

# **Chirala handloom weavers – Crisis and Alternatives**

## **A Report**

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## Introduction

Handloom weavers despite being second largest sector in the country, has been most neglected. The handloom sector has been news often for the weavers' suicides revealing paradox of the most skilled workers contributing significantly to the national economy being victims of extreme poverty and impoverishment.

Chirala is one of the major handloom sectors of Andhra Pradesh. Poverty of Chirala weavers has earned national attention, but little concrete action by the authorities in addressing the problem. Poverty of the weavers has adverse implications to the health and well being of the community and households and especially the children whose future is marred by the compulsions of poverty. The health implications and problem of child labour are one of the consequences of the perpetuation of poverty among the weavers of Chirala.

Chirala is a natural cluster that existed for centuries. It also exhibited resilience in adapting to the changing conditions of the market and underwent many changes in economy, occupational pattern, social composition and organisation of the handloom units.

ASSIST working with the weavers' community of Chirala region planned to address the problem of handloom sector based on a detailed study of the crisis and possible alternatives that liberate weavers from hunger and poverty.

The complex nature of the crisis affecting handloom sector requires a multi dimensional and a detailed study.

“A thorough understanding of the characteristics of the handloom industry is of the utmost urgency and importance” and the challenge is engaging with different perspectives to redefine the handloom industry in contemporary terms (Niranjan and Vinayan, 2001). Niranjan and Vinayan identified three prominent perspectives viz., i) the governmental view of a traditional industry in decline, ii) the academic's view of the industry's continued resilience, and iii) the weaver's own perception of day-to-day problems of livelihood and survival.

The research design comprised of household survey, interviews with stakeholders- different categories of weavers, master weavers, activists, authorities and NGOs in Chirala.

ASSIST conducted a study of the weaving community of the Chirala region through a baseline survey of 10 target villages. It was aimed at understanding the situation of weavers and identifying areas for interventions for their sustainable development.

Baseline survey: The household survey in 10 target villages was focused on understanding of the target families, occupation pattern, economic status, living conditions, basic amenities available

and status of children. The baseline survey covered 1941 households from 10 villages. The baseline survey also employed Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) involving all the stakeholders of 10 sample villages. The findings of the survey are discussed in the section “Situational Analysis- Factsheet”.

Further detailed interviews were conducted to understand the situation of the weavers and scope for organising the weavers to become free and independent weavers through collective action. The information obtained through interviews of key informants from March 11 to 14, 2014 and meeting on roadmap for holistic development of the handloom weavers held on April 19, 2014.

## Situational Analysis – Factsheet

Household survey covered 1941 households from ten select villages of Vetapalem mandal in Prakasam district. Sample villages are predominantly inhabited by weavers and those in allied activities. Population of the villages varied from 271 to 2185 or 81 to 665 households. Chirala cluster villages, being predominantly the home for handlooms, are predominantly inhabited by backward castes viz., Padmashali, Devanga, Pattusali and Thugatlu belonging to Backward Caste (BC) category. BC households constitute 84.60 % of the total population followed by 4.89 % Scheduled Tribes, 4.64% Other castes, 4.02 % Scheduled Castes and 1.85% minorities.

Average household size is 3.37 among the select ten villages. Sample villages have almost equal distribution of female and male population although some villages have more males (Bhavanarushipeta, Thotavaripalem Weavers Colony, Vignewara Coilony and Sai Nagar) while some villages have more females (Ayodhya Nagar, Amcharla Mohan Rao Colony and Gurvaiah Colony).

Villages vary in terms of infrastructure facilities, socio economic conditions, tenurial security and environmental conditions among other factors. For instance, Thotavaripalem weavers' colony, situated on the banks of canal is poor in sanitation and the housing mainly comprises huts inhabited by shed workers of lower economic status. Macharla Mohan Rao Colony and Guruvaiah Colony are of recent origin while other villages are older habitations. Details of the distribution of population by caste and gender across sample villages id furnished in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of population by caste and gender across sample villages

S.No	Village/ Community	Families						Population		
		SC	ST	BC	MN	OC	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	Chandramouli Nagar	5	-	70	4	2	81	132	139	271
2	Bavanarushipeta	2	9	193	5	3	212	391	360	751
3	Thotavaripalem Weavers Colony	11	59	578	7	10	665	1,103	1,082	2,185
4	Sai Nagar	6	1	152	7	4	170	281	265	546
5	Vidhya Nagar	-	9	101	-	21	131	216	219	435
6	Rami Reddy Nagar	22	-	72	2	4	100	192	183	375
7	Macharla Mohan Rao Colony	9	-	81	-	3	93	136	143	279
8	Guravaiah Colony	-	-	53	-	-	53	89	93	182
9	Ayodhya Nagar	9	15	270	6	8	308	539	550	1,089
10	Vigneswara Colony	14	2	72	5	35	128	226	206	432
	Grand Total	78	95	1,642	36	90	1,941	3,305	3,240	6,545
	Percentage	4.02	4.89	84.60	1.85	4.64	-	50.50	49.50	-

Children aged 0 to 14 years constitute 1422 population which is 21.73 % of total population. One out of every five members of the sample villages is a child. Thotavaripalem has highest child population while Gurvaiah colony has lowest number of children. Details of distribution of child population by villages is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of child population by villages

S.No	Village/Community	Children 0 to 3 years			Children 4 to 5 years			Children 6 to 14 years			Total
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
1	Chandramouli Nagar	4	9	13	8	5	13	21	21	42	68
2	Bavanarushipet	19	15	34	11	11	22	54	44	98	154
3	Thotavaripalem Weavers Colony	58	50	108	31	36	67	185	174	359	534
4	Sai Nagar	9	11	20	7	5	12	33	52	85	117
5	Vidhya Nagar	4	8	12	2	2	4	20	25	45	61
6	Rami Reddy Nagar	11	8	19	8	7	15	18	16	34	68
7	Macharla Mohan Rao Colony	7	5	12	4	2	6	20	19	39	57
8	Guravaiah Colony	2	5	7	5	2	7	12	11	23	37
9	Ayodhya Nagar	26	23	49	17	27	44	64	73	137	230
10	Vigneswara Colony	8	7	15	8	4	12	36	33	69	96
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>931</b>	1,422

Literacy among children aged 6 to 14 years is 94.63%, although it is 92.95% for girls compared to 96.33% among boys. Generally children are also seen working with other members of the family after school hours. While in some families children after 12 years are also seen working full time. Child labour is also observed to be seasonal with larger number of children working at home or in shops and worksheds of master weavers.

Education, especially higher education is preferred by many weavers as they see it as passport for occupational mobility- liberation form weaving occupation. Many households invest considerable amount in education of the children. Fee reimbursement schemes by the government have also contributed significantly in motivating many children to pursue professional courses. Several families have one or more members in other occupations including IT, engineering, medicine and other jobs.

Table 3. Distribution of children by literacy/ schooling

S.No	Village/Community	6-14 Group Literate			6-14 Group Illiterate		
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Chandramouli Nagar	19	20	39	2	1	3
2	Bavanarushipet	54	43	97	-	1	1
3	Thotavaripalem Weavers Colony	176	150	326	9	24	33
4	Sai Nagar	33	52	85	-	-	-
5	Vidhya Nagar	19	24	43	1	1	2
6	Rami Reddy Nagar	17	16	33	1	-	1
7	Macharla Mohan Rao Colony	19	19	38	1	-	1
8	Guravaiah Colony	12	9	21	-	2	2
9	Ayodhya Nagar	63	71	134	1	2	3
10	Vigneswara Colony	34	31	65	2	2	4
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>50</b>
	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>96.33%</b>	<b>92.95%</b>	<b>94.63%</b>	<b>3.67%</b>	<b>7.05%</b>	<b>5.37%</b>

## Literacy

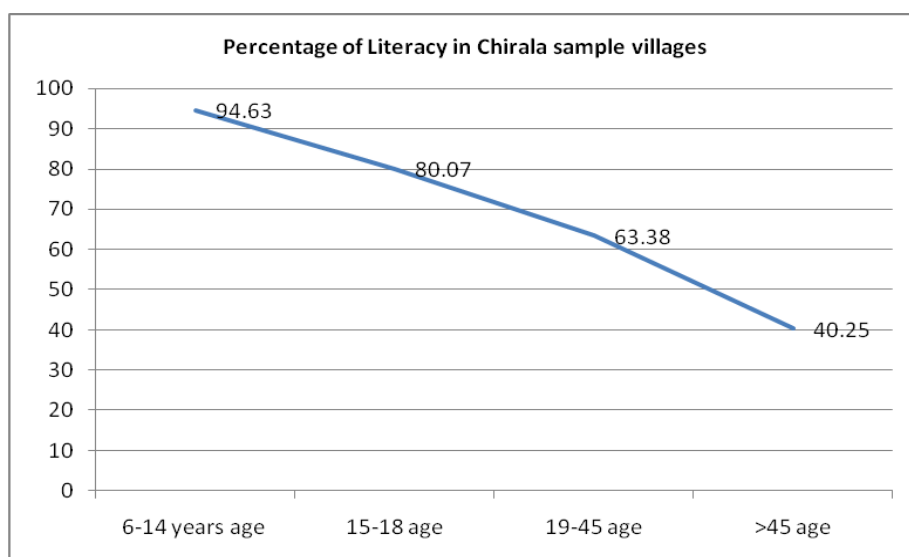


Fig. 1 Literacy by age groups in select villages

Literacy among the weavers communities is as low as 40.25 % among those aged <45 years. There is gradual increase among the younger population. Gender differences are consistent with lower literacy compared the male counterparts.

Education among the children is relatively better than the aged members of the community. While literacy among males aged <45 is 42.76% while it is 96.33% among boys aged 6 to 14 years. Among females of <45 is 37.6% and 92.95% among girls.

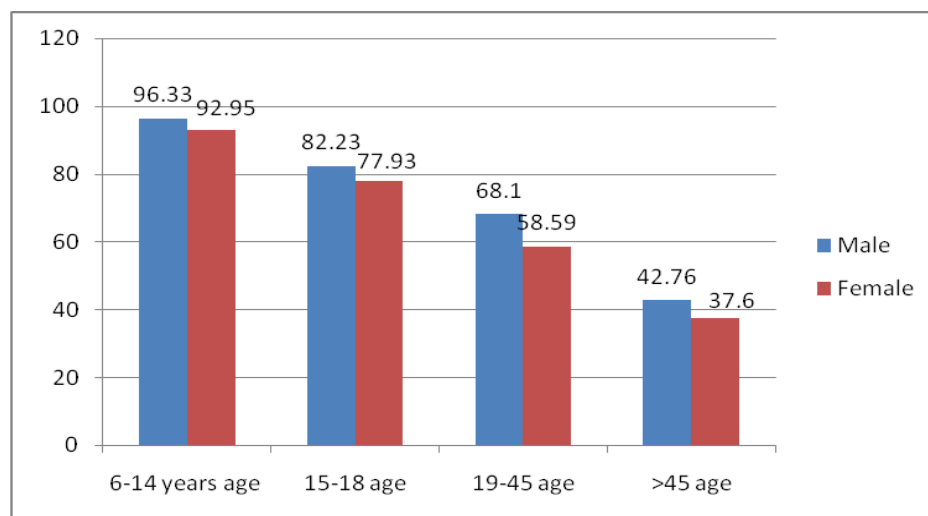


Fig. 2 Literacy by age and gender Chirala

### Children in school and out of school

Totally 828 out of 931 children are in school and the remaining are out of school. Children attending school are 88.94% while it is 90.06 for boys and 87.82% for girls. While 9.94 % of the boys are out of school it is 12.18% girls who are never enrolled or drop outs or working at home or outside for a wage. All children of school going age are in school in Sai Nagar while only one out of 38 in Macharla Mohan Rao Nagar is out of school.



Table 4. Details of school participation and child labour

S.No	Village/Community	School Going		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1	Chandramouli Nagar	19	18	37
2	Bavanarushipet	51	42	93
3	Thotavaripalem Weavers Colony	173	146	319
4	Sai Nagar	33	52	85
5	Vidhya Nagar	17	23	40
6	Rami Reddy Nagar	15	14	29
7	Macharla Mohan Rao Colony	19	19	38
8	Guravaiah Colony	11	8	19
9	Ayodhya Nagar	47	61	108
10	Vigneswara Colony	32	28	60
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>828</b>
	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>90.06%</b>	<b>87.82%</b>	<b>88.94%</b>

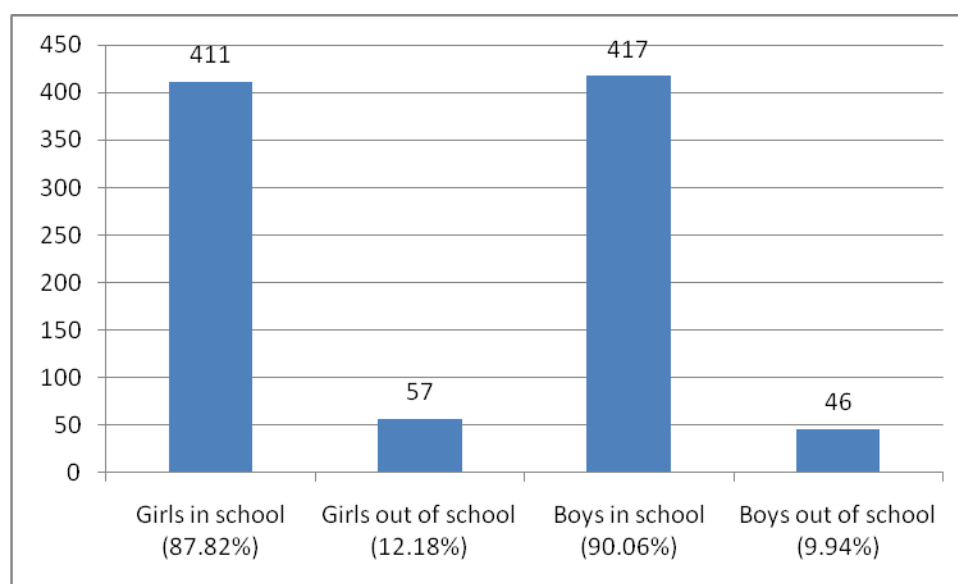


Fig 3. Children in school and out of school by gender

### Occupational pattern of the Chirala cluster

Around two thirds of the population in Chirala cluster depend on weaving and allied works. Around one third (33.38%) households depend agricultural labour and other works.

Aquaculture/ fish ponds have also become popular in the recent decades. There is also small section which is employed in commercial and government offices. Distribution of the households in sample villages is furnished in Table 5.

Table 5. Distribution of households by occupation.

Occupation	Households	percent
Agriculture Labour + Other Labour	648	33.38
Business	53	2.73
Carpentry	13	0.67
Dhobi (washer men)	11	0.57
Fishing	6	0.31
Employees	52	2.68
Weaving	1,158	59.66
Total	1941	100.00

### **Income and sources**

Net income of weavers is much lower than the incomes of households engaged in non weaving occupations in the Chirala cluster. Average income of the households in the select villages of the study is Rs 35,604 per annum while it is Rs 21,704 for weavers and Rs 56,162 for non weavers. Income in the form of government assistance and loans is another source of income for the weavers to survive. In fact it is a liability but that is inevitable for them to survive the crisis period which is almost regular feature.

While total income for 1941 households was Rs 691.08 lakhs or an average of Rs 35,604 per annum, there is additional support form the government and loans to the tune of Rs 242.67 lakh. Loans form 25.88% of the total 'income' of the households.

The gross income from wages and loans and government support is Rs 933.75 lakh for 1941 households which is Rs 48,107 per household. That amount is used for household expenses (Rs 35,232), clearing of loans (Rs 2,341) and savings for emergencies (Rs 10,534). Details of the income per annum is furnished in Table 6.

Table 6 Sources of incomes and loans etc

Net Income from Occupation	income	Av for HH		Remarks
Weaving	25,133,000	21704		1158 weaver HHs
Other Families	43,975,000	56162		783 other HHs
Total income from occupation	<b>69,108,000</b>	35604	74.01%	Total 1941 HHS
Net Income from Govt. Prog	103,460		0.11%	
Loan taken Amount	24,164,000		25.88%	
Total Gross Income	<b>93,375,460</b>			
Loan Repaid amount (P&I)	4,544,000			
Family Expenditure	68,384,354			
Total Net Income	20,447,106			
	Amount	<b>Households</b>		
Total Gross Income	93,375,460	48107		
Loan Repaid amount (P&I)	4,544,000	2341		
Family Expenditure	68,384,354	35232		
Total Net Income	20,447,106	10534		

### Access to government support

One or the other government schemes including PDS ration card have reached only 71.2% of the households. More than one fourth or one out of every four households did not receive assistance from the government schemes. Ration cards (71.46%), House loans/ sites (52.65%), Arogyasri health insurance cards (50.59%), SHG membership (20.62%) and Old age pensions (20.35%) are the popular schemes that have reached some members of the community. Many other welfare programmes and social safety nets have not reached most of the eligible persons. Details of the outreach of varied government schemes is provided in Table 7.

Table 7. Outreach of government schemes

<b>Access to govt support</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>percent</b>
Households accessing Govt Support	1,382	71.2
Households not accessed Govt. Support	559	28.8
Total households	1,941	100
<b>Households benefited from govt support</b>		
House sites	359	18.5
House	1022	52.65
Old age Pensions	395	20.35
Widow Pensions	23	1.18
Physically Challenged Person Pensions	29	1.49
Abhaya Hastam Pensions	5	0.26

Ration Cards	1387	71.46
Arogyasri Cards	982	50.59
SHG membership	668	20.62

Additional details of the household survey are furnished in Annexure 1.

## Structure of Chirala Handloom Cluster

According to the Third National Handloom Census of Handloom Weavers and Allied Workers 2010, nearly 27.83 lakh handloom households are engaged in weaving and allied activities, out of which 87 per cent are located in rural areas and remaining 13 per cent in urban areas.

The handloom sector is second largest source of employment in the country, next only to agriculture. It provides employment for 12.5 million people and is the largest rural employment provider next to agriculture.

Approximately, one out of 12 households in India derives its primary income from handloom sector, according to Macharla Mohan Rao, founding president of National Handloom Weavers Union.<sup>1</sup>

In Andhra Pradesh alone, there are about 3,20,000 handlooms providing employment to about 5,00,000 families directly and 20,00,000 families indirectly (Narasimha Reddy, 2006<sup>2</sup>). Major handloom centres in the state include Chirala, Mangalagiri, Pedana, Ponduru, Polavaram, Pochamapalli, Puttapaka, Gadwal, Dharamvaram, Emmiganur, Madhavaram, and Narayanpet spread across coastal Andhra, Rayalaseema and Telangana.

### Chirala handloom weavers

Chirala, originally known as "Ksheerapuri" (Sea of Milk), gradually is renamed as 'Chirala' (Chira meaning saree). The Chirala handloom industry is famous since times immemorial for excellence in producing variety of fabrics. There are accounts of Chirala handloom industry by the 13th century the Italian traveller Marco Polo's accounts of his visit to this area recorded prosperity of handloom weaving and excellence in the handloom markets and unmatched skills of the weavers who produced 7 yards of saree that fits in a match box.

Chirala is the hub of handlooms and is known as china Bombay (mini- Bombay). It also had the cooperative movement with the first Handloom Weavers Co-Operative Society formed in 1920.

Chirala and Vetapalem mandals of Prakasam district considerable population of weavers. Almost all these weavers belong to Padmasali, Devanga and Pattusali of weavers community. Official reports state that there are about 60,000 handloom weaver population at Chirala and presently 20,000 to 25,000 weavers are active working on about 18000 looms. In addition there are fifteen yarn traders, 25 to 30 dyers, 6 designers and card makers using cad system, 50 to 70 hand work

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<sup>1</sup> Vivek S and Aseem Shrivastava, Weft and warp of a crisis, The Hindu, December 10, 2012

<sup>2</sup> Narasimha Reddy, Weaving woes on the handlooms, India Together, 7 February 2006

designers and card makers and 50 to 100 of other ancillary providers. The annual turn over of Chirala cluster is estimated around Rs 100 to 120 crores.

Chirala is supposed to be the backbone of Chennai handloom market. Chirala reveals a great resilience in regard to its varieties and brand. It imbibed and adapted to changing trends and fashion of the market. It is also the home for weavers from several districts of coastal Andhra and Chennai.

This area was famous for its production of traditional varieties of zari sarees and dhoties sold in local market. The clothes produced here are not value added material. In the past there used to be lungis, and uppadam sarees. Chirala was originally known for 'pattubadi' variety of sarees. That was 7 meters long. That may still be seen in Mangalagiri cluster now. Gradually that variety Now it is replaced by Arangi and Gadwal sarees. Arangi saree is cotton by silk, explained another weaver.

During 1973 the export variety known as the "Real Madras hand Kerchiefs" became popular with art silk and zari (metallic thread glittering like gold) on jacquard looms which was exported to Nigeria and other African countries. Speciality of the clothe produced in Chirala owes to the climate and water used during the process of dyeing that is free of odd smell that handloom clothes of other regions in South Asia have. This variety of clothe lost the market after about a decade. Currently the sarees are popular with wide range of designs and embroidering work.

Generally in Chirala cluster the type of loom used is fly shuttle loom for weaving plain fabric. The fly shuttle loom is equipped additionally with barrel doobby, lattice doobby and jacquard according to suit the variety of fabric woven. The barrel doobby is used to produce small design with 24 threads of extra warp design on border or at desired place of the fabrics, like dhoties, sarees, shirtings and dress material cloth. The lattice doobby is used to produce designs with 48 threads of extra warp design on sarees and dress materials. The Jacquard is used to weave designs with extra warp or extra weft or both depending on the fabric produced.

Late Subba Rao was awarded for the design done with bobbin. There is another Subba Rao famous for use of natural dyes. Mr Bongari Papayya made possible marketing to Nigeria.

Chirala was also famous for Malaysian dress material woven on jacquard which after some years declined. The same material is now produced on handlooms and Chennai is the centre for it currently. Currently Chirala is popular for weaving a wide variety of sarees. "About 90% of the weavers are seen weaving some type of the saree or the other. There are cotton or silk and a combination of silk and cotton sarees", told Mr Batta Koteswara Rao.

Handloom sector of Chirala has been rapidly declining in the recent times with several weavers moving into other occupations. "Times are changing, only 10 per cent of the youth are into

weaving now”, told Mr Salla Veeralingam of Jandrapeta village. Currently it is believed that Chirala cluster has about 10,000 to 13,000 looms.

There are about 500 master weavers in this cluster. They have an association called Chirala Vastra Utpattidaarula Sangham. Each master weaver has 20 to 50 weavers. Earlier there were a few big master weavers also who had 100 to a few hundred weavers. There are some big master weavers now who have hundreds of 200 looms and worksheds provided on rent for the weavers. The weavers who work in sheds pay rent to the master weaver for the loom and shed.

Closure of spinning Mills in the state has forced us to buy the material from other states. The requirement by NHDC is about 561 million kgs.

Yarn Pass book for providing yarn to weavers at subsidised rates is not implemented effectively. Only about 10% weavers have been covered so far. “There is no proper policy to see who really needs yarn or how much is needed. Why someone engaged in dyeing work requires yarn? In fact the market rate is less than the subsidised rate”, explained a trade union activist.

Chirala Cluster had many government schemes, although the benefits have not reached the weavers. Cluster Centre was started at Thotavaripalem village, by the side of Kunderu canal by Ms Panabaka Lakshmi, Minister of Jute on November 3, 2009. The dyeing unit there is used by some master weavers. Other facilities of the cluster centre defunct now.

### **Chirala handloom sector**

Those who are helpless or have no other alternatives (lack of skills, poor health, indebtedness) are found in handloom sector in Chirala.

Handloom weavers of Chirala are essentially those who are engaged in producing handloom products with their skilled labour and looms at home with the help of one or more members of the family. It is a home-based family enterprise.

Handloom weaving consists of several activities. Handloom sector depends on the organised structure of pre-loom activities or processes like dyeing, warp preparation, sizing, etc done with specific wage rate and some people specifically engaged in such activities in Chirala. There is also gender division in the handloom activities in Chirala.

Several allied works are part of weaving process and some of these activities require full time service. They include Padugu, kandelu, atchu, allu, aasu, and yarn to laddies which engage 1 for every four weavers. Around 19% of the 1158 weaving sector are dependent on these allied services (see Fig.4)

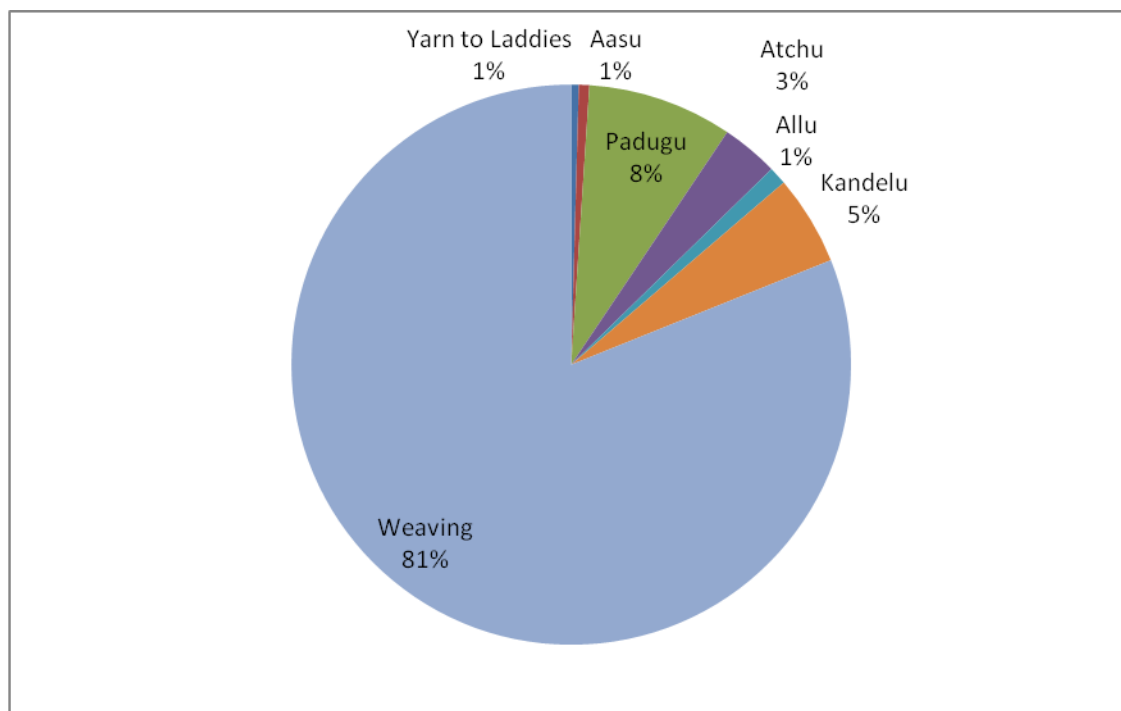


Fig.4 Distribution of households by weaving and allied services

Those in some of the allied services also earn around the same amount as those who do full time weaving. Why particular persons are into a particular activity of the weaving sector depends on skill, age and how much strain one can take.

Activity	Men	Women	Remarks
Kandelu & Achu		Yes	Mostly done by aged people and those who don't know weaving or not fit health wise to undertake weaving
Allu	Mainly	Also sometimes	Requires two persons
Weaving	Yes	Yes	Both do weaving in shifts to provide a break & relief to the other
Aasu	Yes	Yes	Both men and women do
Padugu	Yes	Yes	Both men and women do. Requires four persons
Dyeing	Yes	No	Several non weaver caste people are also found in dyeing activity



Padugu work (making threads strong and non sticky) requires four persons. Both men and women are engaged in padugu work. Often it is the whole family- man and woman and their children. Sometimes they employ anyone from the village. They get Rs 150 per padugu and they can do three padugus a day. The income of Rs 450 is to be divided among four persons. Besides, they need to spend Rs 35 on starch and oil. If the season is good they can expect to work for 25 days a month. Work is hard as they have to move swiftly before the thread stick together using a heavy brush (weighing about 20 kgs) from one end to the other. Padugu work is seasonal. They cannot work in monsoon due to low temperatures and high humidity. Brush used for padugu work costs Rs 8000. They need space about 7.5 cents for workshed and house.

## **Weavers**

Weavers vary by the degree of independence and ownership of the loom. Literature on modes and relations of production in handloom weaving offers different categories or types of weavers. Although there are eight categories altogether, the predominant type of weavers is those working for master weavers, followed by shed workers, independent weavers and master weavers. There are 943 weavers working for master weavers, 8 shed workers, 8 independent weavers of whom 5 are master weavers in the ten villages surveyed.

Categories of the weavers in Chirala include the following:

1. Independent weaver
2. Weaving for a Cooperative
3. Weaving for a Master Weaver at home (on own loom, or master weaver's loom)
4. Combinations (independent weaver cum Master Weaver/ Independent & weaver of a Cooperative/ weaver of a Cooperative & Master Weaver)
5. Master Weaver
6. Wage Weavers (Shed weaver or shed worker/ Cooperative)
7. Wage weaver for a group (DASTKAR)
8. Wage weaver for a handloom industry (Kowtharapu Srinivasa Rao)

### Independent weavers

Independent weavers works on his own, buys yarn and weaves on his own loom and sells the final product. He is not controlled or dependent on others and is master of his own product. However, such independent weavers declined over the years and most of them became part of

the putting-out system and work for the master weaver or the agent or trader. There are barely 8 independent weavers of the surveyed total of 962 weavers of different categories in Chirala.

Most of the independent weavers are actually those who are small master weavers also. Small master weavers also have a loom of their own and can afford to work as independent weaver. They are enterprising as they combine their own work with the margins from trading as a master weaver.

### Master Weavers

Master weavers mainly provide the raw material to the weaver and pay piece rate for the products they weave. Master weaver undertakes the responsibility of marketing the products. Master weaver keeps in regular contact with the market and studies the trends in order to get the latest designs. Master weavers give the design to the weaver. To ensure that weavers provide labour or work for him continuously, he provides small loans to keep the weaver under obligation to work for him till he clears the loan. The loan amount is recovered in small amounts while making payments for the weavers. Weaver is free to work for another master weaver on becoming independent if the loan is cleared. Master weaver takes padugu and aasu.

Master weavers invest up to Rs 60,000 to 70,000 towards loans to the weaver and raw materials, etc. Master weavers are secured if they have adequate number of weavers to work for them and there is competition among the master weavers to get a good weaver. “Big master weavers eagerly wait to see when a ‘loom’ from another master is ready to join him” (*pedda master weaver kaachukoni unTaaDu ii “maggam” epuDosataaDa ani*), told Mr Bakka Koteswara Rao, a master weaver.

Kowatharapu Srinivasa Rao Handloom Pvt Ltd is the formal and large scale unit of the handloom unit run by the master weavers in the Chirala cluster. It is also the formal and industrial type organisation while the units run by master weavers are informal and small in size.

### Shed Workers

There are about 1000 shed workers, mostly in Ipurupalem. They take looms on daily rent from the master weaver. There are also weavers who take loom and house on rent from the master weaver. Such workers are found in Jandrapeta and other villages where some master weavers have hundreds of houses with looms given on rent for the weavers. The weavers in such sheds pay rent for loom and house. Master weavers provide small loans to the weavers for meeting domestic needs and recover the loans by deducting from the payments made to the weavers as per piece rate.

“I have come here ten years ago and changed four master weavers. Initially I was with a master weaver where I worked only for 8 months. For the next master weaver I worked for about 6

years. Then I changed two master weavers in two years and have come back to the old master weaver where I worked earlier for 6 years”, told Mr Venkateswara Rao. They move from master weaver to the other but remain for year as shed workers till they are lucky to save some amount to have their own house and loom.

### Cooperatives

There are 22 cooperative societies in Chirala, but only 10 are functioning and the rest defunct. The cooperatives have a limited range of products and are of low quality. Cooperatives focus on shirting & lungis, bed sheets and mosquito nets and bandage cloth. Wages paid are as low as Rs. 10 per metre of shirting, and Rs. 840 for one warp for lungis, Rs 1200 per warp for bed sheet.

Cooperative societies do not market the produce outside APCO. Aged weavers usually produce dress material, simple or plain clothe (saadha) on simple looms called ‘onti machine’ for the cooperative society.

“Cooperative societies become defunct after some time as the office bearers eat away the money provided by the government”, told a weaver. A few leaders of the Society pay Rs 500 for each member and control the society funds. Members do not question the society because they contribute little to it.

#### **RP Weavers Cooperative Society**

RP Weavers Cooperative Society was established in 2007. It has 200 members (male or female). Every member must have a loom. They pay membership fee of Rs 50. “mEmu takkuva rakam batta nEstaam. Members chEyaru. Non-members tO kuuDa cEyistaam” “We produce low quality clothe. Not all member weave for us. We get non-members also weave for us. 90% of the weavers work for master weavers. Our produce is purchased by APCO”, explained a member of the Society.

The society has received so far a loan of Rs 10,00,000 and is yet to receive Rs 7,00,000. Loans are provided through government banks or cooperative central bank. Loans are not disbursed in time. Insurance is provided to 100 members and health cards are given to the members.

Weavers’ suicides of early 90s shocked the civil society of Chirala and the state. Efforts in building cooperative spirit with “one for all and all for one” motto received attention in 90s. Five cooperative societies were started in 1995 with Rs 1000 membership fee. Each society had 110 members. The societies include Sivajyothi Cooperative Society of Ramannapeta village, Abhyudaya Cooperative Society of Ramanagar village, Sitaramaraju Cooperative Society of

Hastinapuram village, Devangapuri Cooperative Society of Mohan Rao Colony, and Shubhodya Cooperative Society of Amodagiripatnam village. Cooperative Central Bank, Ongole also gave Rs 300,000 loan to each of these societies. These societies were almost closed by 2000.

ASSIST provided Rs 8.7 lakh to Shubodaya Cooperative Society (SCS) to recover and revive. The society is making efforts to become functional and become effective. The SCS is regular in its audits. It has now about Rs 8.0 lakhs fund. It has 1.20 lakh yarn of 40 count.

Cooperative societies, in general, have not been able to run effectively. Some of them do not have annual audit completed for past several years.

Dalit Handloom Weavers Development Society comprising 50 weavers assists the members in accessing Weavers Credit Cards and the Insurance Scheme. Besides, it helps in marketing of the produce. It motivates the members to pay RS 100 for the ICICI Lombard Insurance scheme wherein the Central and State Governments pay their share. The DHWDS is also promoting natural dyes and is able to provide Rs 750 while earlier they were getting Rs 700 from the master weaver. The marginal increase in the income is about Rs 150 or 200 if one weaves three or four baaru a month. DHWDS also conducts health camps for the benefit of the members. Dr Pragathi, gynaecologist conducted a few camps. Their marketing is for people from the development sector and friends in Hyderabad.

## Crisis of handloom weavers

### Wages and living conditions of the weavers

*Earning Rs 6000 to 10,000 a month for the whole family's effort is a big progress for Chirala weaver!*

Wages are paid to the weavers per 'baaru' which is 6 sarees length. It is 5 'baaru' if the saree has blouse piece also. An average weaver household weaves a 'baaru' in 10 days and earns about Rs 2400 per month. Of that the weaver also pays Rs 190 per 'baaru' towards allied services like Rs 70 for Kandelu/ laddeelu @ Rs 5 X 14, Rs 60 for Achu work and Rs 60 for Allu work.

Earnings and expenses for allied services vary with the type of material produced.

Household income of weaver community also includes the 'loans availed form formal and informal sources' without which there is no way of leading the life. Total amount of incomes form wages for 1941 households was Rs 933.75 lakhs or Rs 48,107 per annum for each household. Of that they spent Rs 35,232 on food, medicare and education and house maintenance expenses of the family. They had Rs 10,534 towards clearing other loans or meeting emergencies. These are average figures and the weavers and especially the poorer households had nothing left beyond meeting food expenses of bare survival.

Table 8. Income of the Households and loans

Source of income	Amount	Households
Total Gross Income	93,375,460	48107
Loan Repaid amount (P&I)	4,544,000	2341
Family Expenditure	68,384,354	35232
Total Net Income	20,447,106	10534

Wages have been a controversial subject for the handloom weavers characterised by "putting-out" system. The sector is informal in nature and all operations continue on the basis of informal understandings. Neither the master weaver is as an employer, nor the weaver an employee. "Whom do we fight with (evaripaina kotlaaDathaamu)?", asked Mrs Jakka Malleswari.

The handloom sector is not registered and the transactions are all informal or illegal. Handloom production is not governed by laws of Commercial Taxes, Income Tax, Labour or Establishments or industries department. The business of production and marketing There has

been no minimum wage for the weaver and therefore the piece rates paid to the clothe which is a product of the family enterprise tends to be lower than minimum wage for any work- skilled or unskilled.

Many reports on weavers' suicides make reference to the incomes of the weavers in Andhra Pradesh. According to a recent study comprising 600 respondents of handloom weavers in Prakasam, East Godavari, Kurnool and Nalgonda districts, the average monthly income is Rs 3,497 (Kasisomayajula, S.R., 2012).

Weavers have been fighting for fair wages and the master weavers evade by claiming poor margins. State government has also been aware of the crisis of handloom weavers owing to the incomes being less than what is needed for minimum standard of living. District officials were instructed to examine the matter and ensure the handloom sector of Chirala is in compliance with law (see box item – Rosaiah assures minimum wages to weavers). Nine years after the assurance of Finance Minister of Government of Andhra Pradesh, the weavers are still waiting for the minimum wages for handloom weavers and making the master weavers accountable under any law.

Mrs Sama Lakshmi Narsimhamamma weaves half of Pochampally saree day or 15 sarees at best in a month. She earns Rs 130 per saree which makes about Rs 1560 a month. “We don't have any work in monsoon when the loom pit is full of water” she told.

### **Rosaiah assures minimum wages to weavers**

The Hindu, August 29, 2005

ONGOLE: Finance Minister K. Rosaiah has said that he would ask the Commissioner of Handlooms to study the wages paid to handloom weavers in Chirala area vis-a-vis Krishna and Guntur districts and ensure that they are paid minimum wages.

He was addressing a delegation of master weavers of Chirala area. They said that they were paying weavers their best and increased their wages only in January last and hence were not in a position to increase the wages, especially in the present market conditions. The weavers, on the other hand, contended that most of them were denied minimum wages and could not increase the sale price for want of demand in the market.

District Collector B. Udaya Lakshmi said that she had made a personal inspection of weavers' colonies in Thotavaripalem and found that the master weavers were fleecing weavers in the name of shed rent, loom rent and got the cloth produced through brokers to deny minimum wage to the weavers.

### **Master weavers' plea**

The master weavers pleaded that they would be happy if the Government lifted their entire stock after giving them five per cent profit. They also pointed out that they are paying better wages than cooperative societies. To this, the Collector said that she would depute a team of officials from Commercial Taxes, Income Tax and Handlooms to assess their profits and fix the wage of weavers after giving them five per cent profit.

Source: <http://www.hindu.com/2005/08/29/stories/2005082911940300.htm>

Wages vary by type of sarees produced. Mr Brahma Markandeswara Rao of Sitaramapuram village weaves a 'baaru' for Rs 4000. He weaves two 'baaru' comfortably a month. It is cotton plus butta border saree. He spends Rs 380 towards Achu (Rs 230) and Allu and kandelu (Rs 120) and other expenses of Rs 30. Electricity bill is about Rs 600 pm. His monthly earning is about Rs 6600. His typical day of work starts at 6.00 am and ends at 8.30 pm with lunch break of half an hour.

He is aged about 26 years and not yet married. He studied up to Class VII. He lives with his father and mother – Mr Anka Balasubramanyam and Mrs Murali Lakshmi. His father also weaves. The family has moved here 3 years ago from Chennai. They pay Rs 800 pm towards rent of the house. They do not have a weaver credit card.

Weaver Credit Card was promised to be given to 3000 weavers in Chirala. Under this scheme the weavers with credit card can be provided up to 200,000 loan. But the local banks are providing only Rs 25,000 to 50,000. A separate bank for the handloom sector was also announced to make credit available to the weavers so that they are not caught in intergenerational debt trap.

### **Incomes vary by type of looms**

Mr. Pichuka Purna Chandra Rao and Ms. Tulasi, resident of Sharada colony

They were residents of Neelakantapuram village before they moved to Sharada colony in the year 2009.

They have a son and daughter. Earlier they worked for the master weaver named Pichuka Hanumanthu Rao where they used to earn around Rs. 500 to 600 per baaru and they could not weave more than 3 baaru and the income was Rs 1500-1800 a month. They had some loan also from the master weaver. They could not continue working for the master weaver for that meagre income and there was no chance of any raise in

income as the master weaver had no jacquard loom.

Later they moved to Bandaru Bala, master weaver who works for KSR group. They took advance from Mr. Bala and redeemed/repaid the loans to master weaver. They took a new loom also in Sharada colony.

Now they weave Buta on silk sarees on jacquard loom. They get 3200/- per baaru as wage. They weave 2 baaru and make 6400/- income per month. They do kandelu work, but pay Rs. 240 for others for Allu work. Their net income is Rs 6160 per month because they now work on advanced type of loom (Pedda rakamu maggam).

There are a few weavers who are also small master weavers. Mr Karra Venkateswara Rao of Mohan Rao Colony is one such person. He came to this village from Rajahmundry on makara sankranti of 1994. He was the first inhabitant of this colony. In twenty years he became an entrepreneur and weaver. Today he makes a living by weaving, running cable TV, farming in 3 acre leased land. He has 2 sons who studied up to Class VIII and Class X. Both are married and live here as part of the joint family. Sons earn about Rs 3500 each and Venkateswara Rao earns about Rs 6000 from weaving. Out of total earning of Rs 13000 from weaving they spend about 4000 towards allied services. His earnings from all other works are also important source of his income. He sells his products in Chennai. He does not eat or spend a rupee in Chennai. He eats the food he takes from home. He leaves in the morning for Chennai and returns by night train. He completes his work and meets all traders to update about fashions and rates in the market. He is also active in the agitations of the weavers and was part of the 10 day padayatra of 492 km to Hyderabad from January 30 to February 10, 2014.



### **Hope and new challenges of handloom weavers**

*Mr Pichuka Mallikarjuna Rao and Mrs. Nageshwaramma resident of Sharada colony.*

They lived earlier in Neelakanthapuram. They had a simple loom to weave simple type of clothe (chinna maggam to weave chinna rakaalu). Their earnings were Rs. 800 to 1000 per baaru and they could weave 3 baaru a month. They had a daughter married. They sold the house to the master weaver, Mr. Pichuka Hanumantha Rao, who agreed to allow them to live in the house as long as they weave/work for him. Master weaver started paying them less knowing that they cannot leave his house.

They worked as long as there was no hope of getting out of his clutches. They became free from old master weaver when they found help from Bandaru Bala, another master weaver in Jandrapeta, working for KSR handloom. Bandaru Bala provided them loan to clear all dues towards the old loom.

Now they weave buta on silk sarees on jacquard loom. They get Rs. 3200 per baaru. Mrs. Nageshwaramma weaves 1 baaru per month, husband weaves gas cotton Buta for which he gets Rs. 2700 per baaru and he weaves 2 baru per month. So they earn Rs 8600 (Rs 3200 plus 5400). The couple take care of achu and kandelu work. For Allu work they pay Rs. 210 (Rs. 70 x3).

They purchased 5 cents of land for the house in Sharada colony. IAY loan help them build the house although they had to spend 1.5lakh additionally.

In five years they moved from less than Rs 3000 a month income to Rs 8600. “But is it a progress compared to the inflation and growing needs of the family? We would have certainly starved if there was not even this slight improvement in the incomes” told Nageswaramma.

Activists from weavers community have been fighting for fixing minimum wage for the weavers and also making MNREGA applicable to the weavers. Wage incentive for every metre clothe woven is one of the demands of the activists.

## **Housing and sanitation**

House of a weaver is both a residence and 'factory'. Home and worksite combination in a small 12 X 12 or smaller single room is the typical house. One or two such rooms serve as work site with the loom and kitchen and bed room all-in-one. Crowding and lack of privacy affect rest and education of children. Hygiene and comfort are major casualties in the weavers housing. Poverty and space constraints are major problems of housing in weavers colonies. Weavers colonies also have similar small house-cum-workshed in the region. Houses of master weavers have spacious houses with separate rooms for kitchen, dining, rest and space to chat with guests.

A typical weaver's house has loom and kitchen and bedroom in the same room which has a TV, fan and electricity. Kitchen has basic utensils and stove. Cooking is done sometimes in the open.

Three out of every four surveyed households have own house. Remaining 22.51% of the households live in rented houses typical of slums or workers colonies in cities. More than half (53.99%) the houses are pucca with RCC slab, followed by traditional tiled houses (39.57%) and thatched huts (6.44%).

Most of the houses (89.85%) have power supply, which is essential for the nature of work that continues beyond sun set. Some households also have inverter so that work doesn't suffer due to power cuts. Households without electricity account for 10.15%. It is mainly old age couples or single women who do limited work and are extremely poor to have power connection. Some of the weavers who work in sheds also have no power connection at home, they are limited.

Drinking water is mainly from bore wells. They constitute 97.99% of the surveyed households and the remaining 2.01% depend on ROPs and OHSRs.

Households having inverters and using ROPs or OHSRs may be considered relatively better off.

Cooking fuel reflects both economic status of the households and the rural environment of the region as well as compulsions of the occupational time schedule. About two thirds (62.55%) of the households have LPG connections and 89.62% of them use LPG. Other forms of cooking fuel like wood, kerosene are also seen among not only the remaining one third of the households but also as substitutes/ supplementary source among those who have LPG. Domestic pollution and fire accidents from the cooking fuel is a matter of concern.

Sanitation is a serious concern with only 63.83% households having individual latrines. Of them only 89.99% are using the latrines. Open defecation is practised in many villages. Poor usage of latrines is reported to be due to preference for meeting the colleagues as they go in small groups for attending natural calls. That's the only time when they get to meet neighbours and talk for a few moments otherwise the whole wakeful hours are spent on the loom pit or household works.

## **Work and living conditions**

Weavers community in Chirala has two main endogamous groups viz., Padmashali and Devangula. There are also Thugatlu and Pattushali communities. Inter-marriage among them is rare. Although weaving is a hereditary occupation of the Padmashalis or Devangula community, there is no bar on others taking up weaving as an occupation. There are a few households belonging to scheduled castes who are also seen engaged in weaving in Chirala. Allied works also have several people from other castes.

There is little gender differentiation in weaving work. Weaving is not only a family based enterprise, but also less different among the men and women. Women are also seen weaving and also participating in allied works along with men folk.

There is little scope for entertainment for the weavers. All their life is lost in the loom pit. Leisure is little and they have a break once in a month according to lunar calendar. Padmashali community observes holiday on Amavasya (new moon) while the Devangula community observes break on Pournami (full moon). They don't weave on this particular day. It is also the time for any work of tear and wear and repairs of the looms.

Weavers are in general non vegetarians. They have non veg dishes on the monthly holiday.

Work wise also there are patterns among the different sects of weaving community. While the Padmashali people weave 'butta' pure cotton, the Devangula weave on jacquard looms which are heavy. Padmashali community has more master weavers, although the community is supposed to be relatively less hard working. Some Devangula members say they are hard working and work on jacquard looms and do complex work while the Padmashali folks prefer less paying and simpler works.

"A handloom weaver starts work at about 7.00 AM and is seen in the loom pit till 7.30 PM. It is about 12 hours back breaking work. Our family is into weaving Pochampally saree on simple loom. We earn around Rs 2400 to 2700 per month", told Mrs Jakka Malleswari w/o Mr Pullaiah of Sai Colony of Burlavaipalem village, Chirala.

There is no money for entertainment. "Watching a cinema? I must have gone 3 months ago. Dont remember the film we watched. We go to Ipurupalem to watch the film because the ticket there is Rs 15 while one has to pay Rs 50 in Chirala here", remarked Mrs Shobha.

People say you can find where the weavers live by watching the stream of customers to a liquor shop, because weavers come to sip liquor several times a day. There are several legal and illegal shops where country liquor is sold. "My father has been drinking since my childhood. He spends about Rs 40 every day on country liquor", told Jakka Srinivas.

“If lives are mortgaged to cruel fate and we have no assurance of what is tomorrow, what else one does. Work as long as you can and drink as much as you afford to forget the dreadful tomorrow?”, asks Mr Jagadish which has a loan of Rs 80,000.

### Household expenditures

The incomes of weavers area is so low that most of their expenditure is on food. Food that is mainly rice without any protein. Inadequate nourishing itself is 62.85 of the total family expenditure. Next major head is health care which includes medicines and doctors consultation fee which amount to 5.25%. Customs and traditions account for 5.60% followed by entertainment (5.23%). Expenditure on education for the children is mere 4.03% and the weavers expenditure on clothing is 4.07%. The expenditure of the households reveals a bare survival menu as they cannot afford anything better than that. Table 9 provides standard of life of the weavers which is barely Rs 29 per capita per day!

Table 9. Cost of living of the weavers

Lifestyle and living conditions	Amount (Rs)
per annum household expenditure	35232
per month HH expenditure	2936
per capita monthly expenditure	871
daily per capita expenditure	29

Detailed expenditure of the households and the priorities they have to decide to spend the meagre incomes is tough task. More than one fourth of the total expenditure of the household is towards purchase of rice. Conditions of severe deprivation, malnutrition and food shortages is clearly evident form the amount proportion of expenses out of annual expenditure of Rs 35,232 for the family. Table 10 provides details of expenditure.

Table 10. Household expenditure

Expenditure	Rs	per cent
Rice	18,741,601	27.41
Groceries	11,780,200	17.23
Vegetables	8,766,353	12.82
Meat	3,689,100	5.39
Health	3,592,000	5.25
Clothes	2,780,800	4.07
Education	2,757,500	4.03
Liquor, Beedi	3,217,000	4.69
Festivals, Customs	3,827,800	5.60

Entertainment	3,574,000	5.23
House related expenditure	2,104,000	3.08
TV, Phone, Gas, Electricity, House tax, etc	3,554,000	5.20
Total	68,384,354	100.00

### Poverty and indebtedness

It is shocking to see how people still live in such abject poverty. Average handloom weaver's daily expenditure is Rs 29 or an annual expenditure of Rs 35,232 per household of 3.37 average family size.

Weavers' lives cannot be imagined without debt. Almost all weavers have loans taken from the master weaver, which is recovered by deducting the amount in instalments from the payments made to the weaver. The loan is extending again as the incomes are less than what is required to meet the regular needs of the weaver. Cycle of debt continues and keeps the weaver bound the shackles of the master weaver. Any unforeseen expenses make the weaver take fresh loans. Weaver is free to free away from the master weaver once the loan is cleared, which is possible if the weaver gets a loan from another master weaver. Freedom of the weaver is to move from one master to another. When no fresh loans are available and the debts are high, the weaver sells his assets. Sometimes they are forced to sell the house and looms or any other valuables.

There is also micro credit finance system in Chirala, which provides small loans to the weavers. The local financiers who run this business collect repayments in instalments on a weekly basis. "Vaaraalabbaayi" collects the instalments every week, remarked a weaver of Jandrapeta village.

"We have bank loans of Rs 60,000, of which Rs 30,000 is from NABARD weavers credit card and another Rs 30,000 from weavers credit card scheme. We also have loans of Rs 20,000 from local money lenders on 5% interest. What else we do when there is no work and cant starve to death? Home needs compel us to take loans. We were expecting an additional income of Rs 1000 per month, just about Rs 100 per 'bar' that is the hope since long time. We had to spend about Rs 70,000 to build a house when the Indira Awas Yojana Housing Scheme provided only Rs 36,000 after some Deductions for local officials who granted the money", told Mrs Subbalakshmi. This joint family has a loan of Rs 80,000 to be repaid.

Sama Lakshmi Narsimhamamma and her husband Pothuraju, aged 36 and 40 years respectively, have three children aged 12 to 18 years. Eldest daughter, Hemalatha aged 18 is already married after dropping out of school after Class V. Second daughter, Jayalakshmi also dropped out of school in Class V. She works now and earns about Rs 700 to 1000 a month. Son, Siva Sai aged

12 years is in Class VI now. “Beldar work in (mason) in Chirala or Ongole pays Rs 2000 a day. “Who will continue in weaving which may be art or culture?” asks Lakshmi Narsimhamamma.

**One step forward, two steps backwards- loans don't disappear despite better incomes**

*Mr. Nalla Malikarjuna Rao and Ms. Padma resident of Neelakanthapuram*

Earlier they were weaving as shed workers. Then they earned Rs. 400/- per baaru. They could weave only 3 baaru a month. They had to pay rent for the loom also besides the rent of the house. They could not take proper care of their child- boy.

Somebody told them if they weave in Pedanu village, where they earn Rs. 1200/- per baaru and for 3 baaru they can get about Rs 3600/- per month. So they moved to Pedanu village. They started working as a daily wage weaver for a master weaver. After sometime they felt it was no better solution as the earnings were not so better with increased costs for everything. They returned to Neelakantapuram in 2009. They don't have a house and pay rent of Rs. 1500/- per month. They got a loom fixed in the rented house. Master weaver Mr. Gutha Venkayya, working for KSR Company helped them to get jacquard. Now they earn Rs. 5000/- per baaru. They weave 1.5 baaru per month.

Their son Sai Kiran, also got a jacquard loom and weaves gas cotton buta type. He weaves 2 baaru per month. On two looms, together they three earn Rs. 12500/- per month. Mrs. Padma does achu and kandelu work. They engage outsider for allu work for a wage of Rs. 60/-. Thus they pay 200/- as wages for outsiders.

They are better now, but they also have a loan of Rs. 40,000/-.

**Health – illness and Morbidity and mortality**

Chirala weavers are in news often for chronic poverty and occasionally for suicides, the extreme form of deprivation and violation of human rights. Although poverty, indebtedness and working conditions of bondage have been a regular feature, there have been reports of weavers' suicides from late 80s.

There have been several estimates of the suicides by different agencies, both government and civil society. According to official estimates there have been about 1000 weavers suicides from 2002 to 2012 in Andhra Pradesh. “According to the National Handloom Census of 2009-10, close to 60 per cent of India's weavers today fall below the poverty line, and 80 per cent face

high debts, being at the mercy of intermediaries who also double up as moneylenders, controlling access to both markets and raw materials” (Vivek and Shrivastava 2012).

### Food habits

Food habits of the weavers are characteristic of culture of poverty. Poverty and pressure to work without break has robbed off the pleasure of preparing food for the family members.

Cooking food at home has become less common among the weavers. Lack of time to prepare food has been replaced by food procured from street corner food stalls. Almost all weavers get morning breakfast from the local street food stall. Preparing idli or dosa or other items requires processing in the night and cooking in the morning which the weavers can ill afford. There are low cost options offered by the local street food units. There are also some weavers who have monthly account with such food stalls. One of the family members goes to these food stalls in the morning to get ‘tiffin parcels’ for the whole family. Idly, attu (plain dosa), nune attu (dosa with oil) are most popular breakfast items served with chatni, and spices. It costs 3 to 5 rupees per head. Evening snacks are also popular. The variety is wide- punugulu, idly, dosa and bajji, gaare etc are available. There are “curry points” which sell curries.

Food is a necessity and no more a matter of taste or care and concern for weavers who have no time to relax. Weavers buy curry from these shops and eat with rice cooked at home for lunch and dinner. Cooking at home is considered more expensive than buying the low cost ready to eat stuff from the food stalls available in every street. Cooking at home has become now one of cooking rice. Occasionally they also cook curries at home for the taste of the members of the family or on festive days.

Many foods prepared on for lactating and pregnant women are also now available from the sweet shops in the area.

Although the weavers community- Devangula, Padmashali, Pattushali, and Thugatlu are non vegetarians, not many can afford to have protein rich food. Relatively Devangula members are particular about having non vegetarian at least twice a week.

Those who earn better and can afford to have some time to cook prepare breakfast or curries at home for lunch or dinner. Almost all the weaver families sell the rice they buy on the PDS (Ration Card) to the street food stall for Rs 10 a kg. “The rice available on ration card is of poor quality. We sell that to the attu stall and buy rice ion the market for Rs 40 to 50 a kg”, told Mrs Anasuya of Lakshmpuram village.

Some weavers buy the same ration rice from the shop for Rs 10 a kilo because what they get on the ration card is not enough for the family. “Only 4 kilos per head is available on the ration

card, so we buy the same rice for Rs 10 from others. We cannot buy at Rs 50 a kilo”, told Parvathamma aged 58.

Many also eat “punneellu” (rice starch of previous night kept for fermentation) added with onion and a dash of salt along with rice. Rice is the food. Vegetables and egg or meat is a rare sight. Eating fruits is also not common. Having a meal of punneellu with pickles is still common among many families.

“Chronic starvation” has been the characteristic feature of the handloom weavers. Dr Veena Shatrugna, former Deputy Director of National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad described the problem of severe food insecurities and malnutrition among the handloom weavers in terms of “chronic starvation” if not starvation deaths. The weavers are poor in health, and age faster and fall prey to several health disorders because the normal immune system is severely affected. Any medicare further pushes them into indebtedness and affects their access to basic nutrition. They live and work as long they can fight impending threat of death.

Almost 12 hours of work every day has serious impact on the weavers. Drudgery of work affects the weavers and there is hardly privacy for rest as the house is also the work site with looms in operation. Noise and heavy work is reported to be causing sleeping disorders.

Lifespan of the weavers is reported to be coming down. “Not many people live now beyond 40 years. Deaths of people in 40s has increased with the introduction of jacquard looms. The technology has become a slow death to the weavers. Heart problems are also on the rise”, told Mr Macharla Mohan Rao. Poor diet and lack of rest is clearly visible in thin body frame of the weavers. Emaciated bodies are common sight. Women are malnourished and children stunted.

Women suffer from back pain and many women in the area reported that many women have undergone hysterectomy. Joint pains, knee pains and vision are common problems among the weavers. Working on the looms erodes the joints (“mOkaallu arigi pOthaayi”), complained Mrs Nagamani aged 41 years.

Only two thirds of the households have LPG and several households also use wood and other sources as supplementary source for cooking. Domestic pollution and fire accidents is a matter of concern. Crowding in the house and crowding of the houses in the settlement are major concerns of sanitation and hygiene.

More than two thirds (69.84%) of the couples aged <45 years are sterilised. Serious health issues were also noticed in the survey. There were 11 cases of HIV/AIDS, 10 cases of heart ailments and 2 of tuberculosis.



## **Rehabilitation of weavers**

Several agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, engaged in addressing the crisis of handloom weavers in Chirala approached the issues in a limited perspective. Relative improvement in the economic conditions of the weavers or the handloom sector has been assumed to take care of all the problems of handloom weavers.

### **Economic Interventions**

A great emphasis has been laid on increased subsidies from the government to save the handloom sector from the deepening crisis. Advocates of this approach fail to distinguish the difference between wage dependent weavers and others who run the handloom business by controlling the weavers. The latter includes the master weavers, cooperatives and others who run handloom business by hiring the weavers on piece rate for the cloth produced. The subsidies for making yarn, electricity, and other raw materials required for handloom production as well as buying the finished products with the goal of ensuring better incomes for the weavers do not have any mechanisms to ensure the weaver's earnings have increased with additional government support. There is need to examine whether government support has helped increase the economic conditions of the weavers. Also important to examine where does the government financial support go and who are the beneficiaries. Any advocacy strategy for improving the lives of the weavers would be strengthened by data on who are the beneficiaries of the government schemes.

Cooperative societies have been the oldest intervention aimed at supporting the ailing handloom sector. However, they are considered to be only on paper and engaging a small section of the weavers. According official estimates there are 1420 cooperative societies with 3,55,838 members in Andhra Pradesh as on March 10, 2011 of which 628 are active and remaining 792 are dormant or defunct.

Most of the weavers who work largely for the cooperatives are aged and of poor health. Those who are fit to undertake strain and endure hard work of jacquard looms, do not work for the cooperatives. The quality of the product is low and the marketing ability of the cooperatives is weak. Cooperatives manage to continue because of assured sales to the APCO and also by selling power loom clothe under the label of handloom cloth. Corruption in the cooperative societies is common practice.

The alternative strategies comprise small or big and niche or experimental interventions. They are primarily market oriented and survive on being cost effective to withstand the competition of power looms. One of the methods to remain cost effective is paying low wages.

Another alternative strategy to protect and promote handlooms is centred around “eco friendly” feature. Sometimes it is also dependent on adding the art and heritage element of handlooms. These experiments stress on reaching out to a niche buyers and sell at higher prices. However, this model has not brought any significant increase in the earnings of the weavers engaged in this category.

Another model, and of late growing steadily, in Chirala is the industry type large scale handloom unit based on scale of economy and branding. KSR unit in Chirala is the successful example of this kind.

All these approaches are same in terms of their perception of competing with the power looms and market economics. All these alternatives also share in common the practice of maintaining low wages for the weaver or denial of “living wage”.

Relatively, the art and eco-friendly category has the potential of being independent of market economics and competition of power looms once they see handloom as unique and meeting special purpose and product specialisation away from regular needs of clothing. That potential is not explored yet in Chirala, although the same handloom products are sold for a very high price by the designers in a different market.

#### **KSR Weaves- Home based handlooms changing into corporate weaving**

KSR Handloom Pvt Ltd, established in 1996 with 20 weavers, employs 250 weavers now. They get the handloom products through master weavers providing the raw materials and designs to the weavers working in their homes. KSR unit also has about 100 weavers working in its premises on advanced hydraulic looms.

It specialises in modifying designs frequently to ensure the products are unique. It has design unit and all pre-loom operations at the unit. Besides, it has silk cultivation in their own farm in Sillagadda village in Karnataka. KSR products include Assam sarees, Moga silks, Kallam silks, Ksheerauri sarees, Raga and Tripura sarees. Printing and embroidery work is also done at the unit. They plan to provide a brand and transform handloom into a mill with workers having facilities at work site like transport, canteen, etc. “Bar” has 5 sarees for which they pay Rs 3000 to Rs 3200 and an incentive of Rs 600 to the weaver. Weavers make monthly earning of Rs 5000 to 20,000 per month depending on the number and type of sarees produced. Sale price of sarees range from Rs 3000 to 20,000.

Kowtharapu Srinivasa rao, a local weaver, has turned into a ‘corporate’ master weaver. KSR model promises to push the incomes of the weavers in the area to increase if they have to work for other master weavers. The critics allege that KSR unit extracts the energies of the weavers manifold compared to the current type of weaving in vogue and soon the weavers will be incapable of doing any work. Short term gains are going to make weavers lives more miserable, they complaint.

## Scope for Holistic Development of Handloom Weavers

Weavers and their representatives in Chirala have been advocating an alternative that does not further the exploitation of the weaver by coerced system of working for a master weaver. The model cooperative is based on the collective goal of liberation from slavery and exploitation by the middlemen.

The Cooperative Model aims at ensuring wage to the weavers required for a decent living in place of wages for survival caught in the cycle of intergenerational debts. Cooperative promises earnings according to each one's labour and equal distribution of collective profits.

The cooperative model also ensures access to entitlements and gaining control over the product of his/her labour. Weaver gains control and complete understanding of ones' product and its marketing. Besides, the weaver gains entitlements such as thrift, insurance, government assistance for house-cum-work shed, pensions etc.

Through this system the weavers can actively be involved in the production in their respective activity as well as become part of the allied activities which are linked with them and benefit better wages and other welfare measures implemented by the cooperative societies. In this model the weavers feel that they are the owners of their work and production fabric.

Weavers and allied workers of the handloom sector decide the things as per their requirements of their weaving profession. All the weavers and pre-loom processors (warpers, street sizer, yarn dyer, prin winders, piecing worker, spinning workers, beam makers, etc) are also members in this project. The proposed model creates integrity among the community of all those involved in the handloom industry as a whole. The weavers and workers in pre -loom processes can visualize and decide the activity in its entirety as they know to whom they are working, who are benefiting, how the production process is structured including marketing, procurement of raw materials and other accessories. Cooperative concept of this perspective is holistic.

The basic unit comprises of 100 members who pay a membership fee of Rs 500. They undertake weaving as independent weavers with the support of like minded group which procures the investment and also undertakes marketing by employing staff for professional inputs. Every member gets according to their labour and profit proportionate to one's work. Cooperative also provides all social security measures.

Investment for working capital, up-gradation of looms, marketing and management etc will be accessed from financial institutions. Assistance of NGO will be accessed to facilitating the whole process of demonstrating the alternative model. The loan will be repaid in 68 months with 6

months moratorium period. Members provide self affidavit for repayment of the total amount divided by each member.

The Cooperative will avail Government support in the form of marketing development assistance, rebate on sales (10%), thrift (4% from each member and 4% from Central Government and 4% from State government).

The cooperative will have basic team of professionals to assist the cooperative members in designing, marketing, and office management.

The success will be replicated with another cooperative in the neighbouring village. Larger cooperatives also could be initiated in villages with more number of weavers.

The scope for accessing any existing government scheme for rehabilitation and assistance of handlooms is also planned to be utilised in this model. Some of the government schemes for handloom sector are furnished in Annexure -2, and 3.

#### **Model Cooperative Society of Weavers - Concept**

- In this cooperative, the General Body acts as an **assembly based collective decision making system;**
- Focus on **control over physical production and processes;**
- A concept of labour as a process of creating value- subject to their needs and values and surplus value which links organization to society;
- To establish and promote **organic linkages and relationship between the handloom weavers and pre- loom processors** (warpers, winders, dyers, sizers, spinners, prin winders, piecing workers, etc);
- To establish the Design Development Centre;
- To create Rural and Urban Market linkage facility to the fabric produced by the weavers, more particularly within the district and neighbouring areas (mobile marketing system);
- To implement the government welfare schemes meant for the weavers;
- To conduct awareness programmes about cooperative system and benefits of a cooperative;
- To conduct awareness programmes about the State and Central Government Policies through seminars and workshops.

#### **Other components of concern for holistic development of weavers**

Community mobilisation and contribution of NGOs also could be planned in detail to address non economical aspects of the crisis affecting the weaving community in Chirala.

Food security and nutrition are important concerns of weavers' community. Dr Veena Sahtrugna, former Deputy Director of National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad emphasises that any rehabilitation intervention is incomplete without improving the food security and access to nutrition among the weavers. The measures should include kitchen gardens, access to protein, subsidised public distribution system to ensure all their food requirements are met. They must have eggs, fruits, vegetables in addition to cereals and pulses. Supply of cooked meals at subsidised rates could be one of the measures to improve the nutritional crisis. Food supplementation is also recommended for children to arrest stunting and the adverse effect of micro nutrient deficiency on health and nutritional status. Community mobilisation of women and children for accessing ICDS programmes meant for pregnant and lactating women on one hand and accessing mid day meals programme for school children and Anganwadi programme for pre-schools on the other should form integral component of the health interventions.

## Recommendations

Advocacy interventions on handloom policy and the government schemes for welfare of weavers is important to highlight the gaps and areas for introspection based on evidence based local research to ensure the schemes are reviewed and revised to improve outreach and efficacy of the programmes. The government schemes are not reaching the weavers and there are serious flaws in implementation. Corruption is another problem that erodes the benefits that could accrue to the weavers.

Action research interventions focused specific aspects affecting the weavers can help review and guide policy changes.

Changing conditions of the weavers after the Third Handloom Weavers Census need to be captured as there is large scale decline in the weaving population.

Urgent action is required in exploring the legal spaces for making minimum wages applicable to handloom weavers. Various laws governing trade, labour, social security aspects of the handloom weavers needs urgent action to change the weavers from self employed informal actors of the putting out system into formal and legal enterprise for the welfare of the weavers.

Critical debate on the efficacy of the alternative approaches to revive handloom sector and empower the weavers to attain decent and dignified living is required as the alternative approaches reflect gap between protecting the handloom sector from the actual support to help weavers come out of indebtedness ad exploitation.

Weavers in old age require attention as the younger members are not only moving out of handloom sector but also form the villages leaving behind the old and aged members to fend for themselves. Debt and neglect are forcing the old people to continue lives in despair and helplessness. Community support structures need to be explored.

Health issues are of serious concern. Both institutional and community measures as well as behavioural changes in food habits, medicare are important concerns. Scope for household interventions in improving nutrition and food security as well as community level measures for food security require attention.

Child labour issues need attention as a small section of the children are out of school and are employed in allied sectors and other occupations to supplement the meagre incomes of the family.

Occupational health issues of the handloom weavers need attention. Similarly scope for innovations in technology for reducing drudgery need to be explored. Inter-disciplinary action research may be explored to address technology-health –income issues of handloom weaving

sector. Long term effects of changing technology on health of the weavers needs research and debate.

Role of several government agencies (research, marketing, financial, social security and policy) responsible for development of handloom weavers needs to be explored and popularised. Public private partnerships require attention to tap the resources available with various agencies.

Alternative models of collective action through cooperatives require immediate attention. The alternatives on small scale could be upscaled and replicated as the handloom weavers in other clusters across the state and country have similar problems.

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**Annexure 1 SUMMARY OF WEAVERS BASELINE SURVEY**

1	Total Villages	:	10	
2	Total Families	:	1,941	
	Scheduled Castes	:	78	(4.02%)
	Scheduled Tribes	:	95	(4.89%)
	Backward Classes	:	1,642	(84.60%)
	Minorities	:	36	(1.85%)
	Other Castes	:	90	(4.64%)
3	Total Population by Sex	:	6,545	
	Male	:	3,305	(50.50%)
	Female	:	3,240	(49.50%)
4	Population Caste Category-wise			
5	0 to 3 yrs. age group children	:	289	(4.42%)
	Boys	:	148	(4.48%)
	Girls	:	141	(4.35%)
6	4 to 5 yrs. age group children	:	202	(3.09%)
	Boys	:	101	(3.06%)
	Girls	:	101	(0.03%)
7	Challenged People	:	55	(0.84%)
	Physically	:	37	(0.57%)
	Mentally	:	18	(0.28%)
8	Literate Population	:	3,879	(64.07%)
9	Illiterate Population	:	2,175	(35.93%)
10	Status of 6-14 age group			
	(a) Total No. of Children	:	931	(14.22%)
	Boys	:	463	(14.01%)
	Girls	:	468	(14.44%)
	(b) Studying	:	828	(88.94%)
	Boys	:	417	(90.06%)
	Girls	:	411	(87.82%)
	(c) Labour	:	15	(1.61%)
	Boys	:	8	(1.73%)
	Girls	:	7	(1.50%)
	(d) Own works	:	31	(3.33%)
	Boys	:	15	(3.24%)
	Girls	:	16	(3.42%)
	(e) Assisting Family/Idle at home	:	57	(6.12%)
	Boys	:	23	(4.97%)
	Girls	:	34	(7.26%)
11	Health Status			
	(a) Immunisation Particulars			
	Total Children	:	491	
	Immunised	:	491	(100.00%)
	(b) Pregnant Women			
	Total	:	63	
	Immunised	:	63	(100.00%)
	(c) Reproductive Couple (<45 years)			

## (d) Infant Mortality Status (Last Year)

No. of Pregnancies	:	61	
Live Births	:	59	(96.72%)
Infant Deaths	:	1	(1.64%)
Deaths of Pregnancies	:	1	(1.64%)

## 17 Family Credit Information

(a) Membership in			
SHG	:	668	(20.62%)
Weaving			
No of Families	:	938	(48.33%)
No of Loans	:	1,063	
Loan taken (INR)	:	23,053,500	
Repaid amount (P&I) (INR)	:	4,071,000	(17.66%)
Balance (INR)	:	18,982,500	(82.34%)
□ Other than Weaving			
- No of Families	:	74	(1.13%)
- No of Loans	:	83	
- Loan taken (INR)	:	1,110,500	
- Repaid amount (P&I) (INR)	:	473,000	(42.59%)
- Balance (INR)	:	637,500	(57.41%)
□ Total			
- No of Families	:	1,012	(52.14%)
- No of Loans	:	1,146	
- Loan taken (INR)	:	24,164,000	
- Repaid amount (P&I) (INR)	:	4,544,000	(18.80%)
- Balance (INR)	:	19,620,000	(81.20%)

## 18 Income Status

Income from (INR)			
Net Income from Occupation			
- Weaving	:	25,133,000	(36.37%)
- Other Families	:	43,975,000	(63.63%)
- Total	:	69,108,000	(74.01%)
Net Income from Govt. Programmes	:	103,460	(0.11%)
Loan taken Amount	:	24,164,000	(25.88%)
Total Gross Income	:	93,375,460	
Loan Repaid amount (P&I)	:	4,544,000	
Family Expenditure	:	68,384,354	
Total Net Income	:	20,447,106	
Annual Income including loans availed (INR) / No. of Families			
(a) < Rs. 40,000/-	:	587	(30.24%)
(b) Rs. 40,001/- to Rs. 60,000/-	:	863	(44.46%)
(c) Rs. 60,001/- to Rs. 80,000/-	:	491	(25.30%)

19 Govt support accessed

## Annexure- 2

**Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme (IHDS)**

**The Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme (IHDS)**, introduced during 2007-08, has four components. (i) The Cluster Development Programme provides need-based inputs to clusters of 300-500 handlooms over a 3-year period through grant of financial assistance up to Rs 60 lakh per cluster, for meeting expenditure on formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs), setting up yarn depots, design development, setting up Common Facility Centres (CFCs)/ dye houses, margin money for working capital, new looms and accessories and construction of worksheds, skill upgradation and marketing opportunities. (ii) The Group Approach supports the handloom weavers not covered by the clusters, in groups of 10 or more and up to 100 weavers, by providing financial assistance for basic inputs; training in weaving, dyeing, designing and managerial disciplines; and construction of worksheds. Per beneficiary cost is in the range of Rs 10, 000 to Rs 30, 000. (iii) Marketing Incentive is given to Handloom corporations, Apex organizations and Primary weaver cooperative societies, at the rate of 10% (shared 50:50 between the Central and the State Governments) for promoting marketing of handloom products, largely through promotion of investment in infrastructure. Besides, assistance is extended towards financial strengthening of the handloom agencies. (iv) Up to 10% of funds under the Scheme are for Innovative Ideas, and up to 2% allocated for Publicity, Monitoring, Supervision, and Training of officials of the O/o Development Commissioner for Handlooms and up to 10% of funds under the Scheme are for Innovative Ideas, and up to 2% allocated for Publicity, Monitoring, Supervision, and Training of officials of the O/o Development Commissioner for Handlooms and State Directors of Handlooms as well as for evaluation of the Scheme.

**Institutional Credit for Handloom Sector** was introduced under IHDS in 2011-12. It has three sub-components, namely (a) Interest Subsidy of 3% on loans for a period of 3 years, (b) Margin Money Assistance of Rs 4200 per weaver to individual weavers, their Self Help Groups (SHGs) and joint liability groups (but not to cooperative societies and producer companies) and (c) Credit Guarantee for three years to banks/financial institutions lending to weavers, for which the guarantee fee and annual service fee will be paid by the Government of India.. **Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (IHCDS)**, a Central Sector scheme for holistic and integrated development of 20 Handloom Clusters, introduced in the year 2006-07, was also continued in the 11th Plan. The Scheme covers about 5000 handloom weavers in each cluster, with GOI's contribution of up to Rs 2 crore per cluster over a period of 5 years (initially it was for 4 years). It has benefitted more than 1.50 lakh handloom weavers/workers.

**Comprehensive Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS)** was also introduced as a Central Sector Scheme under the Mega Cluster Scheme of the Ministry of Textiles in 2008-09, which covers clearly identifiable geographical locations with at least 25,000 handlooms, in which Central share is up to Rs 70 crore per cluster over a time period of 5 years. It provides corpus for raw materials, credit for working capital, construction of worksheds, skill upgradation, technology upgradation, design studio marketing complex, value addition such as setting up of garment unit, common infrastructure and publicity. Four such Mega Clusters have been sanctioned so far at Varanasi (UP), Sivasagar (Assam), Virudhunagar (Tamil Nadu) and Murshidabad (West Bengal). These Mega Cluster projects are at different stages of implementation.

## Annexure 3

**REVIVAL, REFORM AND RESTRUCTURING PACKAGE FOR THE HANDLOOM SECTOR- NABARD ASSISTANCE FOR HANDLOOM SECTOR**

The “Revival, Reform and Restructuring Package for Handloom Sector” covers weaver societies as well as loan waiver of individual weaver loans. The Package will be implemented, as a new Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme with a total **outlay** of Rs.3884 Crore. The share of the Government of India will be Rs.3137 Crore and that of the State Government will be Rs.747 Crore. The Package is intended to be implemented by 31 December 2012.

The Package includes:

- i.Reform of the legal and institutional framework of the handloom weaver Cooperative Societies,
- ii.Detailed assessment of losses and subsequent one time recapitalization of Viable & potentially viable weaver cooperative societies (see Annex. I) at the primary and the apex level, one-time waiver of overdue loans and interest as on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2010 for individual weaver loans, (other than “receivables” from Central and State Governments),
- iii.Provision of cheap credit to handloom weavers by providing interest subsidy of 3% for an annual cycle of up to 3 years for each fresh loan,
- iv.Creating mechanism with adequate fund for credit guarantee, including fund for providing relief to weaver in case of calamity like flood, fire etc.,
- v.Computerisation of accounts of all viable and potentially viable primary weavers’ societies and putting in place a Common Accounting System for all weaver societies across the country, and
- vi.The waiver of overdue individual loans and interest disbursed by Banks (Scheduled Commercial banks, Regional Rural Banks & Cooperative Banks) overdue as on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010, meant for handloom weaving and related activities like dying etc extended to weavers, master weavers, Handloom Weaver Groups, Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) engaged in handloom weaving and related activities.

80% of the share of Government of India will be released upon the signing of the MOU by a State Government and completion of special audits by NABARD’s team in that state, and the balance 20% will be released upon fulfillment of commitments by State Government concerned after completing the legal and institutional reforms as per the MoU.

On the lines of Agriculture Debt Waiver and Debt Relief (ADWDR) Scheme of Government of India, wherein banks agreed to issue fresh loans once the overdue agricultural loans were written off, the recapitalization and repayment of outstanding loans of handloom cooperative societies to Banks under the package would be subject to a commitment by the Bank concerned to give fresh loans. The payment from this package for loan waiver will be limited to 100% of overdue principal and only 25% of overdue interest as on the date of loan becoming non-performing asset (NPA). The balance 75% of overdue interest and the entire penal interest, if any, will have to be written off by the bank as a pre-condition to avail assistance under the package.

Receivables such as subsidies etc from Central and State Governments, including institutions/ agencies under the control of the Central and State Governments, will be paid outside the package separately by the respective governments, as a pre-condition. The funds required for loan waiver and recapitalization of handloom weavers' cooperative societies and that for individual weavers will be shared in the following ratio between the Government of India and States concerned in the ratio indicated below:

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>General Category States (Centre : States)</b>	<b>Special Category States (Centre : States)</b>
<b>i</b>	<b>State level apex societies</b>	<b>75 : 25</b>	<b>90 : 10</b>
<b>ii</b>	<b>Primary handloom cooperative societies</b>	<b>80 : 20</b>	<b>90 : 10</b>
<b>iii</b>	<b>Individual weavers/ SHGs etc</b>	<b>80 : 20</b>	<b>90 : 10</b>

Three levels of Committees at the National, State and District levels are proposed for review and monitoring the implementing of the scheme. NABARD, New Delhi Office is the convener of NIMRC.

The Legal and Institutional Reforms proposed under the Package are spelt out in the draft Memorandum of Undertaking (MoU) to be signed among the Govt. of India, State Governments and NABARD.

As at the close of business on 31/03/2012, 22 states have given Letter of Commitment to sign the MOU of which, three states Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Uttarakhand have signed the MOU.

**Annex-3 (I)**

The definition of “viable” and “potentially viable” societies under the package will be as follows:

**a) Viable PWCS are identified based on the following norms/criteria.**

- i. Capacity utilization during the last 3 years should have been equal or more than economic level of operation (Break even level).
- ii. Net Disposable Resources (NDR) and net worth should be positive.
- iii. Sales should be at least to the extent of 75% of average production for the last 3 years.
- iv. Audit may be completed up to for the year 2009-10.**
- v. Working capital/Cash credit limit should be rotated at least twice in a year.

**b) Potentially viable PWCS are identified by the following norms / criteria :**

- i. Net worth should be positive but incurring operative losses in not more than two of last three years.
- ii. Sales should be at least to the extent of 50% of average production for last 3 years.
- iii. Audit may be completed up to for the year 2009-10**
- iv. Working capital/Cash credit limit should be rotated at least once in a year.

c) **Non-viable** societies are those which do not fall under the above two categories.

**Extent of Coverage:** List of Handloom Cooperative Societies: Viable and Non-Viable

**As per the Recast weaver’s package pursuant to discussions with DC Handloom, Ministry of Textiles at Mumbai on 10 March 2011**

S.No	State	Number of Handloom Cooperative Societies			No. of Weavers and Allied Workers (as per handloom census 2009-10)
		No. of Viable/ Potentially Viable	Non Viable/ defunct/ Dormant	Total	
1	Andhra Pradesh	628	792	1420	355838
2	Assam	1,261	1,514	2,775	1643453
3	Orissa	483	237	720	114106
4	Tamil Nadu	1,009	215	1,224	352321
5	Uttar Pradesh	969	2,891	3,860	257783
6	West Besngal	398	51	449	779103
7	Bihar	45	1,044	1,089	43392
8	Chhattisgarh	133	137	270	8191

9	Himachal Pradesh	183	10	193	13458
10	Karnataka	378	280	658	89256
11	Kerala	459	299	758	14679
12	Madhya Pradesh	202	329	531	14761
13	Mizoram	16	146	162	43528
14	Rajasthan	73	323	396	31958
15	Puducherry	9	5	14	2803
16	Tripura	9	0	9	137177
17	Maharashtra	114	6	120	3418
18	Nagaland	8	0	8	66490
19	Gujarat	127	49	176	11009
20	Punjab	83	402	485	2636
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>6,587</b>	<b>8,730</b>	<b>15,317</b>	<b>3985360</b>



#### Annexure 4

### **Related Organizations under the office of Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India**

- Office of the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts
- Handicrafts and Handlooms Exports Corporation of India Ltd.
- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Institute of Textile Management
- Synthetic & Rayon Textiles Export Promotion Council
- Powerloom Development & Export Promotion Council
- Synthetic & Art Silk Mills Research Association
- National Handloom Development Corporation
- Wool & Woollens Export Promotion Council
- Northern India Textile Research Association
- Indian Jute Industries Research Association
- Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council
- Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
- South India Textile Research Association
- Man Made Textiles Research Association
- National Institute of Fashion Technology
- Jute Manufactures Development Council
- Central Cottage Industries Corporation
- Bombay Textile Research Association
- Handloom Export Promotion Council
- Indian Silk Export Promotion Council
- Central Wool Development Board

- Apparel Export Promotion Council
- Carpet Export Promotion Council
- National Textile Corporation Ltd
- Office of Textile Commissioner
- Jute Corporation of India Ltd.
- Office of Jute Commissioner
- Cotton Corporation of India
- Wool Research Association
- Central Silk Board
- Textiles Committee
- National Center for Textile Design