VENUE
VILLAGE: MAWKAPHAN
BLOCK: MAWSYNRAM

DATES
FEBRUARY 18-21, 2015

SPONSORED BY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRIES
GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA

PROJECT BY
DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN
IIT GUWAHATI

WORKSHOP
PARTICIPANTS: 19
MEGHALAYA

FIRST WORKSHOP: FEBRUARY 18-21, 2015
VILLAGE: MAWKAPHAN BLOCK: MAWSYNRAM
**DCI TEAM:**
1. Shri J. Gashnga  
   Deputy Director (Planning), DCI
2. Shri H. Decruse  
   General Manager, DCI
3. Smti D. Kharjana  
   Asst. Director Cottage Industries (Tech), DCI
4. Mr. Mendon Pariat  
   Managing Director, MHHDC
5. Shri P. K. Marbaniang  
   General Manager MIDC
6. Shri A. Malngiang  
   Functional Manager MIDC
7. Shri G. G. Lyngdoh  
   Functional Manager MIDC
8. Shri Iban. K. Pyngrope  
   Asst. Manager (CFS W/S) DCI
9. Shri F. Passah  
   Demonstrator DCI
10. Shri. Gibonsing Kynter  
    Headman of village Syntein

**WORKSHOP ASSISTANCE FROM DCI, SHILLONG:**
1. Mr. Iban Pyngrope  
   Asst. Manager, CFS W/S, DCIC
2. Shri F. Passah  
   Demonstrator; DCI

**FROM IIT GUWAHATI**
Prof. Avinash Shende  
Prof. Ravi Mokashi Punekar  
Mr. Pritam Paraye  
Mr. Subrata Chakraborty  
Mr. Manik Das

**FROM IIT BOMBAY**
Prof. Mandar Rane  
Ms. Divya Bharadwaj
Summary

The Department of Commerce & Industries, Shillong organized the first Craft Design Workshop conducted by the IIT Guwahati (IITG) Design team at Mawkaphan village of Mawsynram block, East Khasi Hills, on February 18-21, 2015.

Shri J.Gashnga, Dy Director (Planning) in the presence of Senior Officials of the DCI inaugurated the program. Shri H.Decruse, General Manager, DCIC, Shillong, introduced the IITG Team, Shri P. K. Marbaniang General Manager MIDC, spoke about the theme of the training workshop and Shri Mendon Pariat, Director, MHHDC, extended warm welcome to all the participants asking the participants to take maximum advantage of interaction with the IITG team during this workshop.
About Village –
Mawkaphan, Block – Mawsynram:

There were 19 participants representing the crafts cluster of the Mawsynram block from the surrounding villages of Kymynsaw, Kenbah, Jympiat, Domskong and Mawkaphan who participated regularly with great enthusiasm.

Mr. Gibonsing Kynter, Headman, Mawkaphan village extended gracious co-operation in encouraging all the craft persons to actively attend the workshop. Excellent arrangements were made to provide afternoon meals, tea and snacks for the participants.

Amongst the cluster of five villages, only Mawkaphan village has access to motorable road. Of the 200 families comprising the village nearly 70 families are involved in bamboo crafts who work on the available bamboo variety locally called ‘Shken’. This grows in abundance and is available to the craft persons. Shken has an evenly distributed inter-node space of nearly 18-24 inches with long fibers, and an even cross section thickness of 2-3 mm. The outer sheath is used for basketry as it is very pliable and flexible in nature. The crafts people with a simple ‘Dau’ and the locally available Khasi knife work in drawing out even thickness long lengths of bamboo slivers which are then used for weaving. As the outer sheath is used, the weaving is done in the green stage before drying. No treatment of the slivers is done. The range of woven bamboo products includes lampshades, winnows, dust bins, hats, fruit bowls, and tiffin boxes.
Listed below is a summary of the range of products made locally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SR. NO.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>LOCAL NAME</th>
<th>PRICE IN RUPEES</th>
<th>TIME TO PRODUCE EACH PIECE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lamp shade</td>
<td>Lamp shade</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Beetlenut Container</td>
<td>ShongKwai</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Winnow small</td>
<td>Prah</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Winnow large</td>
<td>Prah</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Decorative cone</td>
<td>Khoh</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dustbin</td>
<td>Dustbin</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bottle container with handle in hexagonal weave</td>
<td>Bottle</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hat</td>
<td>Topia</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Fruit bowl</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Pot</td>
<td>Burr Khiew</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Tiffin box</td>
<td>Burr</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Potato basket</td>
<td>Kriah Khong Phan</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Rain Headcover for field work (full size)</td>
<td>Knup</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Rain Headcover for field work (small size)</td>
<td>Knup</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Basket with legs</td>
<td>Shang Kwai</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are 3-5 self help groups that have been formed by the crafts people. Each self help group comprises of 10-15 members. The craft produce is sold on market day once every 8 days in the village market to middle men who then resell it to different agencies in Shillong and other towns retaining their own profit margin.

The crafts communities distribute their time during the year between working the fields and craft activities. The months of June to August experience the highest rainfall in the region. Craft activities at their home are therefore carried out during the months of January to March followed by June to August.
Workshop Activities - Day wise reporting

February 17, 2015

Workshop started at 11:30 am in presence of Headman of village, Syntein and the DCI dignitaries.

1. Shri J. Gashgna, Deputy Director (Planning), DCI
2. Shri H. Decruse, General Manager, DCI
3. Smti D. Kharjana, Asst. Director Cottage Industries (Tech), DCI
4. Mr. Mendon Pariat, Director, MHDC
5. Shri M. Pariat Managing Director MIDC
6. Shri P. K. Marbaniang General Manager MIDC
7. Shri A. Malngiang Functional Manager MIDC
8. Shri G. G. Lyngdoh Functional Manager MIDC
9. Shri I. K. Pyngrope Assistant Manager (CFS W/S) DCI
10. Shri F. Passah Bee-Keeping Demonstrator DCI

Mr. Gashgna inaugurated the workshop. Shri. Gibonsing Kynter Headman of village Syntein, welcomed the dignitaries to his village. Mr. Mendon Pariat and Shri H. Decruse, General Manager, DCI, spoke to the participants about the objectives on introducing new product line in bamboo crafts while Shri P. K. Marbaniang General Manager MIDC informed the importance of product innovation, quality and quantity. Prof Ravi Mokashi Punekar and Prof. Avinash Shende, IIT Guwahati outlined the theme and briefed the participants about workshop activities.

SESSION 1
Introduction of Participants

Kick off workshop started with a brief explanation about the bamboo products designed and developed at Department of Design, IIT Guwahati. The range of products designed by the IIT team were based on a brief formulated after market research. The products were designed by considering and adopting weaving skills practiced in Mawsynram/ Syntein. These included:

1. Laundry Basket
2. Chapati Basket
3. Waste paper Bin
4. Lamp shades

The molds designed and developed for each product were explained meticulously. The advantages of using mold and its effect on various factors, such as, standardization of products, maintaining dimensions and consistency were emphasized. This helps in stackability, which again plays a crucial role while transportation. On First day fifteen artisans attended the workshop, whereas, four other participants joined from day 2. The participants were from 5 different villages situated in Mawsynram block.
SESSION 2

Distribution

The participants were guided to prepare strips for the four different products, each product (listed above) demands bamboo strips of different sizes, length, width and thickness. Day 1 was completed with the preparations of strips required for next day weaving by using molds.

The participants were also asked to bring their products next morning, so that IITG Team can learn about artisans skills and weaving style, so that they could adopt the style of weaving into designed products by using molds.

DAY 2

Artisans brought their products, the products were examined and we discussed about the nature / style of weaving. Participants were guided about the products and the molds to be used.

The participants were divided into four groups as per product category. They were as follows:
Group 1 – Laundry basket
Group 2 – Chapatti (Roti) basket
Group 3 – Waste paper bin
Group 4 – Lamp shades

Group one and group two started with weaving laundry basket and chapatti basket respectively, with the help of IITG team. Examining the hexagonal weave pattern shown in figure 1, we decided to adopt the similar weaving style for creating the laundry basket.

Participants were briefed again about the products and the molds to be used.

Fig.1 Hexagonal weave pattern
Observation
While adjusting the strips to realize exact hexagon, the artisans were seen hurting their fingers. A specific tool needs to be introduced here for this purpose. More than three artisans worked to complete this basket. It was again observed that artisans used the extended part of Khasi knife to adjust the hexagonal weave. A tool shown in figure 2 can be much more useful for the same.

Moreover, printed line drawing of the weave pattern on the mold can be developed for the artisan to follow the lines as guides while weaving. This can be much more useful and effective for production. This will again help in achieving a higher level of precision and standardization in weaving and more importantly an artisan will save much time, as it was noted that the artisan spent a lot of time in adjusting the slivers and attaining perfect hexagon shape weave pattern. This may also lead to reduce stress on the artisans.

For chapatti basket, we adopted a spiral weave. This was decided on the basis of collection of bamboo products done during the brain storming workshop held earlier. The spiral weave was new to the artisans of this craft pocket. They however learned spiral weaving efficiently through hands on demonstration by the IITG team. One artisan started weaving while two others assisted him by providing finished slivers and observing the making of basket.

After completion of the basket, the split mold was removed part by part. Removal of split mold was purposely done in front of all artisans present, to expose them to the kind of mold used in weaving baskets with an undercut.
Feedback from artisans
Mr. Isban received feedback that all the artisans were extremely thrilled with the concept of molds and they were able to use the mold for weaving without apprehension. They realized that with the use of molds it becomes easy for them to achieve the desired shape.

In addition, there was a demand enquiring how could they make molds for their own traditional products. IITG team accepted the challenge and will soon work out ready to make mold for a few of their traditional products.

After completion of chapatti basket, IITG team noticed minor errors on the basket and made the artisans take notice of the flaws during weaving step by step, so that they could take care of the strips while weaving the second “chapatti basket” next day using same mold.

Documentation
Prof. Mandar Rane of IDC, IIT Bombay with Ms. Divya Bharadwaj, an expert team in communication design, carried out documentation of the whole process, including cutting bamboo to making of slivers, and the process of weaving baskets. The video documentation was also undertaken to be used in the website (shken.in) for the project and its promotion.

The name of participants, gender, age, EPIC number, address with Mobile number and the products they make were recorded to develop the database of participating craft persons.

Additionally, the team recorded interviews of all artisans gathering their views about living, livelihood and the art and process of basket weaving.

DAY 3
All artisans resumed work the next day with same enthusiasm. New members started making new variations of chapatti basket by following the same instructions discussed on the previous day.

The laundry basket group removed mold from the basket with ease and started weaving the rim of the basket. The style of weaving the rim was adopted taking inspiration from the locally available basket shown in figure 3. This style is quite commonly practiced in Syntein. On completion, it was observed that the basket was looking beautiful, subtle and was made in less time.

Observation 2
The level adjustment of rim was a tricky task for the artisans, and hence, there is a need to develop a tool that will assist to adjust the level efficiently and precisely. Or, there can be marking on the mold for marking and cutting off the strips.

After completion of basket we tried to stack this woven basket inside the sample basket made by using same mold. It was found successfully stackable.

![Traditional Basket with rim detail.](image)
The groups working on Waste paper basket and lampshades also started simultaneously using mold. It was found that artisans were able to make basket and lamp with very less effort and faster. There were very less concern to improve except a tool for cutting length and width sizing. It was observed that waste paper basket using mold was extremely easy and artisan with less skill was also able to weave the waste paper basket. The mold is made of metal and is very easy to use. More number of these molds may help us to achieve production.

Mr. Darlson, who is a very aspiring artisan, started another style of laundry basket “as sample basket made at IITG”. The team of IITG demonstrated Sun weaving and made him learn thoroughly the different stages as such weaves required excessive care and attention during weaving. Mr. Dalson expectably picked up the technique very fast and made the whole basket within a day except making the rim. This was planned for the next day by artisan and IITG team.

PVC Tube is used as mold for making lampshades. PVC tube, which is commonly available, everywhere turned out to be very economical and inexpensive to procure. Artisans were shown about the start of weaving and they were asked to do weaving of their own choice, as any kind of weaving is possible using PVC tube mold.

Mold for locally available ‘Shken’ bamboo products can be a nice idea to explore, because this may make artisans familiar with mold and this will enable them to develop a culture of production. An increased level of acceptance amongst artisans will help to attract new comers in this field. The mold also acts as a medium to communicate between artisans and the designer. In the near future, one can anticipate that artisans will be given only mold to produce bamboo products. And hence it is proposed that a special session on HOW TO MAKE MOLD will be carried out during production workshop at IIT Guwahati.

A combination of weave was tried out for laundry basket that was inspired by cage weave and ‘one by one’ weave found in Mawsynram. The style of making rim was the same as used in vegetable basket made of bamboo locally. Time taken to weave this basket was very less.

At the end of day 3, we had developed 3 varieties of laundry baskets using molds. Artisans were informed about the marketing need of variations in design to offer choice for customers and buyers.

**DAY 4**

Day 4 was the concluding day of workshop. All the pending work of bamboo products like rim of bamboo laundry basket
and chapatti baskets were completed. Finally, the products made by artisans were highly satisfactory.

Valedictory session started at 2:00 in the afternoon. IITG Team, DCI officials and artisans were interchanging dialogues about the workshop, discussed issues related to learning and received critical feedback.

To verify and validate if artisans are able to make the bamboo products with same finish and acceptance on their own, IITG team placed orders for fifteen number of laundry baskets and chapatti baskets with the artisans.

The Dy. Director Mr. Gashgna made observation expressing satisfaction regarding the outcome of the 4th day workshop and Mr. Decruse, General Manager (East Khasi Hills), DCI, extended the vote of thanks.

A group photo session with all the participants marked the end of the workshop.

**KHUBLEI.**
SHKEN.IN HEROES

Diarson Byrsaw  
Biknet Langpen  
Dheilang Disiar  
Sajina Pdahkasie

Dra Kenter  
Hodling Langpen  
Lihsai Kynter  
Phio Pdahkasiej

Pilu P Kasiej  
Pistina Kongsang  
Rangjip Pdahkasiej  
Sima Kynter

Slanda Langpen  
Spilda Disiar  
Srulda Kenter  
Starwell Pdahkasiej

Swik Disiar  
Thira Kenter  
Tising Pdahkasiej  
Khril Khongwet
REPORT ON
CRAFT DESIGN WORKSHOP
R1

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IDC, IIT BOMBAY

Report Design:
Prof. Mandar Rane + Priti Rajwade

Photographs:
Divya Bhardwaj

Content:
Prof. Ravi Mokashi
Prof. Avinash Shende

mrane.com

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