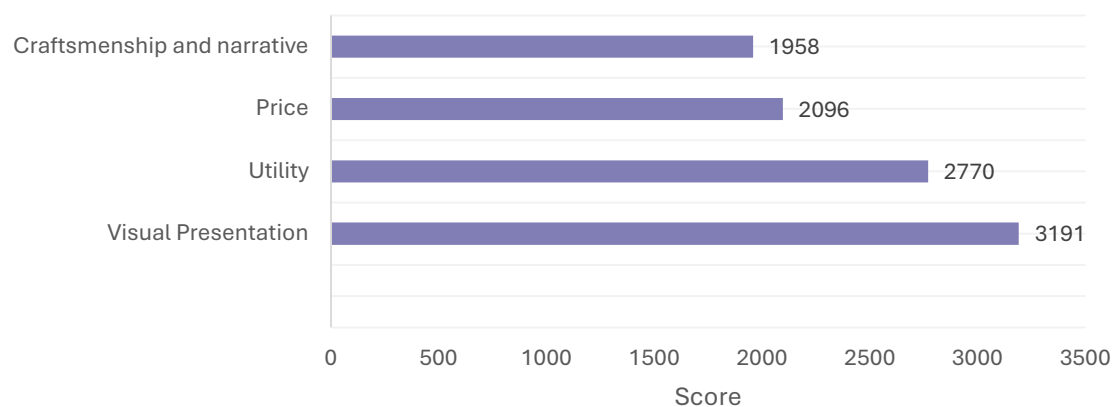


Figure 14: Factors valued by customers to gift artisanal products

Customers also indicated a stronger likelihood of repeat purchase when products were well presented and reasonably priced, reinforcing the importance of branding, packaging, and pricing in driving artisanal sales.



8. Institutional initiatives for marketing of artisan products

Key highlights:

- Basket weavers, tailored items, wooden products and dolls were the top trades convergent among the departments and institutions surveyed
- There is a good presence of physical markets selling artisanal products in key locations across districts
- E-commerce has potential to be leveraged to sell artisanal products
- Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission (NSRLM) through its vast network in the districts can play a key role in cluster development of artisanal trades.

8.1 Institutions

The survey conducted involved 130 respondents, comprising representatives from various sectors, including 6 government departments, 1 corporation, and 1 representative from the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME) in the state. Additionally, 3 private enterprises - YouthNet, Ilandlo, and Fusion, based in Nagaland were included in the survey. The government entities surveyed encompassed the

Department of Rural Development (RD), the Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission (NSRLM), and the State Institute for Rural Development, alongside the Department of Under Developed

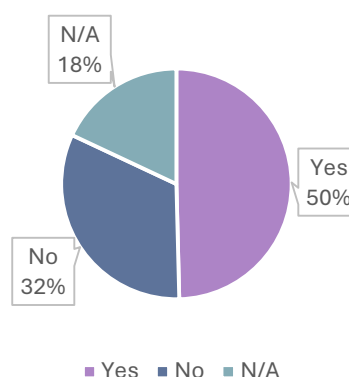


Figure 15: Requirement of bulk gifting at institutions



Areas (DUDA), Department of Tribal Affairs, and Department of Women Resource Development. The Nagaland Industrial Development Corporation also participated in the survey, providing a comprehensive overview of the perspectives and insights from both public and private sectors regarding development initiatives around artisanal markets in Nagaland.

50% of the institutions reported that they engage in bulk gifting for artisanal products particularly for occasions such as Mother's/Father's Day, official functions, Christmas, Hornbill Festival and other tribal festivals.

Table 2: Status of market initiatives relevant to PM Vishwakarma trades in the state

Market Initiatives for PM Vishwakarma trades in Nagaland	
	14 physical stores in 6 districts:
Physical Stores	Made in Nagaland-Kohima and Chumoukedima, Ilandlo in Dimapur, Fusion in Dimapur, NSRLM stores in Phek and Wokha, Old Jalukie marketplace in Peren, Nkwareu village in Peren, Myki stores in Kohima and Dimapur, Anghya and Mongken store at Directorate of Department of Underdeveloped Areas (DUDA) in Kohima.
	Naturally Nagaland stores in Kohima, Dimapur and Delhi in convergence with Nagaland Handloom and Handicrafts Development Corporation, DUDA, NSRLM, Bamboo Emporium at Nagaland Bamboo Resource Centre, Nagaland Bee Keeping and Honey Mission, Nagaland Bio Resource Mission houses agri-allied products and handicrafts.
Schemes/festivals under which the departments work with artisans engaged in similar trades as PM Vishwakarma	Saras Ajeevika mela, Samarth scheme, Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission (PMJVM), Procurement and Marketing scheme (PMS), Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED).
Peak season for sales	Festivals: Chaga Gadi and Ngsim Ngi (Peren District), Hornbill, Myki Fest
	January, May, June, October, November, December
Average customer footfall per stall/exhibition	100-200



8.2 Markets for Artisanal products

Table 3: PM Vishwakarma relevant products sold by Government departments and enterprises

Enterprise/Department	PM Vishwakarma Trade Products sold in existing stores/in production
Fusion	Wooden Products, Basket weaving, Bouquet/wreaths, Doll & Toys, Tailored Products, Others
Ilandlo	Wooden Products, Potter, Blacksmith products, Basket weaving, Doll & Toys, Tailored Products, Brooms, Others
Made in Nagaland	Basket weaving, Doll & Toys, Tailored Products
Department of Under Developed Areas	Wooden Products, Potter, Blacksmith product, Basket weaving, Doll & Toys, Tailored Products, Brooms, Others
Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India	N/A
Nagaland Industrial Development Corporation (NIDC)	Wooden Products
National State Rural Livelihood Mission	Armoury (Machete, Knife, etc), Basket weaving, Doll and Toy, Tailored products, Brooms, Fishing net maker, Metalsmith, Pottery, Sculptor
Rural Development	Wooden Products, Armoury (Machete, Knife, etc), Blacksmith products, Cobbler, Basket weaving, Tailored Products, Brooms
State Institute of Rural Development	Wooden Products, Armoury (Machete, Knife, etc), Basket weaving, Bouquet/wreaths, Doll & Toys, Others
Tribal Affairs	Wooden Products, Blacksmith products, Basket weaving, Brooms, Others
Women Resource Development	Basket weaving, Doll & Toys, Tailored Products, Others



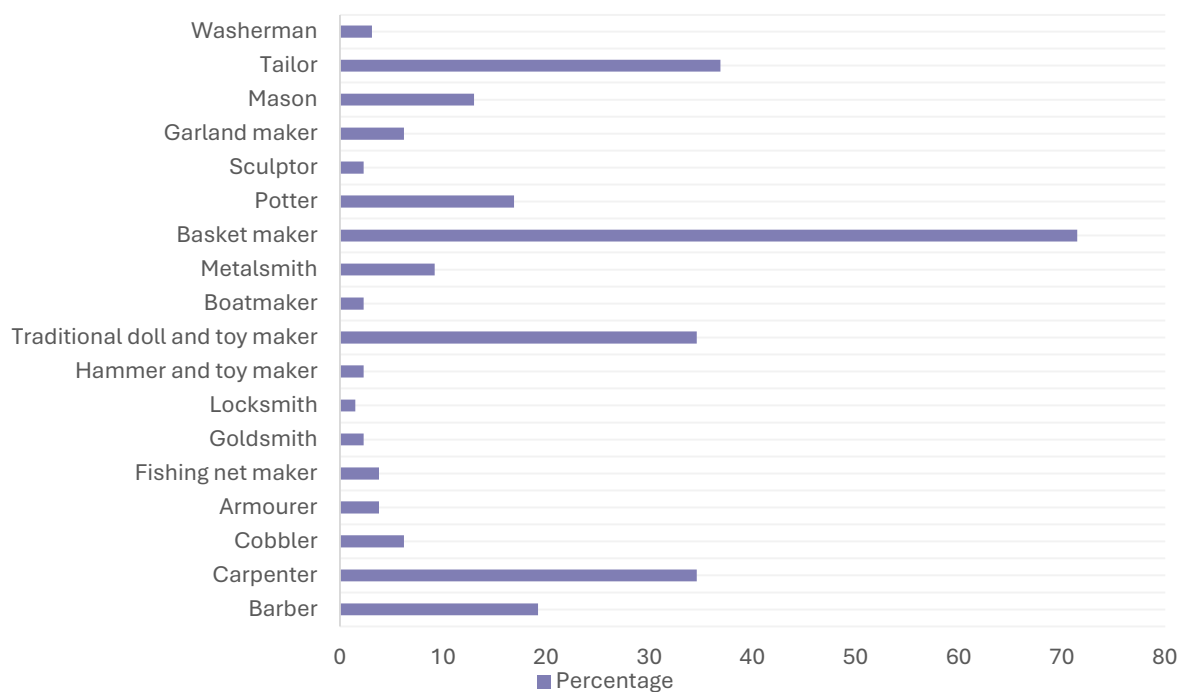


Figure 16: PMV trades in convergence with trades from government departments and institutions surveyed

8.2.1 District Wise Artisan Exhibitions/Stalls

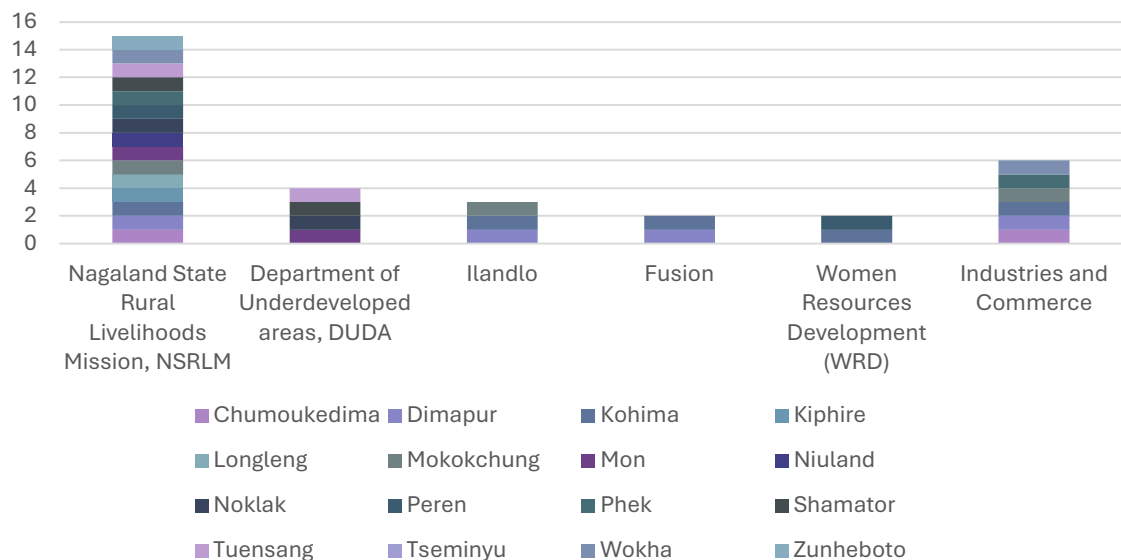


Figure 17: Status of active artisans' exhibitions/stalls across the state



The Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission (NSRLM) has an extensive market reach in all districts except Tseminyu District through their self-help groups. The Department of Under Developed Areas is active in 6 Eastern districts: Kiphire, Longleng, Mon, Noklak, Shamator, Tuensang. Exhibitions were found to be comparatively active in the state capital, Kohima, and its neighboring districts Dimapur and Chumoukedima.

8.2.2 E-commerce

45% of the institutions surveyed use e-commerce platforms to sell artisanal products. They are the Department of Underdeveloped Areas, Department of Tribal Affairs, Department of Rural Development, and Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission.

A memorandum of understanding has been signed between the Department of Industries & Commerce, Government of Nagaland and Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), where Ilandlo will be the Nodal Agency, bringing in all the local artisans, FPO's, entrepreneurs etc. under its umbrella and help in their onboarding process onto the ONDC NetworkT. Ilandlo is a Nagaland based enterprise that provides an online and retail platform to connect artisanal products and buyers.

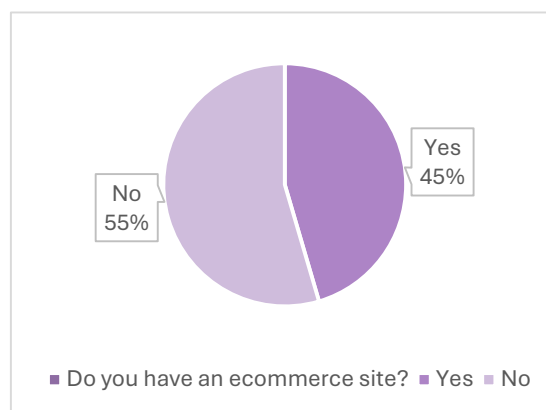


Figure 18: Status of e-commerce sites among institutions surveyed

With only 1.5% of the trained PM Vishwakarma artisans selling their products on online channels, e-commerce is a challenge that must be prioritized in convergence with state and central digital initiatives such as ONDC and Government e-Marketplace (GeM). These are the challenges that artisans generally face during e-commerce onboarding (Sattva Knowledge Institute, 2022):

Documentation in Multi-Platform Onboarding and Seller Autonomy: To register on most e-marketplaces, sellers must provide ownership details, identity documents, bank account information, Goods and Services Tax (GST) registration, and a Permanent Account Number (PAN) card. Whereas 99% of PM Vishwakarma artisans do not have GST registration.

Lengthy onboarding process: Listing on various platforms to enhance visibility requires repeating these cumbersome processes, which can be time consuming and exhausting. Many marketplace platforms also impose unfavorable conditions on sellers, with lengthy registration agreements filled with legal terminology that often place unlimited liability on artisans. Furthermore, several marketplaces take 30 to 45 days to process payments to sellers, and the high commissions charged by these platforms make online selling less appealing for artisans.



Logistics: Artisans often have limited control over service providers and costs and for those located in villages which do not have such providers and are located away from the centre of town, it becomes an additional cost.

Challenges are not limited to e-commerce onboarding but also post-e-commerce journey of artisans. In a study (Dwivedi, 2024) conducted among handicraft enterprises in Uttar Pradesh, it was found that 13.7% of enterprises deboarded from selling on e-commerce due to challenges in legal and regulatory barriers that small enterprises struggle to comply with. Another reason was the enterprise's inability to fulfil supply of products on time due to challenges in inventory, production and shipping processes. Lastly, fear of duplication of their products if they sell on e-commerce was also expressed by the artisans.

8.2.3 Physical Stores

- I. Nagaland Sales Emporium under Nagaland Handloom and Handicraft Development Corporation Limited (NHDDC): Nagaland currently has 8 sales emporiums including one each in New Delhi and Kolkata.⁴ The others are in Kohima, Dimapur (2), Mokokchung, Phek. The emporium in Delhi has partnered with Naturally Nagaland to enhance the availability and visibility of locally made products in the national capital.
- II. Artisan marketplace: Ilandlo, Made in Nagaland and Fusion sell artisanal products in stores and on social media channels. Heirloom Naga, one of the pioneers and oldest artisanal brands in the state, also has a physical and online website where they sell products under their brand.
- III. Department of Under Developed Areas (DUDA): Anghya store sells handicrafts ranging from pottery, baskets, accessories, agri-allied products, books and Mongkhen store deals exclusively with tailored products from apparel to home furnishings.
- IV. Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) : Under Van Dhan Yojana and in collaboration with Nagaland State Co-operative Marketing & Consumers Federation (MARCOFED), Tribal Affairs and DUDA, products from self-help groups are sold at the TRIFED store
- V. Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission: They have physical stores in Chozuba, Phek and Wokha Town.
- VI. Naturally Nagaland: The initiative has three stores, one each in Kohima, Chumoukedima and in New Delhi.

⁴ [Nagaland Handloom and Handicraft Development Corporation Limited, NHDDC](#)



Way Forward

The PM Vishwakarma Market Survey in Nagaland has revealed both strong potential and critical structural challenges in promoting traditional artisan trades. To unlock this potential, the following areas have been identified for strategic action and investment:

Policy in Action:

Data driven measures for e-commerce: Assess e-commerce readiness of the state ecosystem at levels of artisans, institutions, logistics levels to leverage visibility and proactive measures for Nagaland's craft economy; strengthening its heritage, tourism, income generation activities and advancement towards Digital India.

Push for Digital Literacy: Services are being digitalized day-by-day from banking, payments, government schemes, education and more. Barriers of low digital literacy and language further challenge this. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials in the common dialect– Nagamese – can be created for awareness on e-commerce tools and platforms which could encourage more artisans to be incentivized to participate and sell online.

Craft for cultural tourism: To offer deeper interest and engagement in Nagaland's rich cultural history, tourist circuits could be mapped in craft villages and strategic spots in each district where guided tours, artisan lanes and experiential workshops can be provided by exploring collaboration with other departments. This could boost the local economy while also widening unexplored destinations for travel in Nagaland.

Leverage Product Design: Basis the findings from the survey, customers highly value visual presentation of an artisanal product while making a purchase. In parallel, 60% of artisans face issues in product design. A focused intervention on product design is the need of the hour for artisans. The '*naga touch*' is a preference in local products especially for customers outside the state. The product design intervention could form an inspection body with all the tribal bodies to monitor and frame guidelines on inspiration from traditional designs. Design workshops could be further explored with eminent institutions of design and local designers.

Repository of Naga traditional knowledge in crafts: There is a dire need to document the traditional craft practices and preserve the indigenous customs followed by the communities. These archives will be useful references when it comes to applying for 'Proof of Origin' for Geographical Indication Tags, which certifies the authenticity of a product while enhancing the product's value and demand in the market.

Craft in curriculum: The tradition of craft and the indigenous knowledge associated with it is unique to Naga culture. It stands at risk of fading as the probability of the younger generation taking up these practices is low with the demands of technological markets and preference for white collared jobs. Reconnecting the community to cultural roots has been actively supported by the state government through initiatives highlighting Naga art and music. Along these lines, inculcating craft in curriculum could play a pivotal role in educating the growing generations of



Nagaland to understand the history, social and economic fabric of our society which will further help root their cultural identities in the growing landscape of development.

Capacity building:

Awareness of e-commerce avenues: Artisans are not aware of e-commerce avenues and if they are, then they are not aware of the know-hows of onboarding them. Low digital literacy, access to stable network and language gaps in informational content restrict them from participating in e-commerce.

Public awareness campaigns customized in the mediums that the artisans prefer (video/workshop/text) should be prioritized along with insights from real life artisan entrepreneurs from the Northeast who have excelled through the e-commerce model.

Branding and Packaging: With the preference of gifting artisanal products as observed from this survey, branding and packaging are important factors valued by the customers. The ease of buying the product as a ready-to-go gift influences the customer's choice. Emphasis on this domain through hands-on workshops and online talk series in the common dialect would create much needed conversation to educate the artisans.

Further, the government could dedicate a District Cell for Branding and Packaging where tailored support for queries, materials, design and vendors could be facilitated through the District Industries Centre.

Catalogue development: A catalogue showcasing the products from cluster groups of each trade will help connect their offerings to potential customers and clients. A digital catalogue of artisanal products displayed on the state's official portal website would particularly attract a wide range of customers. The catalogue could further guide the customer as to where they can purchase this product in-store or online.

Markets:

Retail: Retail kiosks with artisan products can be strategically set up in the government infrastructure where footfall from tourists and potential customers are expected such as the Dimapur Airport and main town squares. This would enable them to easily access keepsakes and souvenirs as they enter and exit the state.

The private enterprises in the state selling artisanal products have been doing recommendable work in bringing attention to Nagaland's craft while also building a customer base from around the world. The government can partner with these enterprises to further strengthen the existing market for craft.

Trade Fairs and Exhibitions: To better understand state level activities in trade fairs and exhibitions, an annual calendar from each department would not only build brand value but also



a recall value among the community to actively participate in such engagements. Further, relevant departments may also find it easier to plan and participate in the events.

Besides the Hornbill festival in December where trade exhibitions are held, the state needs tailored seasonal market events to revitalize the local economy, build brand value for artisanal products and boost engagement among the community. For instance, the annual Nagaland Anime Junkies (NAJ) Cosfest which brings together fans and community of Anime (Japanese animation) has built its credibility over 13 years and attracted tourists from around the world.

Quality Control:

Regulating body for quality certification: In convergence with already existing quality control bodies such as Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH), Bureau of Indian Standards, Quality Council of India and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), the state government can establish a quality assurance mechanism to ensure all products are complying to standards of production.

Export readiness: For artisan enterprises to be ready to export products, besides compliances such as Importer-Exporter code, EPCH registration, GST registration; the quality of the product must adhere to the guidelines. Active government intervention is required to establish export inspection agencies in collaboration with EPCH and to promote certification with international standards.

Institutional Convergence:

Facilitating collaborations to source local: For peak seasons of gifting requirements, the government departments and district administration could collaborate to source artisanal products made by local artisans particularly.

Employment opportunities: A uniform government database of the formally skilled artisans and service providers could be created such as for carpenters and masons. This would aid in facilitating employment of artisans through institutions such as Town Municipalities, Contractor's Union, etc.



Meet our Artisans

Raised by Hills, Shaped by Stone

My name is Chennye K, and I'm 25 years old, hailing from Mon District, Nagaland. I come from a family of seven, and I am the youngest of five siblings. Growing up in a large family, I faced financial challenges that forced me to drop out of school after completing the 8th grade. For the past seven years, I have been working as a mason, primarily alongside my brothers and friends. Most of my work involves daily wage labor, focusing on construction projects like building houses and retention walls. During the summer months, when work is plentiful, I manage to earn around Rs. 15,000 per month.

Despite my extensive experience in masonry, I have never been part of any unions or groups that could provide support or information about employment opportunities. My work has been largely seasonal, which means I have to travel in search of jobs. This lack of stability has made it difficult for me to save or profit significantly from my labor over the years.



I heard about the PM Vishwakarma Scheme from my brothers. They encouraged me to enroll, pointing out that the scheme allows one person per family to participate. I attended the six-day training program at the Government Polytechnic in Aboi. This training was a turning point for me. It not only enhanced my skills but also instilled in me a sense of purpose and professionalism in my work. I eagerly shared what I learned with my brothers, who also work in the same trade.

Throughout my career, my brothers and I have faced various challenges, but we have always managed to find solutions together. I aspire to connect with organizations or groups that focus



on improving the livelihoods of masons in our state, hoping to expand my work opportunities beyond our district.

Initially, I considered applying for the first tranche loan available through the scheme to invest in more advanced tools. However, I ultimately decided against it, recognizing that my income is not guaranteed monthly. I remain hopeful that in the future, once I find a more stable source of income, I will be able to invest in better tools. For masons like me, tools are essential; they are the foundation of our trade. With improved tools, I believe I can deliver higher-quality work, which is crucial in a village setting where reputation and word-of-mouth referrals play a significant role in securing future jobs.

I believe my journey reflects my resilience and determination to improve my circumstances and those of my family. With the skills I have gained and the aspirations I hold, I am on a path toward a more stable and fulfilling future in masonry with PM Vishwakarma Scheme.



From Crafting Wood to Wisdom: Likhumse's Journey in Carpentry and Mentorship

"Building a sustainable and sufficient home is what I strive to achieve; and I believe with my skills I will be able to achieve my goals. I look forward to working with like-minded people and generating employment opportunities through my initiative". - Likhumse Sangtam.



My name is Likhumse Sangtam, and I am a 38-year-old carpenter from Aspirational District Kiphire. I am a proud husband to my beautiful wife, who is a homemaker, and a devoted father to our son. As the sole breadwinner of my family, I have dedicated the last 12 years to perfecting my craft in carpentry, a passion that was ignited in my childhood as I admired my elder brother and uncle, who are both skilled carpenters.

After completing 8th grade, I found myself drawn away from school and into farming, helping my parents with their agricultural work. However, my heart was always set on carpentry. I expressed my interest in the craft, and since then, I have been working passionately. I began my journey alongside my brother and uncle, learning the ropes before venturing out on my own in 2016. Initially, I took on customer orders, gradually expanding my work to include fixing doors and windows in house construction. My monthly income typically ranges from Rs. 8,000-9,000, but during peak seasons, I can earn as much as Rs. 15,000.



My life took a significant turn when I learned about PM Vishwakarma Scheme from the District Commissioner's Office in Kiphire. Intrigued by the benefits it promised for artisans, I applied and soon received my certificate and identity card, followed by valuable training. This experience opened my eyes to the work of fellow artisans in the district and provided me with a wealth of knowledge and inspiration.

Over the past three years, I have taken on the role of a mentor, working with young boys eager to learn the art of carpentry. I guide them through various tasks, from fitting windows and doors to crafting beds and cabinets at construction sites. Witnessing their growth and improvement has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my journey.

Now, I am ready to take the next step in my career. I dream of moving my business from home to a dedicated shop, where I can not only expand my operations but also create employment opportunities for the boys I have trained. My vision includes providing training and assistance to aspiring craftsmen who wish to learn the trade. With plans to secure a loan for upgrading my business, I am determined to establish a stable future for myself and the young artisans I have nurtured. In doing so, I hope to build a legacy of craftsmanship that will inspire future generations, proving that with passion and perseverance, dreams can indeed take shape.



Designing dresses and building a colorful career

I am Karo T. Tungoe, a 28-year-old from Wokha Village in Wokha District. I transformed my passion for tailoring into a thriving home-based business. Graduating in 2019, I spent my college years living with my cousin sister in Kohima, who owned a tailoring shop. Inspired by my cousin's entrepreneurial spirit, I learned the art of tailoring, honing my skills while contributing to my sister's business. This experience not only enriched my knowledge but also instilled in me a sense of purpose.

In 2023, I came to Wokha Town, equipped with a sewing machine gifted by my parents. With determination and creativity, I launched my own home-based tailoring business. I began taking orders from family, friends, and neighbors, creating a variety of items such as baby bows, traditional bags, scrunchies, and more. My efforts yielded a modest income of Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 4,000 per month, which helped me support my family.

My journey took a significant turn when I learned about the PM Vishwakarma (PMV) scheme through an advertisement shared in my village group. Intrigued by the opportunity, I enrolled in the program under the tailor trade. The training provided me with a certificate, identity card, and valuable skill development. Before the training, I was already aware of the benefits artisans could receive, but I sought to learn new designs and skills to stay current with trends. The training proved to be impactful, equipping me with fresh insights and techniques that enhanced my craft.

Today, I am content with my work and envisions a future where I can engage with like-minded individuals. I aspire to mentor aspiring tailors, offering opportunities to learn and grow in the field. My dream is to open my own shop, where I can train more girls interested in acquiring tailoring skills. Since completing the training, my income has increased to Rs. 6,000 per month, allowing me to expand my product range to include skirts, frocks, and other fashionable items.

I am also keen on exploring online sales opportunities for my products. I recognize the potential of digital platforms to reach a wider audience, and I am eager to showcase my creations beyond my local community.



A Cut Above: The Boy Who Struck His Setbacks into Skills

"God's plan is very different from my own. When I decided to accept my fate and follow my skill set, I was able to make a livelihood for myself and support my family." - Ikato Shohe.



I am Ikato Shohe, a 27-year-old who once dreamed of being a professional footballer but has since found my calling as a barber. Growing up as the second youngest son in my family out of 5 children, I was obsessed with football, aiming to play for the under-18 national team. My journey began when I was selected for the under-14 team by the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and enrolled to SAI Imphal, Manipur for a year. Unfortunately, my dreams were shattered when I suffered a serious injury, forcing me to return home to recover. When I returned, my parents were hesitant to let me continue pursuing football, so I enrolled in a school in Dimapur. However, due to my ongoing recovery, I found it difficult to keep up with my studies and eventually decided to drop out.

During this challenging time, I discovered an interest in trimming hair for my family and friends' whenever I had the chance. While working on the farm with my elder brother, my family, friends,



and well-wishers encouraged me to start a unisex salon. Inspired by their support, I opened my first salon in Lothavi Village, Chumoukedima, in 2022. Now, I earn around Rs. 20,000 a month, which allows me to take care of my mother and support my younger sister, who is pursuing her music studies.

I learned about the PM Vishwakarma (PMV) Scheme from a friend who shared an advertisement with me on WhatsApp. Knowing the benefits that artisans receive, I applied for the barber trade. I was thrilled to receive my identity card and certificate, and I attended a 7-day training program that equipped me with valuable skills. I have plans to avail myself of a loan in the near future to further expand my business.

Despite my progress, I have faced challenges in upgrading my shop and hiring new employees or trainees. However, the PMV scheme has provided me with guidance and support, helping me to stay focused on my goals. The impact of the training on my business has been significant; I have learned new hair-cutting techniques, explored new tools, and introduced additional services such as head massages, facials, and shaving.

My ambition is to upgrade my shop and open more locations across the district. I also plan to take out a loan to invest in hiring more employees and training them. I want to help unemployed youths who are interested in learning new skills for income generation. I firmly believe that through the support from PMV scheme, I will be able to accomplish my goals and assist more school dropouts in finding their passion through my work.



From Basket Weaver Craftsman to PMV Artisan

I am Nuzota Venuh, a 49-year-old, who has navigated a challenging yet inspiring journey that reflects resilience and adaptability. Growing up, I studied until the eighth grade but lost interest in academics, leading me to dropping out of school. He began working alongside his mother, and over time, he became the head and sole breadwinner of a family of eight, which includes my wife, a homemaker and farmer, and their six children—two sons and four daughters.

In 2018, my life took an unexpected turn when the Indian Reserve Battalion arrived in Phek District. The battalion engaged in a craft activity, specifically handmade bamboo stools, which piqued my interest. Eager to learn, I approached the soldiers and requested them to teach me this skill. This marked the beginning of my journey as a basket maker. When the army battalion left Phek District in 2019, I took it upon myself to practice the craft at home. The COVID-19 lockdown provided him with the time and space to hone his skills, and he dedicated the years 2019 to 2020 to perfecting his craft.

By 2021, I began selling handmade products, which included handmade bamboo stools and baskets of various sizes, to family and neighbors. My craftsmanship quickly gained recognition, and he started receiving orders from nearby villages such as Meluri and Chizami. My monthly earnings reached Rs. 8,000, and with increased demand, I earned even more.

In 2024, I learned about the PM Vishwakarma (PMV) scheme through the Common Service Center (CSC) and a Village Level Entrepreneur (VLE). The VLE informed me about the opportunity to receive training in basket making and become a recognized artisan. Intrigued by the potential benefits, including skill training, toolkits, stipends, and loans, I applied for the PMV program. Shortly thereafter, I received my certificate and identity card, completing a seven-day skill training program. During this training, I not only learned new techniques but also shared my knowledge with fellow trainees, teaching them how to craft handmade bamboo stools.

With newfound skills and connections, I plan to take a loan to purchase high-quality raw materials and dedicate more time to basket making. I envision opening my own shop in the near future, fully committing to my craft as a business. After completing the training, my monthly income increased to Rs. 15,000. The friendships I formed during the training have also helped me secure more customer orders.

Nuzota aspires to participate in market days outside the district and is eager to explore online sales and physical stores, expanding his reach beyond Phek District. His journey is a testament to the power of perseverance and the transformative impact of skill development on individual lives and communities.



Threading Life with Love: A homemaker's journey as a doll maker



"In every stitch and every doll I create, I weave not just fabric but hope and empowerment for myself and my fellow homemakers. Together, we can transform our passions into purpose and uplift our families through the art of craftsmanship." - Awamenla Kichu.

My name is Awamenla Kichu, and I am a Doll & Toy Maker Artisan from Changtongya Village, Mokokchung. I am a mother of three beautiful children, and my husband runs a grocery shop in Lower-Agri colony. After our marriage, I moved to Kohima with my husband, and it was during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2021 that my journey as an artisan began. With everyone confined indoors, I picked up crochet and doll-making to spend my time creatively.

I started making small dolls, traditional hairbands, and coasters for home use and as gifts for my family and friends. As I produced more items, I decided to open a Facebook page and began posting my products on WhatsApp status, sharing them with my colony's WhatsApp group. That is when the orders started flooding in, and I began generating income. Within just 3-4 months, I was able to earn Rs 5000 to Rs 6000, which motivated me to continue this craft to support my family.

My friends who had stalls during the Hornbill Festival approached me, allowing me to sell my traditional soft doll toys for the next three years, from 2022 to 2024. I was thrilled to earn around Rs 50,000 to Rs 60,000 each year during this time. In 2024, I opened my Instagram account (*handmade_croched*) with the hope of establishing market linkages for my business. By the grace of God, I was able to sell my products in Punjab and Meghalaya in bulk, earning around Rs 2 to 3 Lakhs over two years.



I believe in sharing my skills, so I provide free training to my neighbors and friends. I am currently teaching 8 of them. I dedicate three days a week to training, which fosters a sense of community and empowers other homemakers to develop their skills.

In 2024, I learned about the PM Vishwakarma (PMV) Scheme through my colony's WhatsApp group, shared by our Town Council Chairman. I applied for the Traditional Doll and Toy Maker Trade, received my ID and certificate, and within a week, I got a call from the training center. I attended a 7-day training program, where I made 28 new friends. During the training, we became comfortable with each other, and the idea of forming an official group emerged. Now, 16 of us have formed the "Doll and Flower Group," where we share our interests and skills. We meet three times a week to brainstorm and learn new designs from one another. I feel fortunate to have met these beautiful homemakers who share my passion.

While I have faced challenges in building good market platforms and reaching more customers, I am blessed with a supportive husband who encourages me to pursue my dreams and find something I love. I plan to continue my craft and be a ray of hope for homemakers across Nagaland. I aspire to open a shop, conduct workshops, and participate in the Hornbill Festival this year, as well as attend fairs across the state. I am also interested in exploring online platforms to sell my products.

I am grateful for the PMV Scheme, as it has allowed me to connect with other homemakers who share similar interests and goals. My journey as an artisan has been transformative, and I hope to inspire others to pursue their passions and achieve economic empowerment.



Crafting Dreams with Resilience and Passion

Zanham, a 29-year-old from Phek District in Nagaland, embodies resilience and passion. Born with speech and hearing impairing, he has never let his circumstances define him. Instead, he has embraced his unique gifts, particularly his love for carpentry, which he attributes to his father, a skilled carpenter and his idol. Growing up in a family of four children, with an elder sister and two brothers, Zanham found companionship in his elder brother, who shares similar impairment.

His parents, farmers by profession, instilled strong values in their children. While his mother managed the household, his father worked diligently in carpentry. Zanham's educational journey was challenging; he studied until the 8th standard but struggled to keep up with his classmates. Recognizing his passion for carpentry, he decided to leave formal education and join his father in the trade. This decision proved transformative, as he learned the intricacies of wood carving and construction, working on various projects/products like windows, chairs, and tables. His efforts yielded financial rewards, generating Rs. 8000-9000 when opportunities arose.

Zanham and his brother are active members of the *Special Abled Union* in their district, which provides them with work opportunities. Through this union, Zanham learned about the Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Scheme, which led him to register under the carpentry trade. He received an identity card and certificate, followed by a week of training at the Industrial Training Institute in Phek. This training introduced him to new tools and techniques, further enhancing his skills.

With newfound knowledge and support from the union, Zanham expressed a desire to expand his capabilities by purchasing more machine to establish a furniture shop alongside his brother. With contributions from the union, they acquired the machine and began producing finished products tailored to customer orders, including windows, chairs, tables, and bed sets.

Zanham's aspirations extend beyond mere business success; he dreams of owning a furniture shop that not only provides for his family but also creates opportunities for other special-abled individuals. He is determined to repay his parents and supporters through high-quality work, striving for self-sufficiency. As he looks to the future, Zanham hopes to find online platforms to sell his products, allowing him to reach a broader audience and fulfill his vision of a thriving business. Through hard work and dedication, Zanham is carving a path not just for himself, but for others like him, proving that passion and perseverance can overcome any obstacle.

"I want to see him achieve his goals with his elder brother who is also differently abled. The Specially abled union in Phek helped my brother emotionally, professionally and gave them both a community to lean on, find a place of trust and made them realize they are unique in their own way. PM Vishwakarma scheme has further provided him with an identity". - Zanham's eldest brother.



Acknowledgment

The Department of Industries and Commerce, Government of Nagaland, extends its sincere gratitude to all individuals and institutions who contributed to the successful completion of this market survey report under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme.

We are especially thankful to the artisan across the 10 districts of Nagaland, whose time, insights, and openness formed the heart of this study. Their lived experiences, challenges, and aspirations have shaped the findings and recommendations presented in this report.

We acknowledge the valuable participation of customers and consumers, whose preferences and feedback have provided critical lens for understanding demand side dynamics and potential market opportunities for Vishwakarma products.

Special thanks are due to the District Administration, District Implementation committee, Department of Rural Development, Village Council Chairmans, and Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLE) who supported the field level mobilization and data collection efforts, ensuring broad geographic coverage and authentic grassroots insights.

We also appreciate the contributions of government departments, private enterprises, NGOs, and institutions who participated in the institutional survey. Their ongoing work with artisans and feedback on market linkages have enriched the report's contextual depth.

This report would not have been possible without the support of the PM Vishwakarma team in Nagaland, and the field teams who carried out the detailed surveys, interviews, and analysis with dedication and sensitivity.

Last but not the least, we thank the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME) for providing the overarching vision that guides this effort to empower traditional artisans and revitalize craft-based livelihoods. We also extend our gratitude to Smt. Hekani Jakhlu Honourable Advisor of Industries and Commerce, Shri Kumar Ramnikant, IAS, Secretary, Industries and Commerce, and Shri Mohd. Ali Rahman, DFO, Dimapur, MoMSME for their constant support and valuable advice in implementing the scheme in the state.

We hope this report serves as a meaningful step for data-backed actions toward strengthening the craft economy in Nagaland and ensuring that the voice and talent of our Vishwakarmas reaches a broader market with dignity and pride.



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