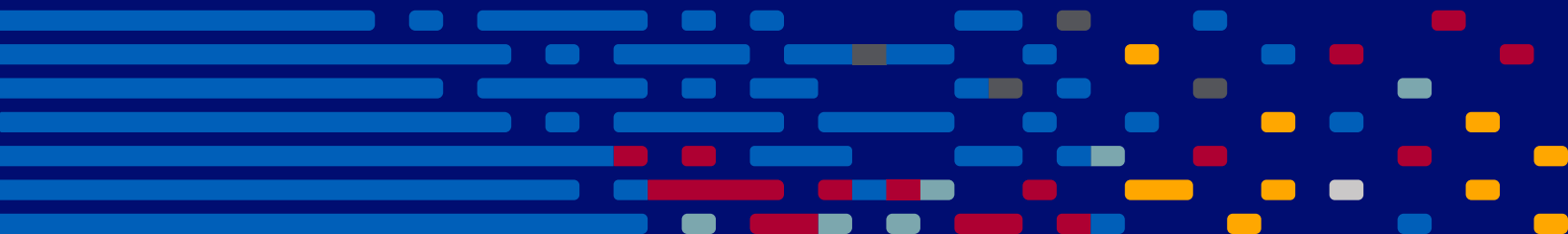


Crafting Futures

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# Sustaining handloom weaving in the Philippines





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# Foreword

***Crafting Futures* is a British Council global arts programme that supports the future of craft around the world through research, artistic collaboration and education.**

The programme is being launched in the Philippines in 2020. Building on our experience around the world, and more specifically in Southeast Asia, *Crafting Futures* seeks to establish new projects and mutual learning between the creative sectors of the UK, the Philippines and the world.

The Philippines is a country with a vibrant and diverse culture, as reflected in its cultural heritage and emerging practices of artisans today. While there are various reports on the wider craft industries in the Philippines, the British Council identified a need for an updated study on handloom weaving given the sector's motivations to reinvent and propel itself into the local and global craft scene.

We commissioned MUNI, a Philippine-based sustainable communications consultancy, to conduct this study. The research presents insights on the gaps and opportunities in the handloom weaving industry in the Philippines and how it is being impacted by global trends.

Based on in-depth interviews with stakeholder groups across the country, the study provides a holistic picture on handloom weaving in the Philippines. It analyses the different value chains within the sector, as well as the power-interest correlation of its players amid cultural, economic and psychological factors shaping the handloom weaving industry.

In addition to informing our *Crafting Futures* arts programming, we believe the study is a significant contribution to the existing knowledge base on the state of the craft sector in the Philippines.

The British Council is pleased to share the *Crafting Futures* report; we sincerely hope that it will serve as a valuable reference for artisans, designers, entrepreneurs and other decision makers as we continue to co-create a sustainable future for and through craft.

**Pilar Aramayo Prudencio**

***Country Director***

British Council in the Philippines

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# Executive summary



## Handloom weaving in the Philippines is going through a pivotal phase.

Efforts to revitalise the industry through economic and cultural interventions are intentionally being developed by several stakeholders, but these are carried out in silos. In the last four decades, livelihood programs for the weavers have been implemented, but despite this, their self-sufficiency has yet to be realised. In addition, current cultural programmes need further support to carry out projects with broader reach and effective impact. While there have been research projects conducted on the craft industry of the Philippines, these have not focused on the local handloom weaving industry and how it is connected to or being affected by movements happening in the rest of the world.

In this context, the British Council commissioned MUNI to conduct a study to help build the programme concept for Crafting Futures in the Philippines, focused on the handloom weaving industry within the context of the wider craft sector in the country and globally. Specifically, MUNI’s objectives were to:

**Gain an understanding of the context of the handloom weaving industry in the Philippines, through the following:**

- The crucial social, political and economic movements in the past that have directly shaped the industry;
- The cultural significance of the craft; and
- Current policies and programs that seek to support the industry.

**Obtain holistic insight into the needs and opportunities within the handloom weaving industry in the Philippines by:**

- Identifying the most pressing issues and needs of the industry across the value chain;
- Identifying trends and opportunities, which the local industry can benefit from; and
- Exploring Philippine handloom weaving’s links with the United Kingdom or Europe, and identifying opportunities for collaboration and partnership.



**A three-dimensional framework was utilised to provide a structure for evaluation, and to gain a holistic understanding of the state of the handloom weaving industry in the Philippines today.**

**Economic:** Weaving as a source of livelihood

**Cultural:** The cultural origins and value of weaving and

**Psychological:** The psychological motivations and impact of weaving, most especially on the weavers

The framework guided the creation of the tools, the analysis of the results, and the formulation of the recommendations.

The recognition of the intertwined impact of these three dimensions is a novel contribution to the understanding of weaving as an ever-evolving industry.

Information was collected through:

- **Focus group discussions (FGD)** with weaving communities in Ilocos Norte, Cebu, and South Cotabato
- **Key informant interviews (KII)** with the stakeholders in the handloom weaving industry, such as social enterprises, the academe, government and non-government organisations
- **Review of existing related literature**, such as publicly available information, peer-reviewed articles, government and industry reports, among others

Furthermore, data was analysed through:

- **Issues analysis** based on the three-dimensional framework
- **Stakeholder analysis** for each of the issues
- **Value chain analysis** of the economic dimension



# Summary of findings

There is a long and storied history of handloom weaving in the Philippines. This context aids in understanding how handloom weaving in the Philippines developed throughout the years in function, meaning, and value.

What was once a personal activity, handloom weaving has evolved into a source of income for women, and, over time, a cottage industry. The impact of industrialisation, mass production, globalisation, and digitisation put pressure on this industry, which brought about changes in production technology and market access, but also left many behind, including the weavers.

To support this industry, many government and non-government interventions geared towards economic development have been implemented.

Movements to support local, sustainable, and ethical goods have increased demand for handwoven textiles. In this regard, the relationships between the weavers, traders, designers and retailers play an essential role in how the textile products are evolving. These different economic interventions resulted in varying levels of growth throughout the sector's value chain.

The gaps in the supply chain, particularly material inputs, pricing, market access, and capacity building, surface as major challenges. However, another crucial matter that needs to be addressed is the income of the weavers, a substantial issue faced by the most important stakeholder group in the supply chain.

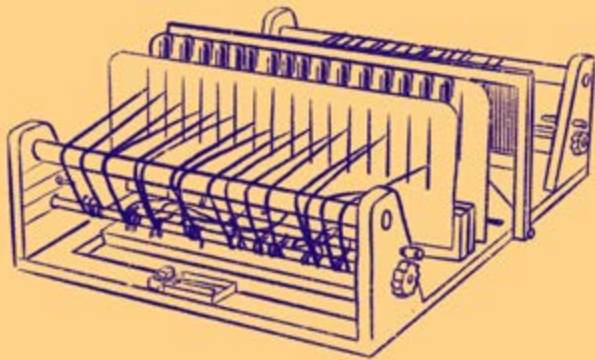
The cultural value of handloom weaving continues to evolve because of its integration into an economic system. Weaving's relevance is re-evaluated by the weavers in the face of financial needs, and this further affects transmission to younger generations. When purchasing products, the market prioritises price over cultural value, though there is a niche market where price is not an issue. Responsible collaborations between weavers and designers have been observed to attempt to be culture-based and community-centered, especially in keeping cultural practices embedded into the supply chain.

In order for weaving to remain relevant to the weavers, there must be continuous consultation, community-building, investment in cultural facilities, and documentation to support the transmission of this craft.

The psychological dimension examines the impact of weaving, as well as the motivations behind the support of the industry. Weaving significantly impacts each weaver through the ways it hinders or enables what they envision to be a good life, such as having the capacity to support their family, in the prestige of being recognised as artists, or when cultural practices and identities are preserved.

The study also reveals the disadvantages that limit the choices the weavers are able to make towards building this good life, which has to do with diminished control and agency. Despite these challenges, the study reveals that weaving is still able to significantly empower weavers as women, artists, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and agents in preserving their culture.

The impact of industrialisation and mass production, globalisation, and digitisation put pressure on this industry, which brought about changes in production technology and market access, but it also left many behind, including the weavers.





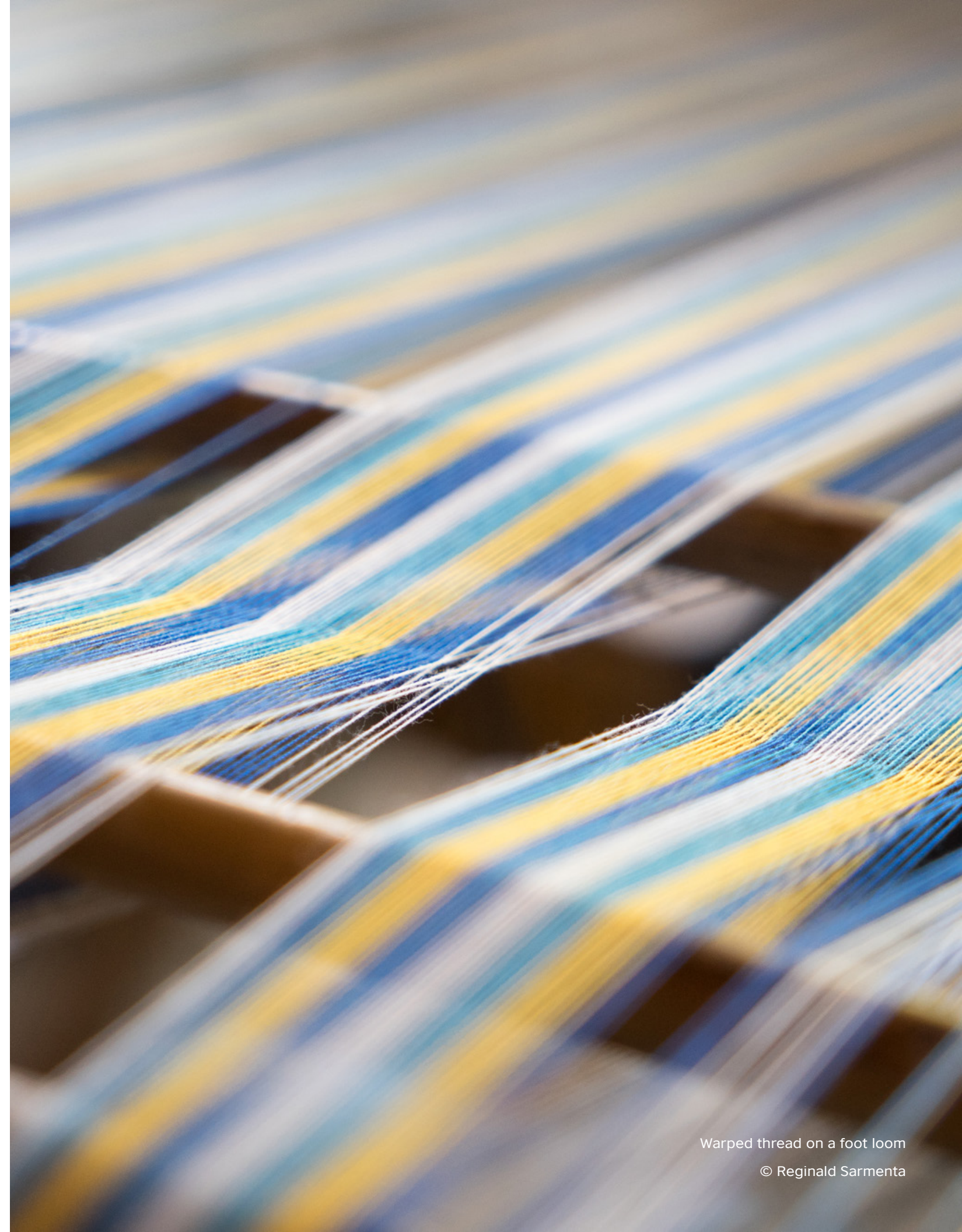
The development of weaving relies on multi-stakeholder efforts. The involvement of all stakeholders is important to drive this industry forward through genuine community development and cultural preservation.

The support of the government is fundamental in the growth and direction of the industry, especially the cohesive assistance of economic and cultural agencies.

Partnerships between weavers, retailers, and designers are essential in capacity building, product promotion, and product development. As such, the research observes the common motivations of other players across the value chain in NGOs, government, and social enterprises. The responses show that the different stakeholders are passionately and intrinsically motivated to persevere through the challenges associated with the industry. It also shows that they are working towards a culture-centric industry that empowers weavers and their communities.

Today, there has been a paradigm shift that recognises the role of culture in holistic and sustainable development. Among many others, this presents opportunities that may be able to raise local handloom weaving's value in the global marketplace.

While economic and cultural interventions were initially treated separately, a singular approach cannot suffice if the interventions' goal is for community development, especially empowerment and self-sufficiency.



Warped thread on a foot loom

© Reginald Sarmenta



**Given these findings, the best interventions are those that are holistic and programmatic, recognising that the cultural, psychological and economic dimensions of weaving will always be intertwined.** Below, we summarise recommendations to help position the British Council’s *Crafting Futures* programme in the Philippines that can create economic, cultural and empowerment programmes with the different stakeholders in the handloom weaving industry. The actions identified are drawn from evidence, insights, and analysis gathered from the respondents, and recommended in accordance with the British Council’s Art Strategy.

**Capacity Building** by supporting the local arts sector through the development of business management and technical skills, with the goal of making the weavers self-sufficient.

**Arts for Social Change** by empowering the weavers, especially cultural masters and indigenous groups, through the extension of safe spaces for dialogue, education, promotion, and collectives that revolve around culture and crafts.

**Fostering Collaborations & Networks** by creating spaces where meaningful dialogue can take place between the different players in the market in order to connect with and learn from each other. This may also be developed by nurturing collaborations that have the potential to spur innovation.

**Policy & Research** by advocating for a policy environment that is conducive to the growth of the handloom weaving industry, the sustainability of handloom weaving as an intangible cultural heritage, and the protection of the main stakeholders, the weavers.

**Sharing UK Arts with the World** by exposing Philippine cultural masters and designers to the creative industries of the United Kingdom through cultural study trips and exchanges to share best practices.



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On the whole, the current research as a descriptive, qualitative, yet holistic profile of handloom weaving in the Philippines, revealed that weaving is an enterprise comprised of several dimensions that are inextricably intertwined. As such, it is recommended that interventions be developed in a programmatic manner, aligned and coordinated in objectives, maintaining a careful balance between commerce, culture and empowerment across all stakeholders, and employed in consultation and co-creation with the weaving communities.

It is recommended that the ***Crafting Futures*** programme work towards the development of these dimensions of weaving, simultaneously, equitably and consistently for the growth and sustainability of the handloom weaving industry in the Philippines.

# Introduction

The Philippines has a long and storied history of weaving, spanning centuries of tradition across different indigenous cultures, going through changes in function, meaning, and value over time. For many of the indigenous peoples, weaving has been a vital way through which they practice and embody who they are and what they believe.<sup>1</sup> Through time, the impact of trade, industrialisation, globalisation, technology, and mass production have evolved the value and function of handloom weaving and transformed into what it is today: an assertion of identity<sup>2</sup>, a means of earning a living<sup>3</sup>, one of the latest design trends<sup>4</sup>, and a source of cultural pride.<sup>5</sup>

Globally, craft continues to show immense potential. In a report of the global creative economy, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) found that the international trade in Art Crafts totalled \$35 billion in 2015, growing 4.42% annually between 2003-2015.<sup>6</sup>

Locally, while industry reports abound on related sectors, such as garment and textile, a comprehensive study of the craft industry specifically has yet to be accomplished, let alone on weaving. Despite this, institutions such as the British Council find that the Philippines' full creative potential is yet to be reached.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, craft-making has also been seen to empower artisans and return agency, all while also valorising their culture.<sup>8</sup>

In light of this, the British Council is launching the *Crafting Futures* programme in the Philippines in 2020. A global programme supporting the future of craft, strengthening the economic, social and cultural, development around the globe through learning and access, it aims to foster economic and social empowerment through the development of creative social enterprise and design-led skills, with a specific focus on promoting social innovation, fair and ethical collaborations, and an appreciation of cultural heritage.

<sup>1</sup> Woven Universes: Math, Method, Meaning, and Magic in Philippine Indigenous Textiles (Yuchengco Museum, 2014)

<sup>2</sup> Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: The Artistry of Philippine Textiles (Labrador, 2016)

<sup>3</sup> Empowering the Local Weaving Communities (Gacusan, 2017)

<sup>4</sup> Empowering the Local Weaving Communities (Gacusan, 2017)

<sup>5</sup> Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: The Artistry of Philippine Textiles (Labrador, 2016)

<sup>6</sup> Creative Economy Outlook and Country Profile Report (UNCTAD, 2018)

<sup>7</sup> First high-level partnership of its kind to unleash creative economy of the Philippines to the world (British Council, 2018)

<sup>8</sup> Craftsmanship as a means of empowerment for the traditional population of Guaraqueçaba: a case study (Leitao, 2011)

In aid of the programme’s development, the British Council commissioned MUNI to conduct this study, specifically focusing on the handloom weaving industry within the context of the wider craft industry in the country and globally.

As such, this study seeks to illuminate the intricate workings of the current handloom weaving industry and unpack its evolving cultural, economic and psychological significance to the different stakeholders, to be able to identify the gaps that need to be addressed and find this balance between shifting priorities, values, and meanings to ensure the sustainable growth of the industry.

# Cultural roots of handloom weaving

Handloom weaving in the Philippines began as a cultural practice, often associated with being the bridge to the spirits to bring wellness and protection to Filipinos in the earthly realm. They are also believed to be protective charms when inherited, and are valuable gifts for elders.<sup>9</sup> This spiritual connection not only guides the use of textiles, but also determines the motifs and patterns used. Aside from distinguishing these textiles artistically, these patterns are also precisely what provides this bridge from the human to the spiritual realm.<sup>10</sup> For example, *T’boli* women are

known particularly to weave patterns that come to them from the goddess of abaca, *Fu Dalu*, in their dreams.<sup>11</sup> These *t’nalak* textiles are thought to be the only way to trace traditional wisdom, as a tradition of writing does not exist in their culture. Not all weavers are dreamers, and most patterns considered traditional are those inherited from dreamweavers. Because of this unique status, dreamweavers are considered to be great designers with much prestige and distinction.<sup>12</sup>

Textiles are also used for rituals and traditional dances for courtship, war, healing, harvest, and protection. Commonly, colours are used to signify one’s identity in the community. For example, red is a colour of power used by the Pinatubo Negrito for healers,<sup>13</sup> by many tribes in Mindanao for the bagani warrior class, and in other areas for village heads.

Textiles are also important symbols used throughout the stages of one’s life. For *inabel*, certain variants are used at these different stages — through birth, weddings, and deaths.<sup>14</sup> Earth colours are usually reserved for matters related to death, such as its use in funerals, or even as the wrapping for the dead. For instance, The Ga’dang in the Cordilleras used brownish red bark cloth for this purpose, before the advent of cotton.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, weaving was considered a recreational activity, where weavers are able to come together and socialise with one another.<sup>16</sup> This would evolve dramatically in the centuries to follow.

# Development of weaving as a trade

Alongside its cultural origins, handwoven textiles and the materials used to make them also have a long history of trade with neighbours inside and outside of the Philippines. Abaca has always been a major export of the country, while cotton yarn from the highland groups in Northern Luzon and Mindoro has also long been traded with China and Borneo.<sup>17</sup> Iloilo’s textile and weaving industry,<sup>18</sup> the barter of *t’nalak*,<sup>19</sup> and the trade of inabel for gold, ceramics, and beads with the Chinese, Japanese, and other countries in Southeast Asia<sup>20</sup> all pre-date the arrival of the Spanish.

The arrival of the Spanish in the Philippines expanded the use and export of weaves, and brought about the industrialisation of weaving, particularly for hospitals and galleon ships.<sup>21</sup> However, conflicting colonial interests diminished the production and export of cotton, indigo, and woven products especially in Ilocos Norte<sup>22</sup> and Iloilo<sup>23</sup>. Dishonest traders brought about a revolt in 1815 in Sarat, Ilocos Norte, and the mono-cropping of tobacco diminished the production of cotton and indigo in 1857.<sup>24</sup> In Iloilo, cotton, which had been grown and spun there even before the Spanish arrived, was not able to keep up with demand in the 19th century. To remedy this, the British vice-consul Nicolas Loney brought in cotton from Batangas, Germany and Great Britain.

This eventually resulted in Iloilo cotton and cloth exports diminishing in sales by 1871, further exacerbated by the development of sugar as the region’s primary industry.<sup>25</sup>

The end of World War II saw a shift to an industrial economy, which brought about changes in economic opportunities. Mass produced synthetic fabrics made in factories and mills were imported into the Philippines. Commercially available yarns were already spun and dyed, as opposed to local practices where inputs were made from natural fibres and dyes found in nearby surroundings.<sup>26</sup> These cheap alternatives posed a threat to handwoven textiles, which usually required more time and highly skilled labour to produce.

By 1974, the World Trade Organization implemented the Multifibre Arrangement (MFA) that implemented international quotas on the importation of textiles.<sup>27</sup> This assured the Philippines of export markets for as long as the agreement was in place. Even so, textiles only contributed less than one percent of the country’s exports, and remained uncompetitive globally because of the highly mechanised and low cost garments produced by other major Asian export markets.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: The Artistry of Philippine Textiles (Labrador, 2016)  
<sup>10</sup> Woven Universes: Math, Method, Meaning, and Magic in Philippine Indigenous Textiles (Yuchengco Museum, 2014)  
<sup>11</sup> Everyday Culture: Our Schools of Living Tradition (Ventura, Samarista & Ulo, 2018)  
<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Philippine Ethnic Patterns: A Design Sourcebook (Design Center of the Philippines, 2006)  
<sup>14</sup> Inabel: Philippine Textile from the Ilocos Region (Valenciano, Jose, Respicio, Manalo, Cunanan & Guatlo, 2015)  
<sup>15</sup> Philippine Ethnic Patterns: A Design Sourcebook (Design Center of the Philippines, 2006)  
<sup>16</sup> Challenges of Cordilleran Hand Weaving Industry (Narda’s, n.d.)

<sup>17</sup> Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: The Artistry of Philippine Textiles (Labrador, 2016)  
<sup>18</sup> Iloilo’s Weaving Industry During the 19th Century (Funtecha, 1981)  
<sup>19</sup> Everyday Culture: Our Schools of Living Tradition (Ventura, Samarista & Ulo, 2018)  
<sup>20</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>21</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>22</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>23</sup> Iloilo’s Weaving Industry During the 19th Century (Funtecha, 1981)

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>25</sup> Iloilo’s Weaving Industry During the 19th Century (Funtecha, 1981)  
<sup>26</sup> Inabel: Philippine Textile from the Ilocos Region (Valenciano, Jose, Respicio, Manalo, Cunanan & Guatlo, 2015)  
<sup>27</sup> The Multifibre Arrangement and its Effects on Developing Countries (Goto, 1989)  
<sup>28</sup> The Effects of the MFA Phase Out on the Philippine Garments and Textiles Industries (Austria, 1996)



The Board of Investments still views the Garment and Textile industry as full of immense potential and has recently released a Textile-Garment Industry Roadmap to support the sector’s growth and development, and identify any roadblocks that must be addressed.

Furthermore, the MFA made it difficult to compete on the production of materials, such as cotton and silk, because of its low-cost alternatives available from competing markets.<sup>29</sup>

Eventually, the MFA was gradually phased out from 1995-2004 through the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing.<sup>30</sup> This posed a problem to the Philippines as the country was dependent on the preferential tariffs and export quota allocations.<sup>31</sup> The impacts of this new global policy were felt the most in the development of the country’s textiles.<sup>32</sup>

Despite this, the Board of Investments (BOI), an attached agency of Department

## Interventions

As far back as the 1970s, there have been interventions developed that were geared towards the economic development of cottage industries, which was described to be “small-scale and labour-intensive in nature; have limited requirements in terms of investment in capital and technology; and are home-based and usually engaged in by people living in the rural areas.”<sup>38</sup> The inclusion of these industries, which included handloom weaving, were first seen in the 1972-1976 Philippine National Development Plan.

Several institutions were created to lead such programs, including the National Cottage Industries Development Authority (NACIDA), Institute of Small-Scale Industries (ICCI), and Design Center of the Philippines (DCP).

of Trade and Industry (DTI), still views the Garment and Textile industry as full of immense potential<sup>33</sup> and has recently released a Textile-Garment Industry Roadmap<sup>34</sup> to support the industry’s growth and development, and identify any roadblocks that must be addressed. Apart from existing initiatives in developing facilities, plant fibres, research, and education<sup>35</sup>, the roadmap seeks to secure preferential trade agreements in key export markets<sup>36</sup>, and to promote the Philippines in the sustainable fashion market.<sup>37</sup>

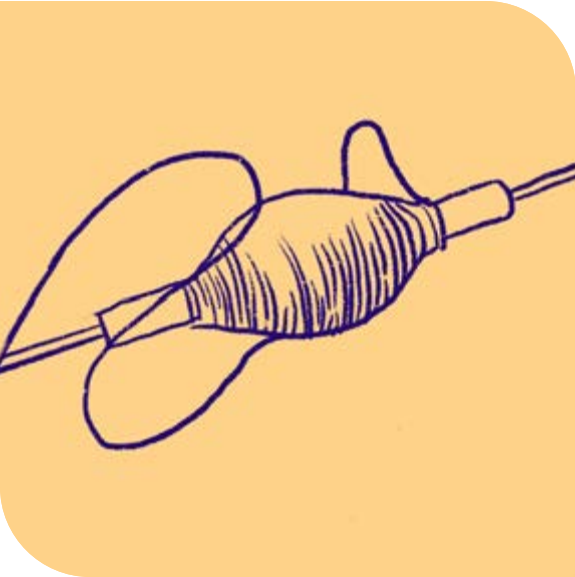
Infrastructure projects were put in place to develop market roads, especially for upland weaving communities. Other government interventions were in the form of funding, assistance in technology, supply of raw materials, product development, and export-promotion, similar to what we see today.

Throughout the years, there was more involvement of other stakeholders in capacity building, which allowed for more participation from the private and non-government sectors. Initially solely implementing these programs, the DTI and other government implementers, now tap the experience of external resource persons, especially for product development. This later paved the way for partnerships with designers.

<sup>29</sup> “Weaving” a Development Strategy: Cottage Industries in the Philippines (Suratman, 1991)  
<sup>30</sup> Textiles: Back in the Mainstream (World Trade Organization)  
<sup>31</sup> The Multifibre Arrangement and its Effects on Developing Countries (Goto, 1989)  
<sup>32</sup> How this government facility is saving Philippine textiles (Bueno, 2018)  
<sup>33</sup> DTI, private sector launch initiatives to revive PH wearables industry (PHILEXPORT, 2018)

<sup>34</sup> BOI rolls out roadmap for garments revival (Desiderio, 2019) DTI, private sector launch initiatives to revive PH wearables industry (PHILEXPORT, 2018)  
<sup>35</sup> PH garments and textile industry gears up to jumpstart resurgence (BOI, 2018)  
<sup>37</sup> BOI rolls out roadmap for garments revival (Desiderio, 2019)  
<sup>38</sup> “Weaving” a Development Strategy: Cottage Industries in the Philippines (Suratman, 1991)

The wax and wane of handloom weaving through the years

Pre-Colonial	Colonial	20th Century	Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cultural use</li><li>Recreational activity</li></ul> <p>In terms of enterprise development, there has been a shift in the target beneficiaries, where weavers are now the focus, and not the traders. Past interventions that were concentrated on small enterprises that trade the weavers’ products were not all successful in improving the conditions of the weavers as traders reportedly “exploited” them.<sup>39</sup> Because of this, the government encouraged weavers to form cooperatives, or sought the assistance of NGOs. Until today, NGOs have played an important role in community development and market linkage.</p> <p>As a key stakeholder in the industry, the situation of ethnic minorities was also recognised and addressed. A 1987 document from the Bureau of Small and Medium Business Development (formerly NACIDA) shows that there were programmes for non-Christians, Muslims, and tribal communities, like Igorots in the Cordilleras and T’boli in Southern Mindanao, to “uplift the lives of cultural minorities by improving and enhancing commercial and industrial activities.”<sup>40</sup> In 1992, two laws that focused on preserving cultural identities were created. Through Republic Act No. 7356, the National Commission of Culture and the Arts (NCCA) was “created to serve as the overall policy making body,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Weaves start to become consumer goods</li><li>Industrialisation of weaving begins</li></ul> <p>coordinating, and grants giving agency for the preservation, development and promotion of Philippine arts and culture.”<sup>41</sup> The Manlilikha ng Bayan Act (Republic Act No. 7355), recognised Filipinos engaged in any traditional art. Later on, the Indigenous Peoples’ Right Act (Republic Act No. 8371) was approved in 1997. The School of Living Traditions (SLT) programme, a flagship project of the NCCA, was created to safeguard traditional cultural practices through the transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills from cultural masters to the youth within the community. What started with three SLT centres in 1995 has grown to around 600 around the country, with handloom weaving identified as part of the programme of 11 current SLT centres.</p> <p>Today, livelihood interventions evolved to include cultural components, and vice-versa. For instance, the second iteration of SLT that commenced in 2016 added two more years to incorporate product development and promotion in the programme to make it holistic.</p> <p>Stakeholders have also realised that there is a need to intervene in other aspects related to handloom weaving. Specific programmes are targeted to develop raw materials through research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shift to industrialised economy</li><li>Weakening of local textile and garment industry after the end of the Multifibre Arrangement</li></ul> <p>and technology, access to market through market linking and collaboration, and environmental regulations.</p> <p>Details of the key laws and interventions can be accessed in Annex III.</p> <h2>Weaving today</h2> <p>The effects of industrialisation, commerce, colonialism and interventions have transformed the landscape dramatically, altering the fundamental context of weaving in the Philippines and introducing the notion of textiles as consumer goods. The weaving communities are no longer the end users of their products, and weaving in many communities has become a source of livelihood.</p> <p>Because of this, the designs and patterns have evolved to cater to consumer demands. Textile patterns and designs traditionally belonging to specific ethnic groups have evolved to incorporate motifs from neighbouring groups, with some becoming in demand in popular culture. In using imported yarn, colours used in textiles have also expanded, including colours that are not traditionally used. Lower quality,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Series of uncoordinated interventions</li><li>Rise of digital technology</li><li>Rise of sustainable fashion and circular economy</li></ul> <p>looser weaves are also more frequently created for commercial and often, tourist sales, with higher quality, tighter weaves reserved for the communities themselves. The concept of Filipino indigenous fashion has also developed.<sup>42</sup></p> <p>In the face of these changes, handwoven textiles remain to be signifiers of membership in indigenous groups, but depending on the intention of the wearer, may also become a social and political expression of his or her ethnicity against the framework of a broader national identity.<sup>43</sup></p> 

<sup>38</sup> “Weaving” a Development Strategy: Cottage Industries in the Philippines (Suratman, 1991)

<sup>40</sup> “Weaving” a Development Strategy: Cottage Industries in the Philippines (Suratman, 1991)

<sup>41</sup> Republic Act No. 7356

<sup>42</sup> Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: The Artistry of Philippine Textiles (Labrador, 2016)

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.



# Trends influencing the future of weaving

There are current movements and trends that shape the environment in which handloom weaving is developing:



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## Globalisation

UNESCO characterises the current era of globalisation as “unprecedented acceleration and intensification in the global flows of capital, labour, and information.”<sup>44</sup> It brought about rapid automation and trade liberalisation, which led to the production of low priced and diversified products through mass production, as well as introduction of foreign products in the local market. This provided easier access to international trade, but negatively affected handwoven textiles due to the availability of low-priced, low-quality alternatives.

## Digital technology and the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The fourth wave of industrialisation is characterised by the automation of production, communication, and logistics processes, bringing changing customer expectations, as well as opportunities that can be harnessed by the handloom weaving industry, such as:

- New technologies and the Internet are significantly transforming the way people access, create, produce, and disseminate cultural content and ideas.

- The digital age has allowed for innovative financing methods, such as crowdfunding. This is different from traditional financing because (1) it helps raise money easier and faster; (2) it allows an entrepreneur to gain market validation and proof of concept, through a community of like-minded people that are part of the online platform; and (3) it also acts as a marketing tool to reach unique users and potential funders. Any market player, including weavers, can leverage on this new funding approach, however, there is still the challenge of digital inclusion that needs to be addressed.
- Design through technology exponentially gives added value to the product. New technologies like embroidery machines, large format printers, and 3D scanners have become useful in adding value to products and increasing product lines. Digitisation aims to ease skills and knowledge transfer, and improves the homogeneity of output. Digital loom technology has become a useful tool for documentation and replication.

## Circular economy

According to McKinsey’s report, *The State of Fashion 2019*, consumers and companies now pay attention to the alleviation of personal impact on the environment, with consumers showing “an appetite to deviate away from traditional ownership to new ways

in which to access product,”<sup>45</sup> reflected in more companies shifting value chains, and keeping resources in the economy instead of disposing. The circular economy has started to move beyond proof of concept and has made inroads into consumer preferences and business models. This presents an opportunity for traditional handwoven textiles, as many of them are produced through sustainable methods that were inherited from past generations.

Today, handwoven textiles have evolved to be understood as both an economic good and a cultural asset. This research seeks to understand how the gaps in the industry can be filled to leverage on these global trends and opportunities while respecting its cultural roots, in aid of development of the British Council’s *Crafting Futures* programme in the Philippines.

<sup>44</sup> Globalization and culture (UNESCO, n.d.)

<sup>45</sup> The State of Fashion 2019 (McKinsey & Company, 2019)

Support local movement

Today, a renewed interest is growing in handicrafts, particularly in handloom weaving.<sup>46</sup> Established mass retail brands, social entrepreneurs, and high-end Filipino designers are more proactively supporting artisan communities, and bringing their work to wider local and global markets. A movement in support of design by and for the Filipino is growing slowly but steadily. Through this, crafts can bring about economic and social empowerment that is tied closely to identity, cultural heritage and design.

Role of culture in development

There has also been a growing acknowledgement of the impact of culture on sustainable development, so much so that UNESCO has developed a framework to measure and monitor how culture contributes to the national and local implementation of the Goals and Targets of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (SDG).<sup>47</sup> UNESCO asserts that while cultural preservation is an end goal in itself, culture contributes transversely across many of the the SDGs. UNESCO also cites other frameworks implemented globally that recognise the role of culture in sustainable development, such as the New Urban Agenda adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016.<sup>48</sup>



© Mat Wright

<sup>46</sup> Empowering the Local Weaving Communities (Gacusan, 2017)  
<sup>47</sup> UNESCO Culture | 2030 Indicators (UNESCO, 2019)  
<sup>48</sup> UNESCO Culture | 2030 Indicators (UNESCO, 2019)

Research objectives

The current research seeks to be a descriptive and qualitative profile of handloom weaving in the Philippines. The report does not claim to be exhaustive, but endeavours to be a holistic view of the industry’s different dimensions.

Specifically, the research objectives are as follow

Gain an understanding of the context of the handloom weaving industry in the Philippines, through the following:

- The crucial social, political and economic movements in the past that have directly shaped the industry;
- The cultural significance of the craft; and
- Current policies and programs that seek to support the industry.

Obtain holistic insight into the needs and opportunities within the handloom weaving industry in the Philippines by:

- Identifying the most pressing issues and needs of the industry across the value chain;
- Identifying trends and opportunities, which the local industry can benefit from; and
- Exploring Philippine handloom weaving’s links with the United Kingdom or Europe, and identifying opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

To ultimately provide recommendations to aid in the development of the *Crafting Futures* programme by the British Council in the Philippines.



# Framework

The three-dimensional framework helps provide a structure through which we can evaluate and gain a holistic understanding of the state of Philippine handloom weaving today. The framework guided the creation of the tools, the analysis of the results and the formulation of the recommendations for the *Crafting Futures* programme. It uses weaving’s economic dimension as a starting point, then builds on it by crucially acknowledging the cultural nature and value of the craft. Finally, it considers the psychological impact of weaving to understand its importance and meaning to the stakeholders, especially the weavers.

The recognition of the intertwined impact of these three dimensions is a novel contribution to the understanding of weaving as an ever-evolving industry.

## Economic

As both a livelihood that fulfils the basic needs of the family and community and as an industry serving the steadily growing demands of the market, the economic mechanisms surrounding the craft and its economic results must be considered. Research will assess how the industry is supporting the economic demands of the community, and how it is influenced by other industries, globalisation, local issues, etc. Value chain, demand generation and market landscape will also be studied to identify needs and gaps. The goal is to understand, identify and address issues that facilitate or impede the growth of weavers to become full decision-makers of their own enterprises, and how these can be financially sustainable in the long term.

## Cultural

As a craft that was born out of cultural traditions that have been passed from one generation to the next, the cultural meanings of handloom weaving and its outputs must be considered, especially in the context of the new market forces they now interact with. The research will also explore the role of community and other stakeholders in craft preservation, and how the craft affects the cultural identity of the community. The goal is to understand, identify and address issues that facilitate or impede the preservation and appreciation of the country’s weaving cultures in the contemporary context.

## Psychological

As both the bearer and successor of handloom weaving traditions, weavers are a major determinant of the success of the industry, yet their lives are also significantly affected by industry movements that may be out of their control. As such, the impact of the ever-evolving economic and cultural value of weaving on the empowerment and well-being of the individual weaver must be considered. The goal is to understand, identify and address issues that facilitate or impede the agency and empowerment of the weavers to achieve a life of their choosing, aligned with their own values and that of their culture.

Furthermore, it is also of utmost importance to gain an understanding of the individuals who may have more control over the industry, especially in relation to the weavers - this includes other stakeholders in government, NGOs and social enterprises. The goal is to understand their underlying motivations in supporting the industry.

# Research design

The research is a descriptive, qualitative study on the handloom textile weaving industry in the Philippines. Among all forms of weaving in the Philippines, handloom weaving was chosen in consideration of the team’s existing networks and expertise.

## Sample

Purposive sampling identified key players across the value chain – from weaving communities, private enterprises, government agencies, to non-government organisations (NGOs). The study aims to give an overview of the handloom weaving industry on a national level, and as such, representation from each island group (Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao) was sought, with heavy consideration for the time constraints on the project. Sampling was also based on the ease of access and pre-existing established connections of the research team.

Aside from national representation, representation across sectors was also considered, especially for the key informant interviews. This includes the academe, designers, business enterprises, national and regional government agencies, as well as non-government organisations.

For the weaving communities, a strong presence of existing livelihood and weaving activity within the geographic area was considered and the selection of respondents who prioritised economic over cultural value and vice versa, was also balanced. For example, to consider the cultural dimension, the

Lumbaan Weavers and Cotton Producers Cooperative in Pinili, Ilocos Norte and the Lang Dulay *T’nalak* Weaving Center in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato were purposively selected because of the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA) awardees in their community. Lake Sebu was selected because of the prevalence of *t’nalak*, a textile that is still thought to be sacred and spiritual by the T’boli people who reside there. To consider the economic dimension, successful weaving enterprises were also included, such as the weavers from Hablon sa Cebu and the Lake Sebu Indigenous Women Weavers Association, Inc.

Lastly, despite having conducted focus group discussions, responses were recorded individually and as such the study’s unit of analysis will be on the level of individual respondents.

Tables 1 and 2 list the respondents of the study.

Table 1 Key informant interview respondents

Academe		
Visayas	Cebu Technological University - Argao	Jorelyn Concepcion
Designers and enterprises		
National Luzon, National Visayas Visayas, National	ANTHILL Fabric Gallery ArteFino Cebu Interlace Weavers Corporation (Interlace) Holistic Coalition of the Willing (HoliCOW)	Anya Lim Cedie Vargas Francis Dravigny Debbie Palao
National government agencies		
National  National National National	Department of Science and Technology - Philippine Textile Research Institute (PTRI) DTI-Design Center of the Philippines (DTI-DCP) National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) National Museum of the Philippines	Director Celia Elumba  Executive Director Rhea Matute Ezra Kristina O. Bayalan Jessica Marquiñez and Johanna Frias
Regional and provincial government agencies		
Luzon Visayas Mindanao  Luzon	DTI Region 1 (Ilocos Region) DTI Region 7 (Central Visayas) DTI Region 12 (North Cotabato, South Cotabato, Sarangani Province, and Sultan Kudarat) Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority - Ilocos Norte	Maricor Racela Assistant Director Nannette Arbon Warren Jay B. Nantes  Evangeline Cabagan, Mildred Paroda, Nenita Cacayurin, Myrna Pascua, Florendo Alamaan, and Gloria Rosario
Non-profit organisations		
National Luzon, National National National Luzon Luzon, National Mindanao  Mindanao	CulturAid Fashion Revolution Philippines GREAT Women HABI: Philippine Textile Council Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation Katutubo Exchange Lake Sebu Indigenous Women Weavers Association, Inc. (LASIWWAI) Lake Sebu Center, School of Living Traditions	Charisse Aquino-Tugade Sophia Calugay Jeannie Javelosa Adelaida Lim Rosal Lim Dr. Edwin Antonio Jenita Eko  Reden Ulo
Master weavers		
Luzon  Mindanao Mindanao	Lumbaan Weavers and Cotton Producers Cooperative Lang Dulay <i>T’nalak</i> Weaving Center Klowil Multi-Purpose Cooperative	Manlilikha ng Bayan Magdalena Gamayo Sebulan Dulay Bernadeth Ofong

Table 2 Focus group discussion respondents

Weaving communities	
Luzon Visayas Mindanao Mindanao	Lumbaan Weavers and Cotton Producers Cooperative (Pinili, Ilocos Norte) Hablon sa Cebu (Argao, Cebu) Lake Sebu Indigenous Women Weavers Association, Inc. (Lake Sebu, South Cotabato) Lang Dulay <i>T’nalak</i> Weaving Center (Lake Sebu, South Cotabato)



Data collection

As a descriptive study, the methods used for data collection are qualitative to be able to capture rich accounts and descriptions of the respondents’ experiences within the weaving industry. The methods used were Key Informant Interviews (KII), Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and a review of existing literature. The construction of the tools followed the framework discussed in the previous section. The KII and FGD schedule is made up of questions exploring the economic, cultural and psychological dimensions of weaving and is tailored to the general sector the respondents belong to. The review of literature also spans the three dimensions to holistically understand the context and development of weaving.

Additionally, discussions on fibre materials focused on what the communities were using, whether cotton, piña, or abaca. There were no actual interviews with suppliers of these fibre materials; presented data were from primary and secondary research.

Measures towards cultural sensitivity were also taken. An informal, semi-structured interview format was used to allow for a more natural, intuitive and equal researcher-respondent discussion. Translators who are native speakers of the languages in Ilocos, Cebu and South Cotabato were also employed for the FGDs, so that the weavers may speak more freely and comfortably in their mother tongue.

The interview tools may be found in Annex IV.

Data analysis

The following tools were used in order to further analyse the data:

- **Issues analysis** explores the current challenges that the industry is facing across its economic, cultural and psychological dimensions. Gaps from the existing interventions were also identified. The analysis loosely followed the procedure of thematic analysis using non-verbatim transcripts and field notes, identifying patterns through the frequency and emphasis with which respondents spoke about such issues.
- **Stakeholder analysis** gives a perspective on who are involved, what their roles and motivations are, and how they influence the industry. The researchers define stakeholders as any individual, group or organisation that affects the handloom weaving textile industry directly or indirectly in the market. The analysis delves into the different stakeholder groups in each issue, and how they interact based on interest and power. Interest is the degree to which a stakeholder gives importance to the success of the project. Power refers to the level to which the stakeholder has a positive or negative influence on the project’s goals accomplishment.<sup>49</sup> Their interest and their power on the ecosystem are two main driving factors to the success or failure of interventions. This allows the consideration of the differing values of each stakeholder, which also helps address ethical concerns in the formulation of recommendations.

- **Value chain analysis** identifies and traces the supply chain of the product. It provides an understanding of how value chain actors create and add value to the finished good. Using this analysis provides insights on how each actor can bring greater value to make the good more competitive.

Ethics and data quality measures

Ethics

Informed consent to participate and to be audio-recorded was obtained with duly accomplished consent forms for key informant interviews and verbally before the beginning of FGDs for weaver communities. Thoughtful introductions of each researcher were done, together with the objectives and supporting organisations of the study.

Data quality measures

The consultants conducted the data gathering firsthand to ensure that sufficient and appropriate data is collected. The consultants adhered to research protocols set by the British Council. All data was documented electronically, and will be kept in cloud storage for the next five (5) years for safe-keeping.



A weaver reads an information sheet  
© Reginald Sarmenta

<sup>49</sup> Stakeholders Analysis (Beeye, n.d.)

# Presentation and analysis of data

This section includes all pertinent primary and secondary data that were obtained in the course of the study to support the analysis and conclusions made in the research. The challenges and opportunities are discussed using the three chosen analytic themes of economic, cultural, and psychological social sciences, while stakeholder relationships, and the correlation between power and interest, is also discussed in each of the issues.



# Economic

The handloom weaving industry in the Philippines is a cottage industry that has long been considered a “sunset industry”.<sup>50</sup> In recent years, however, there has been renewed interest and demand for artisanal handwoven textiles, which has encouraged more designers to use handwoven fabrics, and weavers to continue the craft.

Weaving has become a source of rural employment and income for women.<sup>51</sup> Results from the FGDs show that the weavers’ motivations in handloom weaving largely remain economic because of its ability to supplement household income, while still allowing them to fulfil their duties as mothers and wives. In some areas, such as in Pinili, weaving is their only source of income: “Dati wala namang trabaho, ngayon may income.” (We didn’t have any jobs before, but now, we have a source of income.)

There have been multi-stakeholder efforts to support the industry, especially in the establishment and support of weaving centres through various organisations, skills training, and collaborations with designers. In the public sector, government agencies are crafting a roadmap to revitalise the Garment and Textile industry, including the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Department of Science and Technology (DOST). Furthermore, the DOST has been investing in infrastructure for PTRI projects, demonstrating great interest in the industry.

Furthermore, the DOST has been investing in infrastructure for PTRI projects, demonstrating great interest in the industry.

However, despite the current forms of economic interventions that aim to revive the industry and spur micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) growth, the self-sufficiency and financial sustainability of these weavers have yet to be fully realised.

Discussed below are the issues in the handloom weaving industry that affect overall economic sustainability. The researchers were also able to identify opportunities that can arise from these.

## Availability of local inputs

There is a need to strengthen the segment of local supply of inputs in the supply chain, which lacks the necessary players, regulations and investment to create interest for growth. Erratic supply, the lack of information in the supply chain, as well as limited accessibility to all market players limits production, making it difficult for the value chain actors to operate in this environment.

The suppliers are composed of farmers, who grow the raw material that is used



Cotton from Ilocos Norte  
© Angelica Misa

for handwoven fabric. Before abaca, cotton, or silk can be utilised by weavers, it needs to be processed into yarn. In Lake Sebu, the process of drying abaca is done by the farmers, or the weavers themselves. For cotton and silk, which require further mechanised processing, the farmers would need to bring it to a processing centre to turn into yarn through the process of spinning.

The quality of raw materials brings about value addition. For instance, piña weavers are particular in using only the Red Spanish pineapple variety for their craft, while the *T’boli*’s use a specific kind of abaca for *t’nalak*. Organic yarn also has a higher value in the market than synthetic alternatives. Dyeing, especially natural dyeing, can increase value. Some weaving communities still use natural dyeing agents available in their areas.

Local manufacturing of fibres, whether synthetic, natural, or blended, has declined over the past few decades primarily because of mass production and importation. The handful of local manufacturers of yarn from both the private and public sectors are concentrated in major urban areas, such as Metro Manila.

Today, local cotton yarn costs more than imported cotton yarn, prompting the domestic textile industry to use this more<sup>52</sup>, further evidenced in the FGDs, because they are cheaper, more readily available, and regarded to be more durable than its natural counterparts.

<sup>50</sup> Philippine Textile Industry to Rise Above Challenges and Global Competitiveness (Aguilar, n.d.)  
<sup>51</sup> House Bill No. 0636: An Act Providing for the Development and Protection of the Philippine Handloom Weaving Industry

<sup>52</sup> GMO cotton could prompt renaissance of Philippine cotton industry (Asis, 2017)

The distribution of local inputs tends to be in areas where demand is highest; this creates inconsistency in supply in other areas. For cotton supply, local yarn distribution is limited and typically comes from Manila. The respondent from the Cebu Technological University (CTU) in Argao shares that they still need to order from distributors in Manila because the necessary specifications are not available in Cebu.

The weavers in Lake Sebu and Francis Dravigny of Cebu Interlace Weavers Corporation (Interlace) expressed concerns in sourcing abaca. This is especially important in Lake Sebu, where a particular kind of abaca is used for *t'nalak*.

Meanwhile, for piña, Rosal Lim of Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation shares that the supply in Palawan can no longer keep up with demand, forcing them to look for other sources, like Aklan.

In some cases, when weavers cannot afford to obtain this by themselves, further assistance can be requested from the DTI.

The lack of supply hinders the capacities of weaving communities to expand, with some having to refuse large orders from customers. Bernadeth Ofong consistently cites the problem of raw materials as their main challenge in production because it affects efficiency and supply. Given that *t'nalak* takes many months to make, it creates delays in production, and therefore, delays profits.

**The weavers' motivations in handloom weaving largely remain economic because of its ability to supplement household income, while still allowing them to fulfil their duties as mothers and wives.**



Abaca fibre used for *t'nalak*  
© Bagane Fiola

Interventions focused on reviving the local cotton and silk industry have been initiated by different stakeholders but desired outcomes have not yet been fully realised. For instance, Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority's Fiber to Fabric project in 2016 provided production assistance to farmers to plant cotton; however, after its initial stage, it was not able to meet its targets, as there was no market to sell the harvest. Later on, the agency received a larger funding from then-Senator Loren Legarda, which was appropriated to provide production assistance to farmers and to build a processing centre in Pinili. While this latter project was successful in

producing and harvesting cotton, the programme encountered challenges in looking for operators for the facility, resulting in an oversupply of unused cotton.

Advocates of local cotton yarn production are particularly supportive in the research and investment in this sub-industry. Stakeholders have realised the importance of putting up processing centres to generate interest on the part of farmer-suppliers. The recently launched cotton processing facility of PTRI in Iloilo presents opportunities for farmers to invest in this livelihood. PTRI's natural dye production hubs and natural dye satellite centres aim





to create more space for interested processors to delve into this venture. There is huge potential for the Philippine handloom weaving industry to flourish with the utilisation of local fibres into the products. Nannette Arbon, Regional Assistant Director of DTI Central Visayas, posits that developing the production of raw materials will promote the integration of the handloom weaving industry, and can serve as an opportunity to increase the value of Philippine-made handwoven fabric making it more competitive globally. Furthermore, the production of local fibres, especially production of blended fibres, can balance the local supply and demand for these inputs.

To address this issue, suppliers of raw materials and inputs are important in the industry as there is a lack of access to these inputs; however, not all of these suppliers have capacity to provide for the industry at the moment. Competition with cheaper alternatives and low investment in the supply chain from the government make it more difficult for suppliers to be responsive to the opportunity presented by the market. In order to stimulate the local production of raw materials, access to market is needed alongside the appropriate support from

secondary stakeholders, such as NGOs and government. Strong government regulations are needed to balance business interests between importers and local suppliers.



The lack of supply hinders the capacities of weaving communities to expand, with some having to refuse large orders from customers.





More designers and fashion brands are now incorporating handwoven textiles

© Mat Wright

## Product development and innovation

In terms of the value chain, the production segment consists of weavers utilising yarn and weaving it to produce handwoven fabric. With the employment of seamstresses and sewing machines, their products can be further developed into garments, fashion accessories, and home accessories.

Critical in the value addition process is the product development that occurs in this segment, which is driven by buyers of the product, who are usually traders, retailers and designers, and end customers.

### To differentiate these buyers –

Traders are brokers who distribute it to the market, such as pasalubong centres, local and craft markets, trade fairs, retail stores;

Designers and retailers are those who sell to end customers; and

End customers may be individuals, groups, or institutions that buy directly from the weaver groups, and consume the product.

Both retailers and weavers have interest in product development for their products to be competitive in the market, but it is observable that designers and retailers, who tend to be more involved in the design and product development, possess the ability to create high value products. This enables them to reach markets that neither weavers nor traders can access, giving them an upper-hand. End customers play an important role as usually these product developments are related to market demands.

The interventions observed in this research showed that design collaborations between weavers, designers and design agencies that are able to facilitate the transfer of skill sets and design thinking approaches are successful in elevating the level of quality of the products. This particularly

addresses the need for improvements in terms of quality specifications, standard measurements, and design,<sup>53</sup> which was a challenge mentioned by PTRI, DTI and GREAT Women. Opportunities in this aspect are noted as some of the designer respondents, such as HoliCOW, Interlace, Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation, have expressed the desire and enthusiasm for more design collaborations with weavers as ways to enhance the quality and artistry of their products.

There is also an opportunity to enhance not only the weaving skills, but also the complementary technical skills that are both indigenous and contemporary. In some weaving communities, particularly in indigenous communities, weavers are not only skilled in weaving, but also in other art forms, such as embroidery and beading.



*Manlilikha ng Bayan* Magdalena Gamayo's original pattern: XO in blue and orange

© Reginald Sarmenta



Outside of indigenous communities, the Philippines has skilled workers such as dyers, seamstresses, embroiderers, etc. All of these talents can bring additional value into the value chain, especially to the primary producers. This will not only aid in product development, but also give these skilled workers the opportunity to master these artforms or skill sets.

In terms of product innovation, the role of research is important. DTI Central Visayas Regional Assistant Director Nanette Arbon, Design Center of the Philippines Executive Director Rhea Matute and Francis Dravigny of Interlace mentioned that there is a need for more research into material innovations to make local fibers a competitive advantage. DTI Design Center of the Philippines has been exploring agricultural waste as a source material, focusing on natural and indigenous materials, which she calls “smarter materials.”

Fashion and textile businesses across the world are seeking sustainable raw materials and manufacturing methods for designing innovative products. This was further validated by French designer Francis Dravigny, who says that there is a lucrative opportunity for sustainable products in the international high-end market in Asia, Europe and North America, especially quality abaca

and piña. Given these, it could be an opportune time for the Philippines to grow this industry to cater to this. In the Philippines, the rise of the Circular Economy is becoming socially relevant, especially to the younger generation. There have been a growing number of zero waste initiatives from social enterprises locally. ANTHILL has been exploring textile waste as input for their apparel line, using 3,000 kilos of textile waste to make a total of 6,000 meters of zero waste fabrics.<sup>54</sup>

With the increasing demand for sustainable products, there are efforts from both the private and public sector to spur production and innovation of local materials, including HABI, PTRI and OISCA.



Some T'boli weavers are also skilled at beading and embroidery. A beaded necklace and intricately embroidered garment are seen in this photo.

<sup>54</sup> Weaving Waste (ANTHILL Fabric Gallery, n.d.)



# Access to market

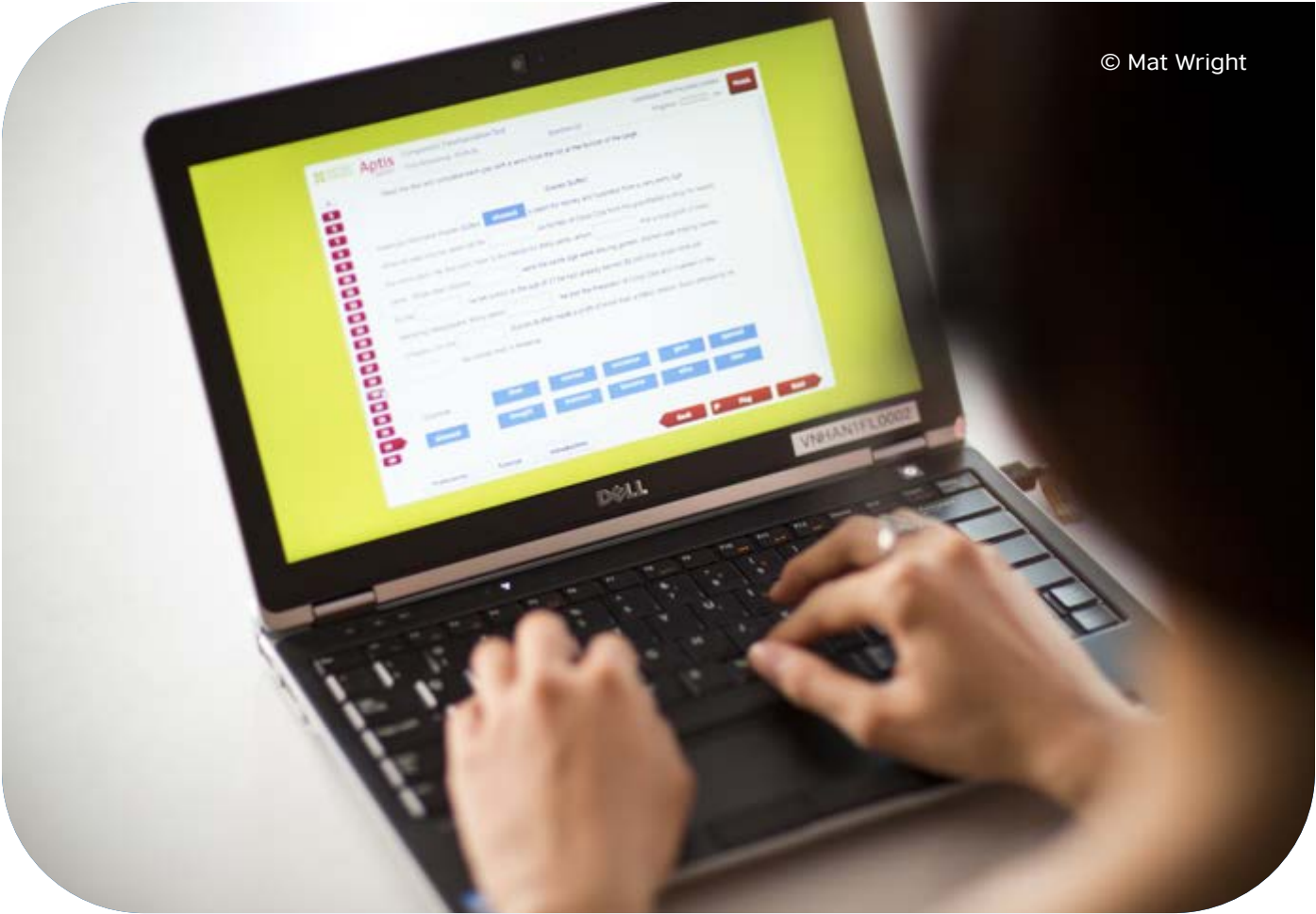
The local marketplace shows renewed interest in locally-made products, increasing the demand for local and indigenously-made products; from social enterprises to designer brands, the use of local fabrics have been on the rise.

Despite this, a common concern of weavers was the lack of regular customers. In Pinili, traders purchase their products in bulk, but according to them, these traders do not come very often. They noted that they mostly rely on tourists to sell their products. In Argao, prior to the establishment of the weaving centre in CTU, the weavers would sell or consign their products to traders, but this arrangement did not provide regular income to them. Now, they are directly working with designers who co-design their products and purchase in bulk orders. In Lake Sebu, a weaving group has expressed frustration in their lack of direct access to end customers, saying that direct connection will increase margins, which will directly benefit the weavers, or the development of their weaving association.

Weavers have also expressed difficulty accessing trade fairs that are concentrated in urban cities. Furthermore, weaving groups depend

on funding from government or partner organisations to take part in these. According to the DTI South Cotabato office, weaving groups need to apply to these trade fairs through the DTI to get an endorsement. Weavers have a disadvantage when it comes to access to the market due to their physical distance. A similar conclusion can be surmised as to why the weavers are having difficulty in accessing the global market. In these cases, the need for traders arises as they facilitate the distribution of products to these local and global markets.

Globalisation has opened up international trade and has likewise created a new market that was not accessible in the past. Technology has been a vital instrument in facilitating transactions beyond the traditional trade routes. It further opened up trade by providing direct access and visibility of products. E-commerce provides the potential to reach a global market; in fact, online shopping is quickly becoming one of the main purchasing channels for the Millennial and Generation Z markets.<sup>55</sup> With the right tools, weavers now have the opportunity to sell their products directly with customers, reducing the need to deal exclusively with traders. This in itself can expand to other



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opportunities, such as increasing margins that go directly to the weavers. It must be noted however, that weavers must be sufficiently equipped with digital literacy and business skills to avoid similar abuses, but in the online setting. Hence, it is important that in both local and global marketplaces, as well as in an online setting, weavers are given the capacity to access these directly. Traders and retailers, most especially designers, have great influence and interest because of their network and capacity to connect the weavers to the market. In addition, they possess the economic position to dictate the selling price to the market, and sometimes even the buying

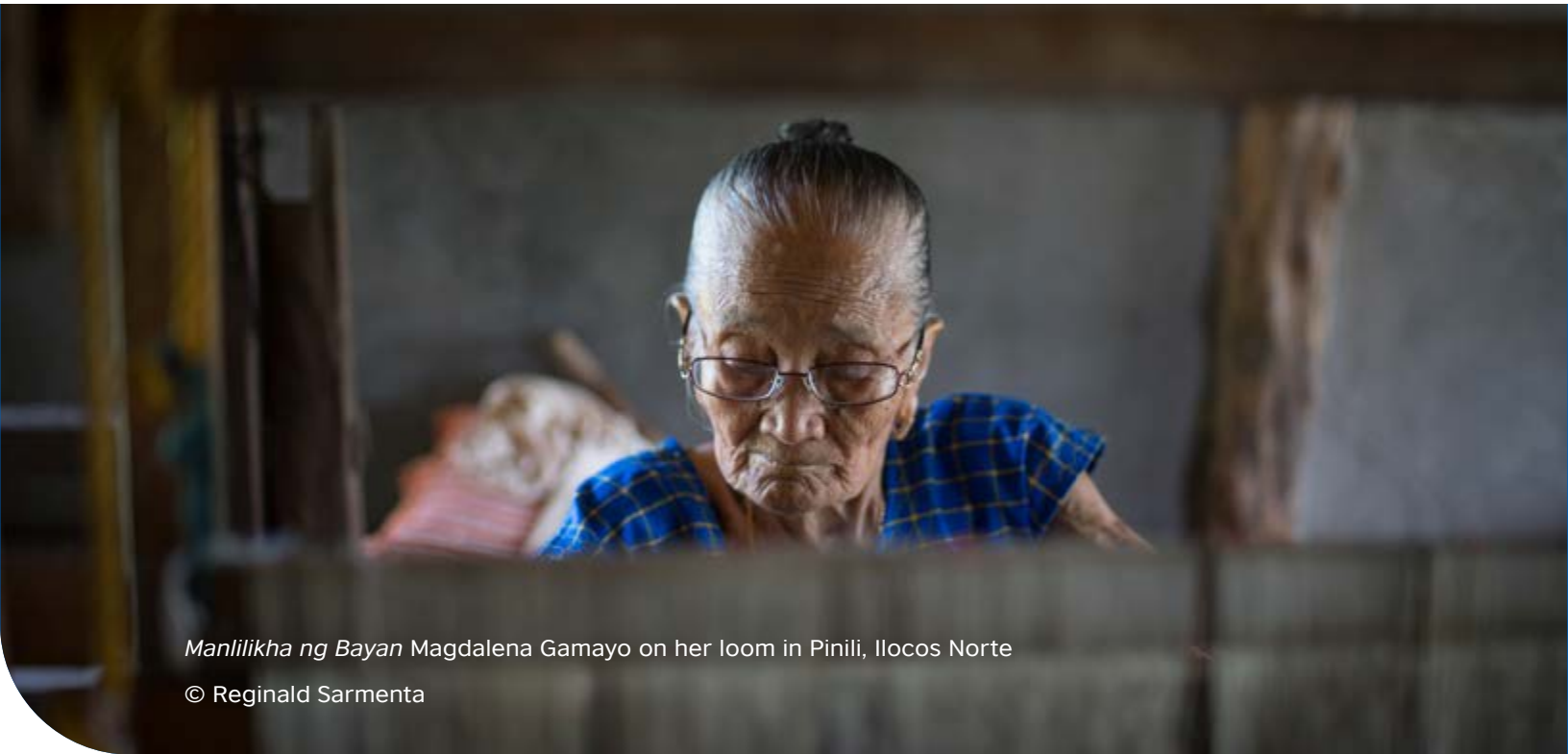
price from the weavers. There tends to be a big disparity in the selling price from the weavers and the retail price in the market, causing the weavers to feel that traders gain more in the value chain. Hence, they also feel that their returns can be maximised if they would have direct access to the market.

<sup>55</sup> Future-proofing retail stores against the threat of online shopping (Francia, 2019)

# Mass production

In the 18th century, the Industrial Revolution brought about mechanisation, mass production and shared information, which drove down production costs that made it very difficult for small artisans and businesses to compete.<sup>56</sup> *Manlilikha ng Bayan* Magdalena Gamayo, a weaver from Pinili who is now 95 years old, recalled that she had to stop making clothes after World War II, when cheaper and readily available garments became available in the local market. This also drove other weavers in her community out of business, which contributed to the decline of the industry in Ilocos.

Today, the handloom weaving industry continues to feel the effects of global mass production, enabled by the impacts of the Multi-Fibre Agreement.<sup>57</sup> This weakened the local production of input components, like cotton and silk yarn, as as other cash crops<sup>58</sup> were prioritised, and materials produced outside of the country became cheaper to import. The influx of imported and mass-produced fabrics forced the local market to compete on price. As an effect, traders are compelled to lower the market price of handwoven products to stay competitive and drive demand.



*Manlilikha ng Bayan* Magdalena Gamayo on her loom in Pinili, Ilocos Norte  
© Reginald Sarmenta

The experience of the different weaving groups in Lake Sebu and Pinili with regards to traders are similar: they would negotiate the buying price to a point where margins become very low. Since handloom weaving cooperatives and businesses operate on a per-output pricing mechanism (weavers are paid by the number of yards or meters they are able to produce), a decrease in margins affects labour costs, and significantly impacts any income that the weavers intend to gain in this endeavour.

As a consequence, the weavers experience the most losses considering that they mostly rely on traders to distribute their products. The sentiment of the weavers interviewed in Lake Sebu is that their income is not commensurate to the output.

Another result of mass production is that it altered production standards and created new norms in business to meet faster production time and bigger production volumes, which makes it difficult for weavers to comply with, given the intricacy of the craft and the nature of the work.

The weavers interviewed explained that time constraints, large quantities, and the related demands, such as the capacity and resources to meet these large orders, are barriers for them. In Argao, the weavers encounter many buyers that require them to produce large quantities of *t'nalak* in a short time frame (it takes them six months to weave 4-6 meters of *t'nalak*). In Argao, the weavers are forced to decline orders when the lead times are too short.

<sup>56</sup> Is the Era of Mass Manufacturing Coming to an End? (Acton, 2014)  
<sup>57</sup> The Multifibre Arrangement and its Effects on Developing Countries (Goto, 1989)

<sup>58</sup> "Weaving" a Development Strategy: Cottage Industries in the Philippines (Suratman, 1991)



Therefore, it is important to note that it will be helpful for value chain actors to consider the nature and complexity of handloom weaving, especially production time, labour capacities, and resources in their business models. Viewed in a more positive light, it also provides an opportunity for more weavers to benefit from weaving as demand increases.

Mass production, characterised by machineries and automation, made it possible for big manufacturers to copy indigenous designs and produce them into cheaper yet lower quality fabrics. Cedia Vargas of ArteFino cited the experience of local businesses that were reliant on exporting handwoven products, but became deeply affected when these were copied and produced through Chinese manufacturers. This observation was also echoed by other respondents working in the non-profit sector.

On the other hand, this challenge can be seen in a different light: another opportunity to grow the local market to support authentic handwoven fabrics and products, and encourage more creativity and innovation in product development among weavers and retailers.

The impact of mass production on pricing resulting in both weavers and traders to compete on bottomline. Weavers hold most interest in this context, as they stand to gain economically from this endeavour through their handwoven products. Because of this, buyers hold the most power as they have the purchasing power. Increased dialogue to facilitate mutual understanding between weavers and traders may also be necessary to help the former feel more empowered in this endeavour.

A foot loom is a heavy wooden device that uses a system of pulleys and weights

© Reginald Sarmenta





## Capacity building

Retailers and designers, may also aid in building the self-sufficiency of the weavers. Many successful outcomes in the existing interventions have been related to responsible collaboration and consultation with the weavers.

Anya Lim, Co-founder and Creative and Managing Director of ANTHILL, shares how they integrate community engagement and development into their business model. ANTHILL goes beyond merely buying products from the communities they work with by employing a capacity building program aimed at making these communities self-sufficient. She explains that this kind of progressive intervention allows the relationship to nurture growth and professionalism among community members.

There is a strong need to increase the level of entrepreneurial skills of the weavers for them to achieve economic empowerment, such as business organisation, product costing, basic bookkeeping, and marketing. In Ilocos Norte, the DTI recognised that the enterprising weaving organisations outperform those that lack these skills, citing a weaving group in Nagbacalan as an example of a successful case study because of their progress after mentoring and technical assistance. The cooperative was able to apply what they had learned from their bookkeeping training, and was able to create financial

records and statements.

Furthermore, in relation to the digital technology trend, community groups may be capacitated in the use of social media, e-commerce and financial technology to take advantage of the opportunities brought about by technology. In 2016, the *T'nalak* Tau Sebu federation in Lake Sebu came out with a crowdfunding campaign and was able to reach their target funding goal to guarantee and label their product as authentic high quality *t'nalak* through a logo and label.<sup>59</sup> This is a good example of how, with the right tools, weavers can utilise technology to promote their product, and also find additional financing.

Follow-up and monitoring must be done by the intervening organisations. DTI South Cotabato highlighted the importance of this through their experience – after feedback, the weavers were still not able to apply to their enterprise what they have learned in the product development training.

Furthermore, these interventions must be complemented by mentoring assistance to be truly sustainable. Mentoring assistance will ensure that the knowledge acquired from training is translated and adapted as practices.

One of the realisations that Jeannie Javelosa of GREAT Women learned from her community work is that the weavers



<sup>59</sup> Tnalak Tau Sebu prestige (wemakeit, n.d.)



learn “not when you teach them, but when you do business with them.” This is important to highlight, as it drives the point that doing business with them reinforces skills building and allows the weavers to implement what they have learned.

Developing these particular skills of the weavers is important in order to capacitate and protect them, especially in relation to pricing and the management of resources. It must be noted, however, that openness to new approaches varies in each weaving community – some embracing commerce and contemporary methods more comfortably than others. While the weavers have the most interest to capacitate themselves, they lack the power to make significant changes without external assistance. It is then important that organisations working with the weavers empower them with the skills necessary to grow as enterprises.

There is a strong need to increase the level of entrepreneurial skills of the weavers for them to achieve economic empowerment, such as business organisation, product costing, basic bookkeeping, and marketing.

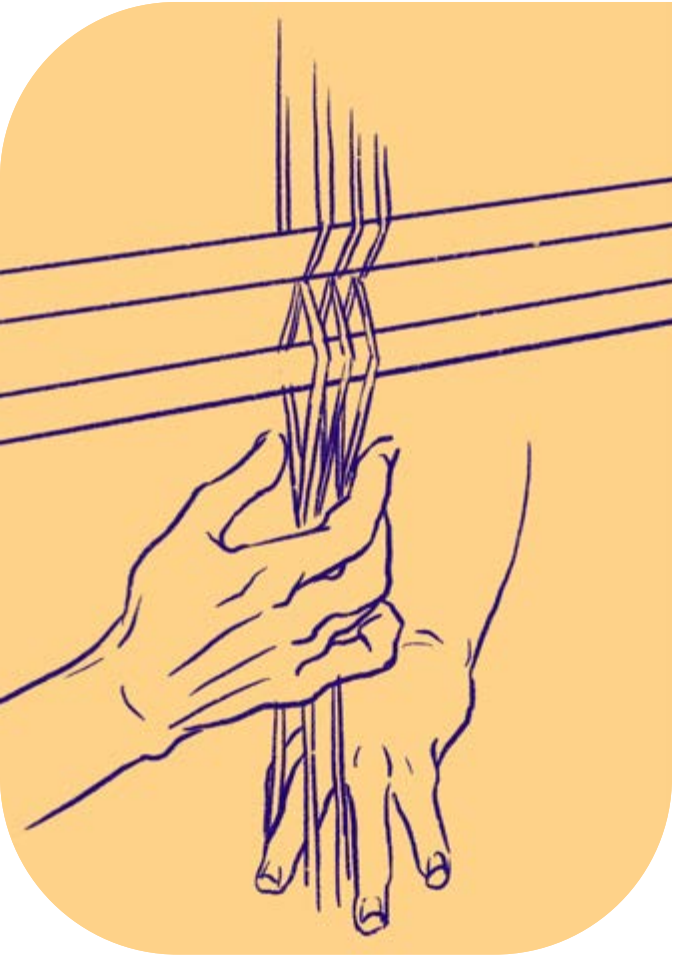
# Alternative livelihood activities

Results from FGDs show that the weavers’ goals remain largely economic: to have an adequate source of income for their family. However, weavers have been losing interest in weaving because of the availability of other employment opportunities that are more stable, not as tedious, or bring more income in comparison to the time and effort that the process of weaving demands.

Weavers may also be unconsciously passing on this preference to their children in their search for a better life for them. In the FGD in Argao, weavers expressed that they would choose other jobs for their children, because there is still a stigma that weaving is meant for those who have not finished school.

Furthermore, industrialisation has pushed the workforce away from rural areas and into the cities, diluting the workforce in rural areas in the province. This being said, it is important to create an ecosystem where the benefits of weaving as a whole outweigh its costs and other livelihood alternatives.

Those interested in retaining weaving as a livelihood are agencies, LGUs, NGOs, weavers, and cultural masters. To support the industry, external organisations have extended assistance and even subsidies, benefitting weavers, cooperatives and enterprises. However, the power to choose and ultimately take up the craft lies fully on the weavers or potential weavers.





# Weaving *T’nalak*

According to the weavers of the Lang Dulay T’nalak Weaving Center



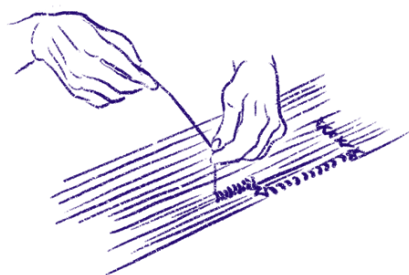
1

The **filaments are stripped from the abaca tree**, dried and separated into strands. The *T’boli* traditionally use a specific kind of abaca for their *t’nalak*.



2

The **strands are joined together with knots** to create a continuous fine thread, which is collected into rolls.



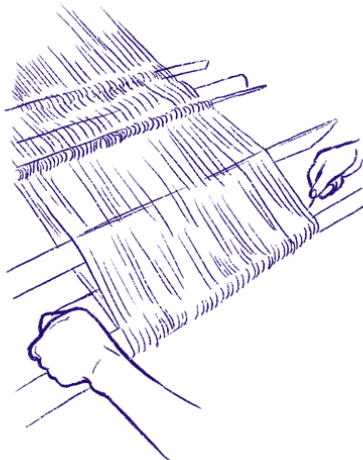
3

For the preparation of *ikat* dyeing, **patterns are designed on the thread**.



4

The ***ikat* dyeing** method is used with pigments from the roots, leaves and stems of plants. The fibres are boiled in a pot of dye for several weeks. The *t’nalak* is distinctive for its tri-colour scheme: white, red, and black (or dark brown).



5

Once dried, the **dyed thread is placed on a backstrap loom** that is held stationary by attaching one end to a beam and another to the strap around the weaver’s back. The design and pattern can now be seen. Weaving can take up to a month of uninterrupted work to produce just one metre of cloth.



7

The **fabric is burnished with a cowrie shell** to create sheen and remove stray strands.



6

A mallet is used to **pound on the fabric to smoothen it**.



8

The *byou* (in Ilonggo, “lumbang”) nut produces an oil that is **lathered on the fabric to soften the fabric**.

# Cultural

As an intangible cultural heritage, handloom weaving is a tradition that is inherited and passed down from generation to generation. Weaving can be informally classified into two categories: indigenous weaving communities and lowland communities. For indigenous weaving communities, weaving is an integral part of their culture, identity, and way of life. On the other hand, lowland communities have been exposed to colonisation, and are typically in areas where the influence of modernisation is more apparent. The practice of weaving may have come into their production systems through migration, trade, or family ties.

The importance of weaving as a cultural heritage varies among weaving communities. Both the lowland and indigenous communities see the value of preserving traditions and being agents of culture. However, the vitality of cultural heritage in every community is relative to the continuous practice of traditions and the utilisation of their cultural products.

Buyers (whether traders, retailers or end-customers) also play a crucial role in preserving the value of handloom weaving, as they, too, are part of the indirect transmission of culture.

In addition, government agencies and NGOs are also vital in ensuring the support for the transmission of cultural heritage, as they have the capacity and expertise to implement programmes to support this. However, more policy and legislative support is necessary to carry these out.

## Cultural value

Responses collected from the KIIs and FGDs across the different stakeholder groups (including the NCCA, SLT centre in Lake Sebu, Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation, CulturAid, Holistic Coalition of the Willing, the weavers in Lake Sebu) reflect that weavers are self-aware of their role as agents of culture through handloom weaving.

However, the value of the tradition of weaving differs in various communities. Due to cultural nuances, lowland weaving communities and indigenous weaving communities have different motivations. This was an observation by Ezra Bayalan of the NCCA, from her experience in implementing the School of Living Traditions programme.

Lowland communities find value in handloom weaving because of its economic benefits, which is the primary reason for weavers to learn

or continue weaving. One of the many goals of the weavers, especially as mothers, is to put their children through school, which is one of the reasons why they continue to weave.

The responses from weavers of the *T'boli* people of Lake Sebu, differed, reasoning that both its economic benefits and cultural significance motivated them to weave. The *T'bolis* believe that the weaving of *t'nalak* is an important skill that keeps their traditions alive, and that the responsibility of passing down the skill is tied to upholding their identities. “Kung nawawala ang paghahabi, sino kami sa mata ng tao?” (*If weaving is dying, who are we in the eyes of people?*)



The *T'boli* weavers of the Lang Dulay *T'nalak* Weaving Center in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato



Interestingly, in both lowland and indigenous communities where a weaver was recognised in the NCCA’s National Living Treasures Award (also known as “GAMABA”), it was observed that weaving was “revived” because of both the prestige and assistance the award brought to the community, as well as interest from new weavers and buyers. The effect of the GAMABA has also related to tourism, where the weavers and other members of the communities are able to benefit additionally. In Pinili and Lake Sebu, tourism has been one of the drivers of cultural preservation.

This goes to show that weaving has transformed into an avenue for income generation that is able to support the weavers’ families. However, while economically beneficial, it is particularly concerning from a heritage sustainability lens, as the loss of its cultural significance to the weavers is one less incentive for weavers to continue weaving when presented with alternative livelihood options.

For the weavers, inspiration of their designs are taken from their surroundings. Among the T’boli people, especially, some weavers are able to translate dreams into cloth. The cultural significance of these symbolisms vary in different communities, distinguishing among tribes, clans or villages.

When interacting with customers, the weavers themselves have observed the attenuated cultural significance of the design of handwoven products. From the experience of the LASIWWAI group in Lake Sebu, customers place a premium on lower prices over the cultural significance of the designs. In Argao, the weavers believe that buyers order from them for their ability to create new designs that adhere to their preferences.

Staying culture-based and community-centred is a challenge ANTHILL, especially in keeping cultural practices embedded into the supply chain. In other cases, such as Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation, where weaving is an introduced skill, and there are no traditional weaves, making it a struggle to create a culturally significant identity. Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation’s program is heavy on innovation to find a way to create the Palaweño identity.

Instances where copying of indigenous designs was mentioned by Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation and CulturAid, where the cultural designs are transformed into cheaper yet lower quality fabrics through manufacturing. Both respondents believe that this diminishes the value of the handwoven products, especially those with indigenous meaning.



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The weavers, who are the culture bearers, have the most interest in keeping their culture alive; however, when faced with economic needs, prioritise economic stability in order to make a living.



These responses indicate that there are implications on the cultural value of handwoven products because of its integration into an economic system. The weavers, who are the culture bearers, have the most interest in keeping their culture alive; however, when faced with economic needs, prioritise economic stability in order to

make a living. On the other hand, traders and end customers hold great influence in this situation as they have purchasing power, and sometimes even social power. Hence, the importance of storytelling is essential in preserving the cultural traditions.

# Transmission of cultural knowledge and skills to the younger generation

UNESCO discusses that the importance of intangible cultural heritage is in the “wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted from one generation to another.”<sup>60</sup> It involves a vertical transfer within the family, usually from mother to daughter within the family, or if there are strong cultural ties within the immediate community, transmission can be horizontal. The learning process itself could span years, where the apprentice-weaver observes and then learns through replication. Approaches to how it is transmitted are varied in every community, remaining within the lines of their traditions or practices, if any.

Among the weaver respondents in this research, the challenge of continuing the tradition and craft through the younger generation

continues to surface.

In Lake Sebu, the goal of the *T’bolis* is to safeguard the heritage bestowed by their ancestors because of their commitment to live their identities. The weaving groups in Lake Sebu where FGDs were conducted expressed enthusiasm and pride in weaving, as well as the desire to pass this down to the younger generation. Despite this, many in the community still fear that *t’nalak* weaving might disappear because the younger generation no longer wants to continue this.

For the weavers of the Hablon sa Cebu group in Argao, this challenge was similarly identified, citing that only a few people want to learn the craft.

<sup>60</sup> What is Intangible Cultural Heritage? (UNESCO, n.d.)



A student from the Lake Sebu School of Living Traditions dances the Madal Siwol, a courtship dance

© Bagane Fiola

A number of organisations that were interviewed also acknowledge the presence of this issue, including HoliCOW, ANTHILL, Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation, Interlace, DTI Central Visayas, CTU - Argao, and NCCA. Ezra Bayalan of the NCCA, observes that there is disinterest among the youth to continue the craft and that the younger generation would rather pursue their education elsewhere. However, she expresses hope that while there are SLT centres, which are initiated by the communities themselves, preservation of culture will continue to happen. In the SLT centres, the transmission of their indigenous knowledge and skills are

done through the cultural masters to the younger members of their local communities.

In the Lake Sebu SLT centre, there is a sustained enrolment of students, but attendance becomes a disruptor of transmission within the community, according to Reden Ulo, the Head Coordinator. Bernadeth Ofong, one of the cultural masters in that centre and head of the Klowil Multi-Purpose Cooperative of *malong* weavers, still believes that the young are motivated to learn, especially if they see an upward trajectory, such as becoming a cultural master.



The bestowing of GAMABA also requires the awardee to teach the younger generations. In the weaving communities where there are GAMABA awardees, there is interest linked to the prestige of the award, attracting more weavers.

ANTHILL’s Community Enterprise Development Programme (CEDP), a community and culture-based modular coursework, teaches their partner communities to develop skills, including cultural appreciation, and has a Master and Apprentice programme that augments the income of master weavers by 20% if they are able to successfully train an apprentice from the younger generation. This Master and Apprentice programme has led to a 57% increase in membership, half of which are in their youth.<sup>61</sup>

Since 1999, the Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation in Puerto Princesa was able to train communities to extract and knot pineapple yarn, and train weavers how to weave piña and cotton. This drew many to want to learn and teach how to weave. Rosal Lim of Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation, said that because the weavers were able to put their kids through school, there has been an increase in younger people who want to weave with them. In 2019, they saw the largest turnout for trained weavers, where 15 new and active weavers are now part of their community.

Francis Dravigny of Interlace talks about the need for the weavers to continue to tell the story of weaving in order to continue succession. When selling the products, Interlace puts a tag on each roll to connect with their

customers so that they can tell a story about the “marriage of tradition and modernity.” They want customers to know the story of each piece.

Based on the responses collected, there is interest to retain the cultural dimension of weaving from the weavers, especially in communities where weaving has strong ties to cultural identity, as well as by organisations that work with weaving communities, whether traders, NGOs, or government agencies. However, engaging the youth remains to be a challenge.

The organisations that have been able to create programmes that are aimed at transmitting cultural practices and knowledge have the most power in addressing this challenge – these are the NGOs, social enterprises, and government agencies. Usually, successful programmes are coupled with other incentives, such as personal growth, augmented income, and empowerment, that support continuation of weaving and attract the younger generation.



The teachers at the School of Living Traditions are deemed to be cultural masters

© Bagane Fiola

<sup>61</sup> This young entrepreneur weaves dreams through her social enterprise (Matabuena, 2017)



# Cultural facilities for the transmission of knowledge

Related to the challenge of transmission of cultural knowledge and skills is the need for more cultural facilities for this to take place.

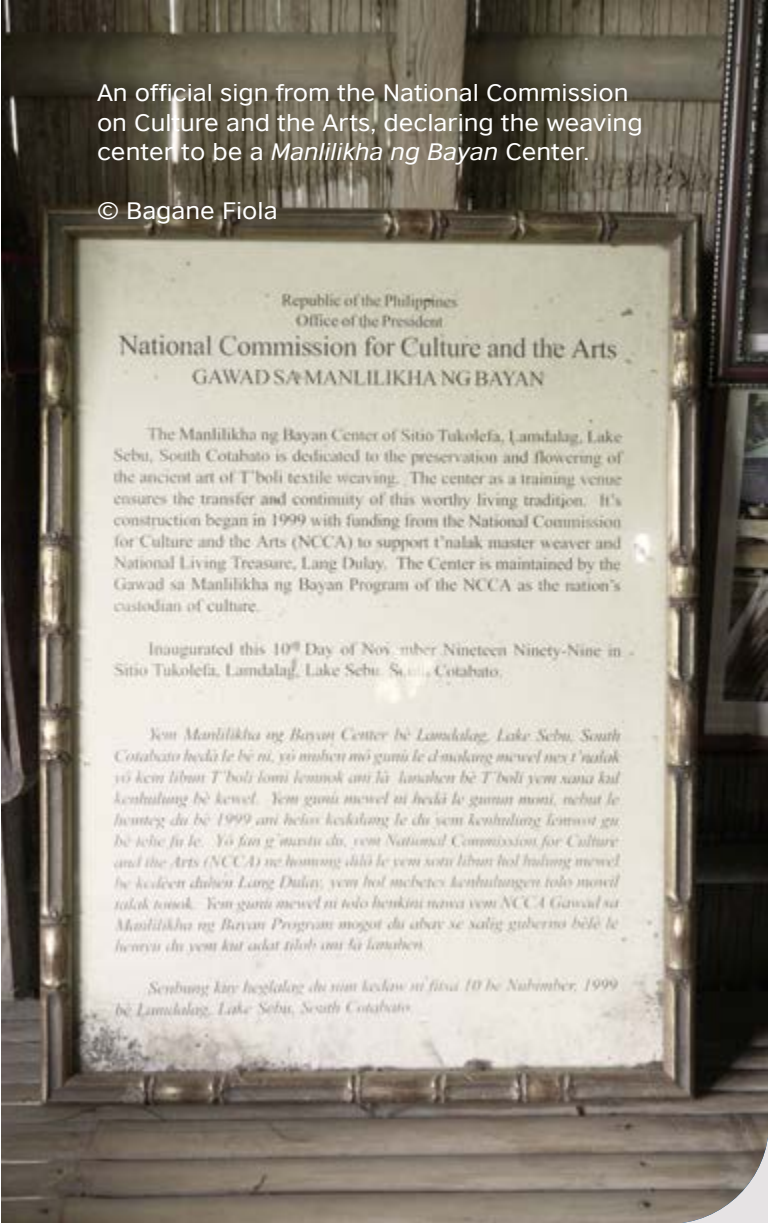
The following cultural facilities that also function towards the transmission of knowledge to the younger generation surfaced in the findings of this research: However, some weaving groups, especially those that are active in cultural

- The School of Living Traditions programme requires physical SLT centres dedicated to cultural conservation and cultural rights advocacy. It serves as a venue to transmit knowledge of the chosen art forms and subjects, but is also utilised for social gatherings where the community can deepen their cultural awareness.
- The Lumbaan Weavers and Cotton Producers Cooperative in Pinili have a weaving centre, which was

supported by the NCCA when *Manlilikha ng Bayan* Magdalena Gamayo was bestowed the GAMABA award.

- The Lang Dulay T’nalak Weaving Center was supported by the NCCA during the time of *Manlilikha ng Bayan* Lang Dulay.
- The establishment of the weaving center in Sultan Kudarat supported by CulturAid was a big milestone for the community. The centre is where weavers are able to work outside of home and where tourists may come and see their products.
- LASIWWAI’s *T’nalak* Production Center and a Kindergarten Learning Center.

The young are motivated to learn, especially if they see an upward trajectory, such as becoming a cultural master.



An official sign from the National Commission on Culture and the Arts, declaring the weaving center to be a *Manlilikha ng Bayan* Center.

© Bagane Fiola

preservation, have expressed a need for additional or an expansion of facilities to serve as venues for cultural transmission. In Lake Sebu, the respondents from the Lang Dulay T’nalak Weaving Center spoke of an urgency to refurbish or expand their weaving centre, which is old and needs maintenance. They believe that a bigger weaving centre will attract the younger generation to learn. This also gives the weaving masters more room to impart their breadth and depth of knowledge of the process from dyeing to weaving. The LASIWWAI group also spoke of their hope for a weaving centre that will be purely for educational purposes.

The shortage of these facilities makes it challenging to engage the younger generation. These facilities are also where weavers can comfortably continue weaving, and where guests and buyers may be received by the community.

The stakeholders that have the most interest in this issue are the weavers and organisations that work with them, especially those that advocate for the preservation and transmission of culture. The weavers need the support of the government and NGOs to assist them in building and expanding these facilities.

# Documentation

The intangible cultural heritage of a community resides in a few members, many of which are older. Communities have developed their own systems for transmitting their knowledge and skills, but this is typically passed down through oral transmission within the family or community. The need for documentation emerged in several responses.

The NCCA said that one of the challenges they face in preserving the craft of weaving in SLT communities is when cultural masters have no opportunity to teach, or have not been able to pass down this knowledge.

The T’nalak Tau Sebu (TTS), a federation of weavers, acquired the Collective Mark Certificate of Registration, which serves as evidence of the *T’boli’s* communal ownership of the *t’nalak* cloth.<sup>62</sup> The *t’nalak* was also listed as a Geographical Indication (GI) product, implying that the product has a specific geographical origin in Lake Sebu and possess qualities or a reputation that are connected to that origin.<sup>63</sup> The Code of Practice, a document prerequisite for the GI mark, includes guidelines for colours, material, design, and quality of textile that will ensure that it is produced from raw materials sourced in the Philippines. The weavers that comprise of the TTS consider this a big win for the community in the documentation and ownership of *t’nalak*.

Both Holistic Coalition of the Willing (HoliCOW) and CulturAid have suggested that documentation is a form of intervention that is necessary. CulturAid sees the great need for communities to document their own cultural heritage and currently teaches cultural mapping to several of the communities they work with. As a designer, Debbie Palao of HoliCOW, sees the value of documenting designs and the history of the products to inform the design process.

The interest to document the cultural products lies in external organisations and grassroots advocacy groups (such as the TTS) that see its value in terms of design and culture. The power to acquire such documentation tools and expertise greatly lies on those who have access to them, who are usually government agencies, such as the NCCA, and other organisations.

# Cultural appropriation

When developing and innovating on handwoven textiles, cultural appropriation is an important issue that comes to light. The treatment of handwoven textiles varies from place to place, and the cultural nuances of these are different in every community.

In Lake Sebu, the *T’bolis* place great respect on *t’nalak*, avoiding using it on the floor, or stepping on it. Still, some customers misuse the fabric by using it on shoes – an example given by the weavers in Lake Sebu. On the other hand, in Argao, the weavers do not identify their handwoven products with indigenous design, and are more flexible in changing the designs. In Pinili, weavers have inherited designs, but are also experimenting creating new ones.

The need to understand the cultural significance of the handwoven products and its designs is echoed by many organisations that work with weaving communities.

Charisse Aquino Tugade of CulturAid stresses that it is important to know the meaning and significance of handwoven design. If changes to the design of the weaves are introduced, it should be the community that makes these changes, as opposed to being dictated by buyers. The Lake Sebu SLT centre also urged that buyers or traders should know the story behind the products and to know the protocols that respects the consent of communities when collaborating.

ANTHILL believes that creative entrepreneurs and designers that work with weaving communities must understand the cultural constructs communities and the products textiles they work with.

*Salimbago* is a specially-design entrepreneurship development programme spearheaded by the DTI-Design Center of the Philippines (DTI-DCP). In their work with the different SLT communities, design and product development were used as tools to innovate on the community’s products while being cognisant of treating the cultural identities of the artisans with respect. As a result of the learning experiences from this, the DTI-DCP emphasised that working with these communities means collaboration with them as artisans, and respecting their cultural identities.

The stakeholders with most interest in respecting the cultural meanings of their handwoven textiles are the weavers, especially in IP groups, who translate their cultural identities into cloth. As cultural products go higher up the value chain, there tends to be a lack of awareness of the cultural value of these products, especially customers and traders. Given this, buyers play a major role in helping preserve the cultural value and significance of handwoven textiles.

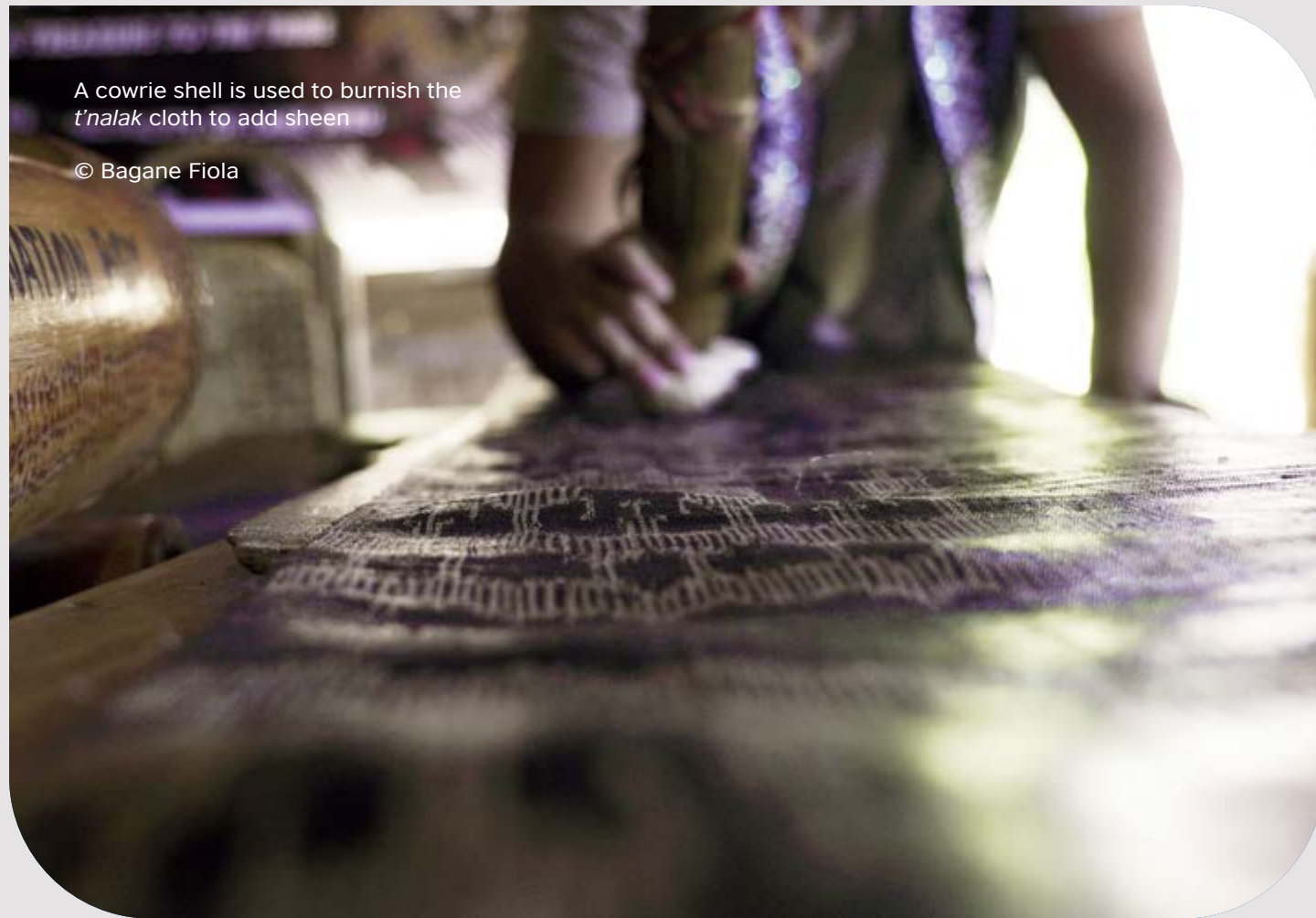
<sup>62</sup> IPOP HL Grants *T’nalak* Tau Sebu Collective Trademark Registration (IPOP HL, 2017)

<sup>63</sup> Geographical Indications (WIPO)



A cowrie shell is used to burnish the *t'nalak* cloth to add sheen

© Bagane Fiola



When developing and innovating on handwoven textiles, cultural appropriation is an important issue that comes to light.

# Psychological

Weaving, as both an economic and cultural activity, significantly impacts the lives of each individual weaver through the ways in which it hinders or enables what they envision to be a good life. This is in line with a view of development called the Capability Approach, which is an inclusive<sup>64</sup>, empowering view that takes into consideration the wants and needs of people and their idea of quality of life. The proposition is that an economic approach to development must be supplemented to truly understand, measure and develop the well-being of people.<sup>65</sup> As such, the study looked into what enables or obstructs the weaver's pursuit of such a life.

Furthermore, the social context of the weavers may also pose challenges for them. Weaving is an occupation that puts weavers into regular contact with

individuals from upper classes, such as traders, middle men, NGOs, etc. This context wherein weavers, often from working class backgrounds, interact with individuals from upper classes, has been shown to likely systematically create disadvantages for those from the working class to achieve a good life.<sup>66</sup>

Both the FGDs and the KIIs revealed some of such disadvantages, such as the lack of participation and control over the development of pricing, interventions and community, that all tend to limit the choices the weavers are able to make towards building a good life of their choosing and have to do with the weavers' diminished control over the outcomes of their own lives.

<sup>64</sup> The living wage as an income range for decent work and life (Yao, Parker, Arrowsmith & Carr, 2017)

<sup>65</sup> The Idea of Justice (Sen, 2011)

<sup>66</sup> Class rules, status dynamics and "gateway" interactions (Ridgeway & Fisk, 2012)

# Diminished control & agency

The following are the ways through which weavers experience a loss of empowerment through the lack of control and agency over socio-economic factors:

## Low educational attainment

The data of the respondents from the weaving communities interviewed shows that the educational level among most weavers is low. None of the weavers were able to reach or finish college, and there was only one recorded Alternative Learning System Graduate. Most of the weavers reached either Grade School or High School level. 23% percent of the respondents graduated High School, while 30% have only reached Grade School level. Many of the elder weavers have not received formal education, and are unable to read or write, which significantly impacts the livelihood choices available to them.

In fact, weavers from Lake Sebu stated that low English proficiency is already an immediate barrier in promoting their products, especially for international buyers, and that their illiteracy leaves them with no other option but to take weaving as their only source of livelihood. Katutubo Exchange adds that new interventions are more difficult to carry out for weavers whose educational attainment is low.

CulturAid believes that this results in a culture of “poor smallness” in the weavers, where they focus

on immediate gains, avoid new innovations, and limit the goals they set for themselves because they believe “they can only do so much.”

As educational attainment is seen as a form of upward mobility, the weavers put great importance, and, therefore, hold most interest in their educational status, but often do not have access to socio-economic opportunities to achieve this. Educational institutions, NGOs, and government agencies have the most power to provide access to education in order for weavers to increase their social mobility.

Educational institutions have been proven to promote upward mobility in terms of social class, providing not just new skills and knowledge, but also the growing belief in one’s own merits as a determinant of economic success.<sup>67</sup> This demonstrates how the weavers’ low educational attainment not only objectively limits the choices they are able to make, but also psychologically impacts their belief in their own agency to improve their own lives.

## Lack of control over pricing

The FGDs reveal that the pricing for handwoven products is often dictated and controlled by entities external to them. According to the Lang Dulay *T’nalak* Weaving Center, prices for *t’nalak* are prescribed by the NCCA. Products from the Hablon sa Cebu weaving community are priced by Cebu Technical University – Argao.

Respondents from LASIWWAI, DTI Region 1, DTI Region 12, and Katutubo Exchange also cite the unethical practices of some traders who drive prices lower during times of urgent need. One such instance is during the start of the school year, when weavers are pressed to pay for their children’s tuition fees and are compelled to sell their textiles to traders at unjust prices.

As such, it is a common sentiment among many of the weavers across all the weaving groups in the study that the prices of their products and their overall income from weaving are not enough to support them and their family. They feel that the prices are not commensurate to the physical effort, technical skill and time that they put into producing the weaves, and that attempting to make any changes is tremendously difficult. For example, for LASIWWAI, pricing 30-50% higher than the market is still not enough. Bernadeth Ofong from the Klowil Multi-Purpose Cooperative of malong weavers from Lake Sebu benefited from a DTI workshop on costing. While they are able to exercise some control over

pricing, they are still, also unable to refuse unjust prices by some traders.

As a result, some of the weavers now make variants of the weaves that are of lower quality so that it can match the lower prices that traders demand. This was also found to be common among other weaving communities in the Philippines.<sup>68</sup>

Weavers hold most interest in this context as it is their products and in relation, their time and energy and even identity that are attached. Because of this, buyers, including traders and end customers, hold the most power as they have the purchasing power. The traders, in particular, stand to benefit the most.

DTI South Cotabato asserts that as the lifestyle of traders improve, so must the weavers’. The weavers of LASIWWAI contend that commerce must be properly and ethically bridged with culture most especially in the way it is priced. The lack of control weavers have over these prices directly affect the kind of livelihood they are able to earn and the quality of life they are able to attain.

<sup>67</sup> Unpacking the Inequality Paradox: The Psychological Roots of Inequality and Social Class (Piff, Kraus & Keltner, 2018)

<sup>68</sup> Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: The Artistry of Philippine Textiles (Labrador, 2016)



**Lack of consultation in intervention development**

Lack of discourse and consultation with weaving communities have resulted in interventions that are not aligned with the needs that the weavers deem to be the most urgent. Consultations will not only minimise inefficiencies and cultural misappropriation, but they will also be a source of empowerment as a participative exercise of agency for the weavers.

ANTHILL and GREAT Women both share that staying culture-based and in continuous consultation with the communities is key to a sustainable business model. One of the best ways to honour community-centered cultural practices is to embed them into the supply chain. In one project with the communities from the NCCA’s School of Living Traditions project, Design Center Executive Director Matute cites that a cultural advisor was integral to ensuring that the agency’s projects were in accordance with the local cultures of the communities they are working with.

On the side of the weavers, one of the weaving groups in Lake Sebu hoped that government agencies consult with weavers, especially when it comes to interventions. They stressed that the focus should be more on social security and health – basic necessities that can ensure that people have the capacity to do any form of economic activity. Increased involvement may also help avoid over-dependence on interventions, if goals are co-created and the purpose of the intervention’s

benefits are clearly communicated to both the weavers and the intervening body. Consultation can also create more accountability on both the intervening bodies and the weavers in this way, especially if self-sufficiency is made a proactive goal by both parties.

External organisations that provide interventions, including programmes and financial support, are those that hold both power and interest in this situation. The interest lies in the success of the programme or intervention, and its ability to meet the goals laid out. It is also within the weavers’ best interests to have a stake in this as well, but because they are the beneficiaries in this arrangement, they do not hold as much power as the organisations that implement these programmes.

Certain weaving communities in the research who have received significant and consistent assistance from both private and public institutions show little progress in terms of enterprise development, as evidenced in their self-reported income and product line. Different government stakeholders interviewed in this study articulated their concern over the strong belief of some members of these weaving communities that support must be given to them, regardless of whether or not they meet established criteria. They add that some weavers are not challenged to develop their community or products without the help of interveners.

CulturAid explains that many weavers are wary of outsiders, such as NGOs, claiming to help them. Continuous consultation will help build rapport and eventually, trust in the authenticity of the intervener’s motives.

**Lack of community leadership & organisation**

In the weaving communities in the study, clear and strong leadership provided a competitive advantage compared to neighbouring communities as they were able to grow their weaving enterprise. Community leaders become important figures that impact all dimensions of weaving enterprises in terms of the fair treatment of weavers, the preservation of the craft, negotiation with traders, and a clear direction for the community.

In some of the weaving groups in Pinili, Lake Sebu and Argao, there are key female figures who continue to greatly affect the outcome of their specific group. These women provide social cohesion, business direction, and are instrumental when it comes to promotion.

Conversely, weavers from communities without such leaders were unable to clearly answer questions regarding business and had less self-initiated solutions in place. This may add to the growing dependence of such communities on external interventions.

Ultimately, those that can benefit from clear leadership within the community or weaving group are the weavers themselves. These leaders are able to bring business into the group, which positively affects the other weavers. Conversely, the power to appoint these leaders also resides in the other members of the group as well.



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## Conflicting life roles

Additionally, the precedence of their role as mothers influences not just their productivity, but also their primary motivations as weavers.

In the FGDs conducted, weavers shared that one of the benefits of weaving is that they can accomplish other tasks required of them as mothers at the same time. For them, weaving is something that is done during free time, and in between household chores, such as cooking and rearing children. Anya Lim of ANTHILL and Jorelyn Concepcion of CTU-Argao observe that having flexible work hours is something weavers expect and must be considered in demand forecasts.

Consequently, responsibility to family takes clear precedence over responsibility to the weaving group. As such, weavers in the FGDs report that many women have been losing interest in weaving as both a livelihood and a craft because of the availability of other employment opportunities that are more stable, that are not as tedious, or that bring more income to their families in comparison to the time and effort that weaving demands. Furthermore, the weavers in Cebu expressed that they aspire for jobs other than weaving for their children, because of the stigma that weaving is

only for those who were not able to finish school.

This demonstrates that the weavers' idea of a good life, more often than not, prioritises their role as mothers and also involves the idea of better lives for their families. This means that their role of being a mother competes with their role of being a weaver and even determines their goals for weaving in the first place. Several interests are at play here: the woman herself in her role as both mother and weaver, and the interests of her family. The dynamics of this relationship is complex and varies. Most of the time, the biggest factor that plays out in this situation is the family relationship.

Any intervention must then consider and respect both these roles, while optimising productivity and income.



A weaver in Pinili showcases her work while taking care of a child on her lap

© Reginald Sarmenta

Their role of being a mother competes with their role of being a weaver and even determines their goals for weaving in the first place.



# Empowerment through weaving

Aside from issues challenging empowerment, the results have also revealed the many ways in which weaving has significantly empowered them as women, artists, entrepreneurs, community leaders and culture-bearers and agents to preserve their culture. For many of the weavers in the study, a good life is one wherein their culture is alive and thriving, they are able to contribute to family income as women and they are recognized as artists. The challenge is in working towards an industry wherein this empowerment can keep up with the challenges they face everyday, and the achievement of this good life is maintained.

## As culture bearers

Many of the weavers across all the communities in the study recognise their roles as agents in preserving the tradition of weaving and view weaving not just as a way to earn a living, but as a responsibility to both their indigenous culture and to the Philippines on the whole. As mentioned earlier, this is particularly salient in the groups in Lake Sebu who emphasise their conviction to continue weaving *t’nalak*, despite all of its difficulties as an occupation and as a craft, because it is tied directly to their identities as *T’boli* people.

There is evidence that craft-making such as weaving brings benefits like connectedness, belonging, self-worth, identity maintenance and a sense

of control<sup>69</sup>, in addition to its unique capability to also empower and return agency by valorising the culture it came from.<sup>70</sup>

Indeed, the weavers in the study call for more support in preserving their weaving cultures especially through cultural facilities, as aforementioned earlier. This presents an additional opportunity for empowerment by making the building of such facilities participative and inclusive. This promotes a sense of agency that not only eventually leads to civic engagement, but also to individual well-being.<sup>71</sup>

## As women

The economic benefits of weaving have helped women contribute to household needs. This has given them the motivation to continue, not only for its economic benefits but also for its psychological and social impact on the weavers and their families. Women weavers are able to gain a voice in the household and community through the income they are able to contribute through weaving.

Throughout the interviews, this has been a sentiment that has continuously surfaced. While many believe weaving serves only to

augment family income, the fact that they are able to contribute to earnings at all improves their role in the household significantly. For some women in LASIWWAI in Lake Sebu, this has empowered them to leave abusive marriages. Because they now earn their own income, they are able to return the dowry paid in tribal marriages with interest. Eventually, this led them to successfully negotiate the recognised roles of women with the local datus or tribal chiefs.



The weavers of the Lang Dulay T’nalak Weaving Center in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato softening the abaca fibre

© Bagane Fiola

<sup>69</sup> Creative arts occupations in therapeutic practice: a review of the literature (Perruzza & Kinsella, 2010)

<sup>70</sup> Craftsmanship as a means of empowerment for the traditional population of Guaraqueçaba: a case study (Leitao, 2011)

<sup>71</sup> Theorizing critical placemaking as a tool for reclaiming public space (Toolis, 2017)



## As artists

Many of the weavers also take great pride in being recognised as designers or artists. The Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA) or the National Living Treasures Award further reinforces this. The award brings much prestige not just to the community, but to the individual weavers who are able to follow in the footsteps of the GAMABA awardee. In Pinili, only five (5) weavers are technically skilled enough to weave Magdelana Gamayo's award-winning pattern. It also helped encourage the interest of younger Ilocanos to take up the craft after the award was given, as income became more stable for them and they were able to demand higher prices for their weaves.

In the Lang Dulay *T'nalak* Weaving Center in Lake Sebu, they believe that the award brought them national and international recognition and helped further encourage them to continue the craft despite its difficulties. Even more, the community's elder weaving master, Sebulan Dulay, believes that it significantly uplifted the status of the T'boli people to be finally recognised

as people on the same footing as everyone else. "Tao din kami." (We are people, too.), she explains. This demonstrates the award's powerful effect on economic development, cultural appreciation, heritage sustainability, indigenous identity and individual dignity.

Lastly, the weavers in both Lake Sebu communities expressed that the income weaving may bring will never be able to match the prestige of being recognised as an artist. This most especially applies to the T'boli dreamweavers who they believe are artists blessed by the deities. This demonstrates the need for more engagement with weavers that touch on the dignity and prestige that is geared towards not just preserving the craft, but also uplifting them as artists.

Sebulan Dulay, a T'boli weaver, sits in front of her late mother-in-law's portrait

© Bagane Fiola





## As entrepreneurs

The openness to trade and innovation varies in each weaving community – some embracing commerce more comfortably than others. The key is the balance between culture and commerce.

As mentioned in an earlier section, the weaving group in Nagbacalan has been recognised by the regional DTI office as a good example of how weavers have embraced commerce.

In Lake Sebu, Klowil Multi-Purpose Cooperative leader Bernadeth Ofong also credits the training she received from DTI on costing that somehow helps protect them from unjust pricing. The LASIWWAI community has also learned the enterprising skill of adapting traditional textiles to meet the demands of the market, without disrespecting their indigenous culture.

These other skills are important in order for weavers to capacitate and protect themselves, especially when it comes to pricing and the management of resources. Weavers are empowered when they are able to control these aspects.

## As community leaders

Finally, the influence of weaving may go beyond livelihood and tradition. With enough social and political capital, they are able to push for policies that support weaving.

In the case of LASIWWAI in Lake Sebu, weaving also brought about empowerment in different forms that uplifted not just the weavers, but also the barangays they belong to. This includes providing stable water supply to their entire community, working towards sustainability to protect the natural resources they use for weaving (such as abaca and plants used for natural dyeing), intellectual property, and as earlier mentioned, successfully negotiating the recognised roles of women with local datos that ultimately resulted to women empowerment.



Jenita Eko, the president of the Lake Sebu Indigenous Women Weavers Association, Inc. (LASIWWAI)



# Motivations of the industry

The development of weaving also relies on the efforts of the other players in the value chain. Indeed, as was elucidated above, the lack of control and empowerment that weavers experience also depend largely on how these other players interact with

them directly or indirectly. As such, the study also looked into the common motivations of other players across the value chain in NGOs, government and social enterprises.



Researchers talk to *Manlilikha ng Bayan* Magdalena Gamayo  
© Reginald Sarmenta

## Stakeholders aim for the empowerment of weavers and their communities through self-sufficiency in doing business and in valuing culture.

Like the weavers, the stakeholders’ most urgent goal is to build a sustainable livelihood for the weavers, especially so that they will be able to send their children to school and avoid finding alternative employment abroad. In addition to this, select stakeholders, such as representatives from regional DTI offices as well as the social enterprise Anthill, also take active steps to help weaving communities be independent entrepreneurs in their own right, and no longer need as much assistance as is currently provided to them. This informs the kind of programs and interventions they’ve built, where the help they provide goes beyond the dispensing of skills and knowledge, and instead plans for a future where communities can survive and thrive on their own.

Aside from being independent in business, many stakeholders proactively make known to the weavers their role in preserving their culture. One way several stakeholders do this is by tying design with their cultural identity. Social enterprise HoliCOW begins with a design that must have purpose, identity and is based on history. Anthill also believes that design is something innate to the culture of each community and goes hand in hand with the technical skills they learn as weavers. Another way stakeholders suggest is to address how weaving is not viewed as a “noble” profession,

something to be done during idle time. Stakeholders hope that through their efforts, pride may be instilled in weaving as a profession and in textiles as part of the country’s inherited culture.

This becomes more pressing as some stakeholders emphasize that the appreciation of handwoven textiles may be concentrated in the upper classes. Charisse Aquino-Tugade from CulturAid observes that the youth in communities no longer want to wear traditional textiles, while those who are able to afford the expensive price tags of woven products, usually in Manila, are more willing to do so. Dr. Edwin Antonio from Katutubo Exchange further laments that the pricing in cities seems to be very unjust, especially when compared to how much weavers earn. This highlights further the disparity between the social classes of the makers and consumers of handwoven textiles, that some stakeholders hope to address.



**Stakeholders work towards an industry that is more culture-centric in its dealings and that promotes consumption that is more meaningful.**

Many stakeholders observe that production lead times, processes, and work habits are challenging to implement in weaving communities. They attribute this to their priorities skewing towards family and relationships. Other stakeholders recognise that this is due to the difference between the culture of business and the culture of weaving, and as such, take proactive steps to close the gap between the two. For example, Anya Lim of ANTHILL emphasises that practices across the supply chain must stay culture-based and community-centered, and that a one-size-fits-all-cultures approach does not work. They further observe that the dynamic of the business relationship with weaving communities is not just transactional, and must be dealt with a more “human” element. Charisse Aquino-Tugade of CulturAid echoes this sentiment as she learned with time that the nature of their partnership with communities becomes one of loyalty and kinship.

Furthermore, stakeholders repeatedly emphasise how much value the story of each weave brings, and hope to be able to tell this story through their branding and marketing. The goal is for their own customers to be able to appreciate weaving cultures, and

as Francis Dravigny of Interlace puts it, to “keep the soul of tradition”, and to embrace “modernity without destroying tradition.” Cedie Lopez-Vargas from ArteFino recounts her dissatisfaction with customers in her previous endeavors, where the textiles were only bought to support a fundraiser, instead of appreciating them in and of themselves, and through the cultures they represent.

They also call on other organisations, whether they are NGOs or social enterprises, to do business with weaving communities in a more ethical manner, and ensure they have the proper background or support in social work or community development. Through this, Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation hopes to create a niche industry that is truly based on fair trade, while ANTHILL endeavors to prove that ethical and humane business is scalable and sustainable.

This again shows the importance of aligning economy and culture, especially when considering the industry on the whole. This also shows the potential of the industry if stakeholders are aligned and supported in their goals and interventions.

**Stakeholders are driven by the deep, intrinsic motivation to protect culture and people.**

Many stakeholders spoke passionately about the personal value their work brings them. Respondents from HoliCOW, Interlace, and Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation are just a few of those who expressly mentioned the personal fulfillment they gain from their work, while CulturAid believes it is a higher calling that she must answer. Respondents from the regional offices of DTI in Ilocos, Cebu and South Cotabato have all also been involved in weaving for nearly a decade, with some employees going beyond their duty to provide assistance to weaving communities.

Indeed, it has been proven that prosocial motivation, or the desire to protect and promote the well-being of others, predicts perseverance, persistence and productivity in work<sup>72</sup>, making it likely for our respondent stakeholders to persevere through the many difficulties of working in weaving.

**Stakeholders call for a collaborative and united approach across other stakeholders in the industry.**

Many stakeholders expressed dismay over the way other organisations conduct their interventions and assistance, with some even directly opposing those within their sector. To address this, PTRI Director Celia Elumba calls for a singular direction for the multiple government agencies that provide similar help and for a portal or platform to be created for conducive, real conversations and collaborations around the issue. Anya Lim of ANTHILL even emphasises the crucial role of creative entrepreneurs, designers, and design collaborators who understand the balance of business, design and culture in a unified approach to the development of weaving.

<sup>72</sup> Prosocial motivation at work: How making a difference makes a difference (Grant & Berg, 2011)

# Summary of findings

In summary, handloom weaving in the Philippines is going through a pivotal phase, where efforts to revitalise the industry are intentionally being developed by several stakeholders.

Its historical context aids in understanding how handloom weaving developed throughout the years. Once a solitary act to create fabrics for the purposes of the self, home, or ritual, the impact of trade has transformed the function of handloom weaving to an economic activity through textile production. When handloom weaving integrated into an economic system and production circuit, it evolved into a source of rural economic employment and income for women, and over time, a cottage industry. However, the impact of industrialisation and mass production, globalisation, and digitisation put further pressure on the handloom weaving industry. These trends brought about changes in production technology and market access, but it also left many behind, including the weavers. To support this, many government and non-government interventions geared towards economic development of the industry have been developed.

The results of the research showed that while these interventions are well-intentioned, they worked in silos, and resulted in varying levels of growth throughout the industry's value chain. Challenges continue to surface, including barriers to growth, pricing, income instability, access to market, and other skills to capacitate the weavers. Local supply of inputs (both raw and processed) is heavily connected to the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, and may need more capital-intensive interventions. That being said, there are government players that are currently developing plans to drive this forward, including DTI and DOST. In the area of product development and capacity building, government programs and business relationships have helped the industry become increasingly productive. With technology and globalisation, market access is expanding, especially with more individuals, business and government actors promoting handwoven products.

As an intangible cultural heritage, handloom weaving has been supported by government agencies and non-government organisations (NGOs) towards cultural preservation, but still need further support to carry out projects with broader reach and effective impact. One of the observations is that the cultural value of handloom weaving continues to evolve because of its integration into an economic system. The weavers possess a desire to remain true to their cultural identities expressed in the craft, and regard themselves as agents of their heritage, but are in need of economic stability. There is a re-evaluation of weaving's cultural value when faced with financial decisions. Furthermore, economic gain is essential to the sustainability of weaving, because it provides incentives for cultural participation. Hence, weaving's relevance to the

community and the transmission to younger generations continue to be challenges that surface.

Furthermore, movements to support local, sustainable and ethical goods have revitalised interest and demand for handwoven textiles, resulting in weavers continuing to practice the craft. But the research results have also shown that the cultural value of handwoven textiles is also constantly evaluated by the market.

The recent paradigm shift towards sustainable development, and the recognition of culture as a contributor in economic development, present opportunities that can be seized. This change can be seen in the research, which reveals that while economic and cultural interventions were initially treated separately, over time, stakeholders have recognised



Designers observe a sample of the handwoven textile

© Reginald Sarmenta



the interconnectedness of the two dimensions, and realised that a singular approach cannot suffice if, ultimately, the interventions’ goal is community development, especially empowerment and self-sufficiency.

As a response to this trend, the textile industry may look at this strategically to innovate on textile products, while remaining authentic and respectful to cultural nuances. Through sustainable production, circular design and material innovation, Philippine handloom weaving may be able to raise its value in the global marketplace. The support of the government is fundamental in the growth and direction of the industry, especially the cohesive assistance of agencies working towards the economic and cultural activities both on the side of the weavers and the businesses that support the industry.

To increase value, designers play an important role, presenting a need for more responsible design collaborations rooted on cultural preservation and genuine community development.

Traders and end-customers are important in keeping handloom weaving alive. Without their sustained patronage, the handloom weaving industry may remain as a sunset

industry. However, it is important that there is awareness building among stakeholders on cultural appropriation.

Furthermore, because the weavers play vital roles in the industry, the challenge is to empower them economically, culturally and psychologically. There is an opportunity to create an environment that is empowering and dignified to them that will positively contribute to the sustainability and continuation of handloom weaving. Interventions must be strengthened through continuous consultation, community-building, documentation and investment in cultural facilities to aid the transmission of this craft.

Given these, the best interventions are those that are holistic, recognising that the cultural, psychological and economic dimensions of weaving will always be intertwined. Some recommendations are made in the following section.

# Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the results of the current research, and in line with the five pillars in the Arts Strategy of the British Council: Capacity Building, Arts for Social Change, Fostering Collaborations & Networks, Policy & Research, and Sharing UK Arts with the World. The recommendations may be regarded as opportunities to foster collaboration, exchange and partnerships within the craft sector in the United Kingdom and in the Philippines, as well as to provide expertise in capacity building, training, and policy technical assistance.

## Capacity building

The British Council can provide value by supporting the local arts sector by developing its capacities to grow equitably. Capacity building should always have the goal of making the weavers self-sufficient.

- **Community development**

Because of its initial beginnings as a cottage industry, weaving groups may need to be provided with community organisation and development training. One such training programme with great potential is the British Council’s Creative Hubs and the use of the Creative HubKit, adapted and indigenised to Filipino culture in general and to the specific culture of the weaving communities it will be implemented in. Practitioners of shared affiliations and convictions may band together forging strategies to thrive within frameworks with insufficient and inconsistent support from public and private institutions.

By honing collaborative and multidisciplinary approaches in running their workspaces and venues, these groups or creative hubs have been able to consistently initiate, enable, and subsist.<sup>73</sup>

The School of Living Traditions is an existing community development programme of the NCCA that is initiated and developed by the communities themselves. It provides an opportunity for cultural transmission, as well as product development and promotion. The British Council may look into how the Creative Hubs concept can be integrated to SLTs that have sustained themselves after the NCCA programme.

<sup>73</sup> Fostering Communities: The Creative Hubs’ Potential in the Philippines (British Council & Ateneo Art Gallery, 2017)

- **Entrepreneurial skills**

Existing training programmes and toolkits developed by the British Council such as the Creative Enterprise Toolkit, Creative Hubs Training and even the Creative Innovators Fellowship may be utilised to the benefit of both weavers and designers.

The British Council may also partner with Bayan Academy, a social development organisation that offers training programmes focused on social entrepreneurship, and to develop and run training courses on business management.

Capacity building geared towards technology is also important for both weavers and retailers to keep up with growing digital trends, especially when it comes to e-commerce, digital marketing, and new financing mechanisms. The British Council may also incorporate this into the said Creative Hubs concept, integrating technology into business skills training.

However, it is recommended that these programmes be adapted to be appropriate to the cultural values and economic circumstances of the weavers.

- **Support for skill and knowledge transfer**

The British Council may come up with a full suite design programme incorporating training of basic skills (e.g. drafting weave designs, sewing, embroidery, pattern

making) to expand the skill sets that encompasses the entire design process. A second phase would allow the weavers to be connected to young designers or design students, whom they can collaborate with for product development. After the entire programme, a tool kit may be given to provide the weavers with the same design tools used during the collaboration to give them the chance to produce these products sustainably and on their own capacity. On top of this, the British Council may explore responsible design collaboration training with the DTI-Design Center of the Philippines and NCCA for designers and other stakeholders.

The UK can help weavers with a plethora of avenues for skills building in the different complementary skills to increase the value of traditional practices in sustainable product innovation. For example, consultation and partnership with the University Arts London particularly Central Saint Martins and its diverse textile programmes and short courses may be done to provide guidance on the structure and implementation of such skill and knowledge transfers.



- **Innovation**

Innovation is essential in developing the craft. Across the board, capacity building in design and material innovation would be beneficial for many of the stakeholders involved in the production process.

In material innovation alone, there are many ways that the British Council may enter. The PTRI is already looking into Smart Textile research and development that focuses on sustainable textiles, health and medical applications, as well as architecture and interiors.<sup>74</sup> The British Council may come in to supplement research that will pave the way for advanced uses of these fibres and capacitate entrepreneurs to adopt these into innovative social projects and businesses. This may be an area of shared interest with the University of Leeds' Masters programme on Textile Sustainability and Innovation, Cranfield University's Sustainable Textiles, Fibres and Sustainable Materials for Fashion Design Applications programme, or the Future Fashion Factory.

Moreover, with growing demand for eco-friendly materials and products, the opportunity for growth may lie in the advancement of neo-ethnic textiles. A study between the Philippine Textile Research Institute and the Centre for Circular Design of University Arts London around neo-ethnic textiles that use circular design concepts may further explore how handloom weaving can play a role in sustainable production.

## Arts for social change

Through its Arts for Social Change projects, the British Council aims to extend safe spaces for culture, creative exploration and exchange by building trust, enabling dialogue and presenting marginalised voices. Given this, the researchers deemed that the following recommendations be considered:

- **Community empowerment**

The understanding of the importance of self-organisation is encouraged to push for policies that are beneficial to the craft and to the weavers when it comes to the challenges they face in the industry. For example, the *T'nalak* Tau Sebu, an association of different weaving groups, was able to obtain the GI mark for *t'nalak* after continuous. LASIWWAI is a social enterprise that uses weaving as a form of economic driver for the communities of *t'nalak* weavers but it also advocates for gender equality and environmental preservation.

- **Cultural appropriation**

As cultural appropriation is an important issue that is regularly encountered in the production and sale of cultural products, it is important for market players to understand that weavers are more than suppliers. Hence, increased dialogue on cultural rights, especially cultural appropriation, can play a role in the sustainability of collaborations and partnerships with communities. There are

<sup>74</sup> Smart Textiles Technologies R&D Program (PTRI, 2013)



opportunities to develop and educate traders and end consumers on proper usage by empowering the communities themselves to know their cultural rights.

• **Cultural awareness**

Awareness building programmes on empowerment can be safe spaces that enriches the weavers’ lives in accordance with their local culture. As an example, the British Council can look at Katutubo Exchange as a case study for workshops that promote cultural exchange among indigenous youth groups around the Philippines. To make it relevant to the *Crafting Futures* programme, the British Council can assist in the formation of an organisation of indigenous artisans, including weavers, which encourages the youth from indigenous groups and the public to celebrate indigenous talents and promote awareness of indigenous cultures.

• **Recognition of cultural masters**

The Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA) award has also shown that acknowledgement of artists have positive effects on artisan communities and their art forms. It is important to develop avenues for continuous awareness and recognition of the cultural masters. Cultural exchange with contemporaries from other weaving groups in the region or important artists in the UK can also show equality and appreciation of their cultural identities.

• **Inclusivity in education**

To tackle the negative perception of weaving as a profession, partnering with institutions and integrating weaving into degree and non-degree courses can provide legitimacy and inclusivity:

- \* Workshops may be offered to art and design students to encourage a social orientation towards the arts early in their formation as creatives.
- \* Exchange programmes may be arranged with educational creative institutions in the UK, such as the various textile programmes under the colleges of the University of Arts London, and even the Philippine Studies forum at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London. The existing partnership between SOAS and the Ateneo de Manila University may also be tapped for this purpose.
- \* Chevening Scholarships may be allocated to the development of the weaving industry. Included in the recently granted scholarships are Mich Dulce, a fashion designer and milliner, for a Masters in Social Entrepreneurship at Goldsmiths, University of London and Jessica Ouano, a circular textile and apparel designer for an MA in Fashion Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the London College of Fashion. This may be indicative of the growing interest and capability of Filipinos who

need support to become future leaders of social change in the arts.

- \* Similar to the UK Education Advisory Service education fairs, the British Council may hold a niche educational exhibit showcasing specialised craft and design schools in the UK. Aside from meeting the exhibitors, guests may listen in on design seminars and presentations delivered by distinguished speakers.

**Fostering collaborations and networks**

By creating spaces where meaningful creative dialogues can take place and by supporting the collaboration of creative people and the experimentation of new ideas, solutions, content and forms of practice, the British Council may be able to support the weaving sector through:



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• **Design collaborations**

Some of the respondents, such as HoliCOW, Interlace, Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation, ANTHILL, have expressed the desire and enthusiasm for more design collaborations with weavers as ways to enhance the quality and artistry of products, while also providing an avenue for the weavers to exercise their creative and cultural voice.

• **Development of the social enterprise model**

The rise of social enterprises that work with weavers has shown that it is possible to marry commerce and culture in a way that is mutually beneficial. To proliferate the social entrepreneurship model, the British Council can develop relevant training programmes in cooperation with ANTHILL, Rags2Riches, and other social enterprises, that can encourage new ways of responsible and equitable business.

• **Regional cultural exchange**

The understanding of the importance As mentioned in the recommendations under “Arts for Social Change”, cultural exchange with contemporaries from other weaving groups in the region involved in the *Crafting Futures* programme can result in collaborations with other artisans, further shaping the Southeast Asian identity.

• **Crafting Futures fair and marketplace**

Results from the research revealed that trade fairs have become venues for both weavers and

designers to meet and connect, and become more than just selling events, but a space for collaboration and knowledge-sharing, especially when it comes to design thinking and market positioning. The British Council can look into the viability of a biennial *Crafting Futures* fair, which can feature the weaving community-based Creative Hubs and their products. More than just an exhibit of products, it can be a venue for communities to learn from each other through best practices, successful collaborations, cultural exchanges, and more.

Moreover, an online e-commerce marketplace may be built to provide an avenue for weavers to sell directly to consumers, while avoiding any expenses for travel. However, this will require capacity-building training to equip the weavers with the skills needed to participate in such an enterprise.

• **Tech-based cultural information portals**

Technology allows for the ability to deliver information instantly and economically to a huge number of people, making a case to evaluate the possibility to develop technology-based cultural information portals, which would be able to do the following:

- \* Connect farmers and government institutions to discuss the industries around natural fibres, such as abaca, cotton, piña;
- \* Weavers share techniques and experiences (linked to capacity-building);

- \* Weavers and traders set an ethical trade agreements (i.e. price point, demand);
- \* Designers and weavers collaborate and innovate on design and product, improve overall quality;
- \* Weavers, government institutions and on-profit organisations discuss areas of support so that aid is in consultation with the community;
- \* Create a roadmap where roles are clearer, and interventions are more programmatic and holistic in scaling the industry;
- \* Improve traceability and circularity of the industry;
- \* Increase dialogue and collaboration between UK and Southeast Asian institutions and practitioners in the craft and design sectors will build sustainable partnerships and relationships with South/East Asian designers and artists who will become ambassadors to promote trust and reputation for the UK; or
- \* Bring technical information and research for use in development programmes, and into the hands of weavers and social entrepreneurs may prove to revitalise the local textile industry.





Policy and research

Given that the role of culture in sustainable development is continuously evolving<sup>75</sup>, and as the UK aims to be the convenor for the development of policy and practice regarding the place of culture in inclusion, the British Council may help advocate for a policy environment that is conducive to the growth of the handloom weaving industry, the sustainability of handloom weaving as an intangible cultural heritage, and the protection of its main stakeholders (the weavers.)

• Trade

There is a lack of policies in place that specifically support the industry’s growth to compete in the global market. Being a cottage industry, there is no recognition of the handloom weaving industry’s contribution in economic and social development as evidenced by the absence of economic figures on the handloom weaving industry as a whole. For example, the DTI’s Garments and Textile Industry statistics currently does not include the handloom weaving industry. There is an absence of a clear and unified direction in the growth trajectory and sustainability of the weaving industry in government policies and regulatory frameworks. More data collection is necessary to gain a better perspective of the weaving industry. Primarily, the

industry needs to be represented in the BOI’s Textile-Garment Industry Roadmap, which will provide direction for the industry. Because of the gaps and lack of data in the segments of the supply chain, there should also be more research on how technology can create full transparency across the value chain.

In addition, the One Town One Product (OTOP) programme of the DTI provides direction to local government units to focus on specific indigenous products (i.e. silk in Bago, abel in Paoay), taking into consideration the availability of resources and its success. By strengthening the OTOP programme and using it as not just as a trade but cultural and tourism tool, it can drive more value to handwoven products.

On the side of the consumers, a deeper study and analysis is recommended to be able to understand their motivations and needs. There is significant global market research on the future consumer and their growing demands for sustainable and ethical products.<sup>76</sup> However, no local research is publicly available at the time of this writing.

To show the value of weaving and crafts in the economy, a council, similar to the Craft Council in the UK, may be established. This council can continuously gather information from across the craft sector to chart and anticipate economic, social, cultural and political trends in craft, and give national policy recommendations. The UK may support the Philippine counterparts to shape local policies.

• Culture

The establishment of regional NCCA offices, or having a trained cultural officer in LGUs, can strengthen the reach of cultural projects to local governments by aiding the close implementation and monitoring of programs.

The establishment of regional NCCA offices, or having a trained cultural officer in LGUs, can strengthen the reach of cultural projects to local governments by aiding the close implementation and monitoring of programs.

Strengthening the promotion of products through local festivals that highlight the town’s products (e.g. *T’nalak* Festival) can be related to the OTOP programme. This can drive direct economic benefit to the weavers, as well as reinforces social relevance of these cultural products in these towns.

Similar movements and efforts to register and claim ownership of the weave and patterns such as *T’nalak* Tau Sebu’s GI mark with the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) will strengthen the heritage sustainability of the craft and community. Policy formation on tangible and intangible cultural heritage together with IPOPHL will surely be able to protect weavers also empower them as artists.

In relation to this, to supplement the current documentation efforts of government and NGOs, there is a need for community-driven research and documentation of their traditions and products through cultural mapping. Some institutions are already doing this (ex. CulturAid and the NCCA under the Philippine Registry of Cultural Property), where the British Council may lend its expertise to achieve this on a bigger scale in a way that is inclusive and adaptable.

With the role of culture being more evident in development, it is important to encourage adoption of the new UNESCO Thematic Indicators for Culture (Culture|2030 Indicators), which aims to measure and monitor the progress of culture’s enabling contribution to the national and local implementation of the Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

<sup>75</sup> UNESCO Culture | 2030 Indicators (UNESCO, 2019)

<sup>76</sup> Future Consumer 2020 (Bell, 2019)



Ultimately, the function of the framework is to aid decision-makers understand the impact of culture on the SDGs in order to integrate and implement this into policies, plans and programmes on national and local levels.<sup>77</sup>

- **Empowerment**

Policies or programmes that can empower weavers as women and as artisans are important in an industry where weavers are marginalised in several dimensions such as economic, social, gender, education, governance. The British Council may come in to support the formation of such policies with advocacy groups and other policy actors in this space.

## Sharing UK arts with the world

To recognise the UK’s world-leading creative industries, an exposure of Philippine cultural masters and designers to UK’s leading artists, designers and artisans will bring enormous value. Previous initiatives of CITEM, such as Redbox and Manila Wear, brought Filipino designers to the International Fashion Showcase in London, which catapulted them to the global stage and in effect, gave awareness to global standards. Results of the interviews show that there is an openness from designers for continuous learning and exposure through cultural trips and exchanges, and are interested to learn more about the best practices and experiences from the UK and Europe.

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<sup>77</sup> Fostering Communities: The Creative Hubs’ Potential in the Philippines (British Council & Ateneo Art Gallery, 2017)



Overall, the study showed that weaving is an enterprise comprised of several dimensions that are inextricably intertwined. As such, it is recommended that interventions be developed in a programmatic manner, aligned and coordinated in their objectives, maintaining a careful balance between commerce, innovation, culture and empowerment across all stakeholders, employing consultation and co-creation with the communities when necessary. It is recommended that the *Crafting Futures* programme works towards the development of these aspects of weaving, simultaneously, equitably and consistently for the growth and sustainability of the handloom weaving industry in the Philippines.



# About the researchers

**MUNI** is a company that aims to contribute to creating a more mindful, livable world by organizing learning and community-building events, producing original content, sharing resources on social media, and collaborating with like-minded organizations on projects that move sustainable development forward.

**The researchers involved are composed of the following:**

**Lilibeth L. Leh-Arcena**

In this study, Lilibeth is the Senior Researcher with more than two decades of experience in social science research having led multiple academic research for economic education and community development. She is the current Director of the Arrupe Office of Social Transformation at the Ateneo de Davao University.

**Reichelle Castro**

Reichelle's development work experience started as a Program Officer in Social Enterprise Development Partnerships, Inc., where she provided research, consulting and training in the fields of microfinance, social entrepreneurship, and financial literacy. Presently, she continues to provide these services as a freelance consultant. She served as the Research Lead in this study. As an associate of MUNI, she helps in organizing their MUNI Meet-up events.

**Angelica Misa**

Angelica served as the Handloom Textile Lead in the study. She is the Co-founder of WVN Home Textiles, where she works with traditional weavers around the Philippines, and is a resource person for topics on Sustainable Fashion for MUNI.

**Karina Abola**

Karina provided research support for the study, informed by her ongoing MA in Social Psychology from the University of the Philippines Diliman. Her latest research, *Crafting Ginhawa*, was presented at the Pambansang Samahan ng Sikolohiyang Pilipino's 2019 national conference. She is currently a brand strategist at Serious Studio and is MUNI's Brand Director.

**Denise Subido**

Denise has more than a decade of experience in the development sector, primarily in the areas of social enterprise, financial literacy, and microfinance, having been part of research teams on housing microfinance and domestic payments, and other research related to MFIs and social enterprises in the Philippines. She is presently the Managing Director of MUNI, and is a Manager for Financial Inclusion and Capital Markets for Habitat for Humanity's Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter. In this study, she provided technical guidance as part of the research support team.

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Annex I

Glossary

<b>Backstrap loom</b> <sup>78</sup>	Found mostly in mountainous regions, it is portable and consists of two wooden bars, where the warp is stretched between, with one wooden bar attached to a fixed place and the other held in place by a strap around the weaver’s back	<b>Indigenous Peoples</b> <sup>86</sup>	<p>A group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organised community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed and utilised such territories, sharing common bonds of language, customs, traditions and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonisation, non-indigenous religions and cultures, became historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos.</p> <p>Indigenous Peoples shall likewise include peoples who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, at the time of conquest or colonisation, or at the time of inroads of non-indigenous religions and cultures, or the establishment of present state boundaries, who retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions, but who may have been displaced from their traditional domains or who may have resettled outside their ancestral domains</p>
<b>Circular economy</b> <sup>79</sup>	An economy that is restorative and regenerative by design. In a circular economy economic activity builds and rebuilds overall system health.		
<b>Creative Hubs</b> <sup>80</sup>	A place, that may be physical or virtual, which brings together creative people. It may also be a convener, providing space and support for networking, business development and community engagement within the creative, cultural and tech sectors.		
<b>Crowdfunding</b> <sup>81</sup>	Crowdfunding uses digital platforms that will allow startups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) greater access to funding while providing the public more investment options.		
<b>Cultural appropriation</b> <sup>82</sup>	The act by a member of a relatively dominant culture of taking a traditional cultural expression and repurposing it in a different context, without authorisation, acknowledgement and/or compensation, in a way that causes harm to the traditional cultural expression holder(s).	<b>Intangible cultural heritage</b> <sup>87</sup>	Practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills, as well as the instruments, objects and artifacts associated therewith, that communities, groups and individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage, such as: (1) oral traditions, languages and expressions; (2) performing arts; (3) social practices, rituals and festive events; (4) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and (5) traditional craftsmanship.
<b>Ethical Trade</b> <sup>83</sup>	Retailers, brands and their suppliers take responsibility for improving the working conditions of the people who make the products they sell.		
<b>Foot loom</b> <sup>84</sup>	Usually found in lowland areas, it is a heavy wooden device that uses a system of pulleys and weights.	<b>Loom</b> <sup>88</sup>	Looms are devices that bind threads though weaving to make cloth
<b>Economic Globalisation</b> <sup>85</sup>	Global trade integration, characterised by internationalising of production and the new international division of labour	<b>Neo-ethnic textiles</b> <sup>89</sup>	Natural and/or indigenous materials, sourced and/ or produced in the Philippines using updated, relevant and green scientific and technological approaches and innovations by spinners, dyers, weavers and artisans

<sup>78</sup> Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: The Artistry of Philippine Textiles (Labrador, 2016)

<sup>79</sup> The Circular Economy in Detail (Ellen Mcarthur Foundation, n.d.)

<sup>80</sup> Creative Hubs: Understanding the New Economy (British Council, 2016)

<sup>81</sup> SEC Approves Rules on Crowdfunding (SEC, 2019)

<sup>82</sup> Curbing Cultural Appropriation in the Fashion Industry (Vezina, 2019)

<sup>83</sup> Ethical Trading Initiative (Department for International Development, 2013)

<sup>84</sup> Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: The Artistry of Philippine Textiles (Labrador, 2016)

<sup>85</sup> Globalisation (UNESCO, n.d.)

<sup>86</sup> Republic Act No. 8371: The Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997

<sup>87</sup> Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2019)

<sup>88</sup> Hibla ng Lahing Filipino: The Artistry of Philippine Textiles (Labrador, 2016)

<sup>89</sup> House Bill No. 0636: An Act Providing for the Development and Protection of the Philippine Handloom Weaving Industry



Philippine tropical fabrics	Includes those containing fibres from plants and animals grown, spun, and woven in the country. It includes fibres of abaca, pineapple, and banana, which have been proven to be good materials in making tropical fabrics.
Stakeholder	<p>Any individual, group or organisation that affects the handloom weaving textile sector directly or indirectly in the market.</p> <p>Stakeholders who affect the sector directly are identified as primary stakeholders, while those who affect indirectly are called secondary stakeholders.</p>
Sustainable development <sup>90</sup>	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

<sup>90</sup> Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future (United Nations, 1987)

Annex II

Abbreviations

ANTHILL	Alternative Nest and Trading/ Training Hub for Indigenous/ Ingenious Little Livelihood
BOI	Board of Investments
CEDP	Community Enterprise Development Program
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CITEM	Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions
CTU	Cebu Technological University
DCP	Design Center of the Philippines
DEPED	Department of Education
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAMABA	Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan
GI	Geographical Indication
IP	Indigenous People
IPOPHL	Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines
ISAT U	Iloilo Science And Technology University
ISSI	Institute of Small-Scale Industries
KII	Key Informant Interview
LASIWWAI	Lake Sebu Indigenous Women Weavers Association, Inc.
LGU	Local Government Unit
MFA	Multifibre Arrangement
MSME	Micro, small and medium enterprises

NACIDA	National Cottage Industries Development Authority
NCCA	National Commission for Culture and the Arts
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NEFCA	National Endowment Fund for Culture and the Arts
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OISCA	Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement
OTOP	One Town One Product
PCW	Philippine Commission on Women
PhilFIDA	Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority
PTRI	Philippine Textile Research Institute
RYPIC	Regional Yarn Production and Innovation Center
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLT	School of Living Tradition
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
SSF	Shared Service Facility
TELA Campaign	Textiles Empowering Lives Anew Campaign
TTS	T’nalak Tau Sebu Federation
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

ANNEX III

Existing policies and interventions

A. Existing policies

The Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997 (R.A. 8371)	Republic Act No. 8371 is the chief law that governs the rights of Indigenous Cultural Communities/ Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) on ancestral domains, self-governance and empowerment, social justice and human rights, and cultural integrity. Out of this law, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) was created to be responsible in promoting these rights as well as creating plans and projects to protect their well-being.
Law Creating the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (R.A. 7356) and National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 (R.A. 10066)	<p>Republic Act No. 7356 created the The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), which was to serve as the overall policy making body, coordinating, and grants giving agency for the preservation, development and promotion of Philippine arts and culture; an executing agency for the policies it formulates; and task to administering the National Endowment Fund for Culture and the Arts (NEFCA) — fund exclusively for the implementation of culture and arts programs and projects.</p> <p>Areas of functions of NCCA were expounded more deeply in the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009. Under this law, NCCA is responsible for the management of cultural properties - all products of human creativity by which a people and a nation reveal their identity, including churches, mosques and other places of religious worship, schools and natural history specimens and sites, whether public or privately-owned, movable or immovable, tangible or intangible.</p>
Manlilikha ng Bayan Act (R.A. 7355)	Republic Act No. 7355 aims to recognise citizen or group of citizens engaged in any traditional art uniquely Filipino, whose distinctive skills have reached such a high level of technical and artistic excellence and have been passed on to and widely practiced by the present generation in his/her community with the same degree of technical and artistic competence. The law discloses the criteria and qualifications for the Award as well as the Artist’s awards, incentives, and duties and responsibilities.
Philippine Tropical Fabric Law (R.A. 9242)	Republic Act No. 9242, or the Philippine Tropical Fabrics Law, is “an Act prescribing the use of Philippine tropical fabrics for uniforms of public officials and employees.” It requires a certain percentage of Philippine tropical fabrics on uniforms of government employees. It stipulates that all fabrics should be purchased from local sources and should contain at least 5% by weight of either abaca, banana and pineapple material, and 15% by weight of silk.



<b>Philippine Design Competitiveness Act of 2013 (R.A. 10557)</b>	Republic Act No. 10557 aims to enhance the competitiveness and innovation of Philippine products, create market-responsive design services, while advocating for economic and environmental sustainability through design. This law specifies the mandates of Design Center of the Philippines to use and promote design as a strategic tool for economic competitiveness and social innovation through design awareness, integration and innovation.
<b>Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022</b>	The Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 published by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) includes the promotion of culture and values in the pillar of Malasakit (enhancing the social fabric). The PDP 2017-2022 recognises that culture contributes to several pillars, including Pagbabago (inequality-reducing transformation) and Patuloy na Pag-unlad (increasing growth potential). Programs and projects under four major categories were prioritised: cultural research programs, institution-building for cultural development, competitive creative economy, and awareness campaigns for culture.

B. Existing interventions

Government institutions

<b>Department of Trade and Industry</b>	Capacity building	The Department of Trade and Industry provides trainings to enhance managerial and entrepreneurial skills. Topics include organisational strengthening, productivity seminar, product development, and market promotion.
<b>Department of Trade and Industry</b>	One Town One Product (OTOP)	<p>One Town, One Product (OTOP) program enables localities and communities to determine, develop, support, and promote products or services that are rooted in its local culture, community resource, creativity, connection, and competitive advantage.</p> <p>OTOP Next Gen, its second iteration that was implemented in 2017, allowed communities to have more than one OTOP offering and has transitioned to being more market-oriented and innovation-driven.</p>
<b>Department of Trade and Industry</b>	Shared Service Facility	A major component of the DTI’s MSME development program is the Shared Service Facilities (SSF) Project, which provides fixed equipment investments. It aims to address processing and

		manufacturing gaps or bottlenecks of the industry cluster brought about by needed facility or lack of capacity of the needed facility.
<b>Department of Trade and Industry - Design Center of the Philippines</b>	Salimbago	<i>Salimbago</i> chose twelve (12) School of Living Traditions (SLT) communities to participate in a design entrepreneurship development program. Interventions include documenting the restrictions of the communities in injecting design into their products. The output from the documentation was used for product development, which was implemented by partner social enterprises. The program’s goal is to develop products that will drive demand beyond the project’s scope. Salimbago was able to develop 152 products, which were showcased in the National Arts and Crafts Fair in 2018.
<b>Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions</b>	Manila FAME	Manila FAME is a bi-annual trade show that focuses on high-quality and design-oriented home, fashion, holiday, architectural and interior products, where CITEM provides exhibit space for MSMEs to feature their works.
<b>Philippine Textile Research Institute</b>	Textiles Empowering Lives Anew (TELA) Pilipinas	<p>Under the Textiles Empowering Lives Anew (TELA) Pilipinas campaign banner, they have various projects that seek to develop homegrown and eco-friendly textiles, and transfer their research technologies to MSMEs and communities throughout the country through technical assistance and training programs.</p> <p>Under this program includes interventions on natural dyeing centre in Batangas, a textile product development centre in Taguig City, micro-scale yarn spinning facility in Iloilo, and multi-program plan to revive the silk industry.</p>
<b>Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority</b>	Fiber to Fabric Project	Fiber to Fabric project is aimed to convince farmers to supply the cotton and needed fibre of the weavers for their weaving activities by providing them with production assistance.

National Commission for Culture and the Arts	School of Living Traditions	<p>The School of Living Traditions program is the NCCA's flagship program that was created to safeguard specific traditional cultural practices through the transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills from cultural masters to the youth within the community. It is an extra-curricular learning concept that ensures that young people in the community are given the opportunity to learn the indigenous knowledge and skills, which are otherwise not integrated into the regular school curriculum. People's Organisations and Local Government Units organise the SLTs, while the NCCA provides funding assistance.</p>			<p>nearby educational institution of their methods, tools, methods and designs and a feasibility study on converting the awardee's specific art into a cottage industry on its own.</p> <p>With this, the awardee is also expected to transfer their knowledge and their skills to the younger generation, to cooperate with the implementing agency to promote and propagate their art and to donate a sample or copy of his/her work to the National Museum.</p>
		<p>Its general plan of action consists of a five year program, where the first 3 years are focused on training, knowledge transfer and preservation and the last 2 years on product development and marketing. An additional Year 0 will also be included to carry out consultations with the community and make necessary preparations and linkages to relevant organisations and agencies. The goal is to empower communities to eventually be the direct recipients of the grants and implementers of the program, taking responsibility of the SLT even beyond support the NCCA provides.</p>	National Commission for Culture and the Arts	Cultural Mapping Program	<p>The NCCA's Cultural Mapping program is established to help LGUs identify and account their cultural properties. It aims to (1) apply the different tools and methods for gathering, classifying, and analysing local cultural data and information; (2) to consolidate Local Culture Profile and generate baseline data for cultural statistics; (3) recommend mechanisms to integrate profiles and baseline statistics in LGU development plans, programs and activities.</p>
	Gawad Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA)	<p>Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan or the National Living Treasures Award, which was created through Republic Act No. 7355, aims to preserve and promote traditional folk arts in order to honor and support traditional folk artists for their contribution to national heritage.</p> <p>The criteria for awarding includes technical and creative skills, artistic quality, character and integrity, and willingness to transfer knowledge for an art tradition that his/her community is known for and that has existed for at least 50 years.</p>	National Museum	<i>Piña-seda</i> : The Pineapple and Silk Cloths from the Tropics Travelling Exhibition	<p>Starting 2017, the National Museum launched a travelling exhibition which focused on piña-seda textile. Entitled, <i>Piña-seda: The Pineapple and Silk Cloths from the Tropics Travelling Exhibition</i>, the NM were successful in launching it in key cities around the globe including London, Lisbon, Madrid, Frankfurt, New York, Hawaii, Tokyo, Bangkok, Singapore, Prague, Geneva, among others. The goal for the exhibition is to re-introduce world-class <i>piña-seda</i> in the global market and restore its once renowned value in the European market.</p>
		<p>The incentives include an initial grant of PHP 100,000 and a PHP 10,000 monthly allowance thereafter for the duration of the awardee's life. An additional PHP 14,000 personal allowance, medical and hospitalisation benefits as well as funeral assistance are also included. A grant for additional funds specifically for awardees and their corollary projects may also be applied for. The other incentives are associated with the preservation of the craft — a vocational course at a</p>	Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines	Collective Mark Certificate of Registration	<p>The Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) is the government agency that grants Collective Mark, which is a type of a mark that is used by members of a group, to indicate membership in the group or to identify and distinguish the products or services of members from those of the non-members. The members of the association use the collective mark to indicate a level of quality, authenticity, and origin that they provide.</p>



Academe

Cebu Technological University – Argao	Hablon sa Cebu Handwoven in Argao	CTU - Argao houses Hablon sa Cebu Handwoven in Argao in its efforts to revive the handloom weaving industry in Argao. The university assists the weavers in finding customers, purchasing materials, and lobbying for further assistance. They are also the Cooperators of a DTI-funded Shared Service Facility located in the premises of the campus.
University of the Philippines Baguio	CordiTex Project	The Cordillera Textiles Research Project, or CordiTex Project, led by Associate Professor Analyn Salvador-Amores, recognises that master weavers and their knowledge on weaving techniques and patterns are quickly dwindling over time. The CordiTex team goes to weaving communities to be able to document these extensively. They employ tools of material science such as mathematical symmetry analysis to trace how the patterns are made in the loom in order to digitise it through the digital loom.

Non-government organisations

GREAT Women	Capacity development and enterprise collaboration	<p>GREAT Women runs a brand platform that is focused on creating an integrated sustainable supply chain by working and collaborating with the weavers, private sector, non-profit organisations, among others.</p> <p>Their technical team assists in creating an innovation space with the weavers to create the “GREAT Women heritage textile.</p> <p>This is done by documenting the community’s motifs, textile capacities, and weaving techniques, which will be used as a basis for product development and technical assistance. After which, they study those patterns and provide the community with sets of threads with yarn to work on, letting the weavers experiment with the design pattern on their own, allowing for the community to reinvent and revitalise their traditional patterns and techniques into a modern design.</p> <p>GREAT Women has designed and produced bags and clothing with premium woven textile, that have received attention from local and foreign designers and customers. One of their notable and high value collaborations was on the Manilacaba bags with French designer Christian Louboutin.</p>
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HABI Philippine Textile Council

Likhang Habi Market Fair

Likhang Habi Market Fair provides a venue for weavers to showcase and sell their handwoven textiles and new product designs and connect them with the international market. During the market fair, different lectures on topics such as the importance of reviving the Philippine textile industry, fusion of traditional craftsmanship and modern design, the issue of cultural appropriation are also conducted as a way of educating both the local and international public.

Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation

Livelihood and women empowerment

Rurungan sa Tubod foundation teaches women how to weave as a source of alternative livelihood and a form of empowerment in Puerto Princesa, Palawan. Piña weaving was introduced to the women through capacity building facilitated by PhilFIDA. Geared towards livelihood enhancement, the goals of the foundation are to give these women opportunities to earn a livelihood while taking care of their children, and in turn putting their children through school.

Retailers

ANTHILL Fabric Gallery	Community Enterprise Development Program (CEDP)	The programme, which is run by ANTHILL or a partner NGO, is a community and culture based modular coursework facilitated informally through dialogue and workshops among their direct partners. The workshop teaches the community to develop their skills on cultural appreciation, product design and innovation, business management, and financial literacy. They also employ an incentive scheme wherein they increase the income of master weavers by 20% if they train an apprentice. CEDP’s goal is for the weavers themselves to sustainably grow in order to become self-sufficient.
ArteFino	ArteFino Fair	The ArteFino Fair is a bi-annual crafts fair in Manila with the intention of providing a platform that re-imagines, innovates and elevates Filipino craftsmanship. Merchants are selected based on criteria that ensures a strong interdependent relationship between artist-entrepreneurs and consumers. ArteFino’s process is designer-led, allowing them to lead the product development with the community.

Multi-stakeholders

<p><b>Philippine Commission on Women</b></p> <p><b>Department of Trade and Industry</b></p> <p><b>GREAT Women</b></p>	<p>GREAT Women Project II</p>	<p>GREAT Women Project II is a \$7.65 million grant from Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) that aims to promote and support gender-responsive enabling environment for women’s economic empowerment, particularly in microenterprises. Weaving communities are included as beneficiaries in this project receiving capacity building on business management skills. The project also includes a component of market linking by facilitating various trade fairs, caravans and exhibits, with sales reported at P52 million.</p>
<p><b>Iloilo Science And Technology University</b></p> <p><b>Philippine Textile Research Institute</b></p> <p><b>GREAT Women</b></p>	<p>Regional Yarn Production and Innovation Center (RYPIC)</p>	<p>The Iloilo Science and Technology University (ISAT U) Miagao campus hosts the newly-opened Regional Yarn Production and Innovation Center (RYPIC), which was inaugurated last November 2019. PTRI funds the PHP 41.57 million establishment while ISAT U heads operation and maintenance of the facility. For the first two years, they will be assisted by GREAT Women.</p>

ANNEX III

Research tools

FGD tools for weavers

Main questions	Probing questions
Demographics	<p>Before we begin, let’s introduce ourselves. Kindly mention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Name</li><li>b. Age</li><li>c. Sex (let’s just take note of this)</li><li>d. Educational attainment</li><li>e. Number of Years employed / Age when first employed</li><li>f. Number of years employed in the Handweaving Sector</li><li>Age started as a weaver</li><li>g. Marital Status (single, married, separated, widow)</li><li>h. Number of Children</li><li>i. Average monthly income from weaving</li></ul>
How did you become a weaver?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. How long have you been weaving?</li><li>b. How did you learn the craft?</li><li>c. Why is handweaving your chosen craft? Was motivation economical? Cultural? Why handweaving over other crafts or livelihood?</li><li>d. Why do you continue to weave today?</li><li>e. What do you like about weaving?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Economically</li><li>ii. Psychologically<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Does it give the weavers pride?</li><li>2. Do the weavers enjoy weaving?</li></ul></li><li>iii. Culturally: Is weaving a big part of the weavers’ cultural identity?</li><li>iv. Artistically: Are the weavers able to express their creativity?</li></ul></li><li>f. What are your goals for yourself as a handweaver? For other people?</li></ul>
How did you view handweaving when you started?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Has your perception of handweaving change over time?</li><li>b. If yes, how and why has it changed?</li></ul>
How did handweaving start in your community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. What was the purpose of handweaving when it started?</li><li>b. How was it perceived by the community before? How is it perceived by the community now?</li><li>c. Are there efforts in the community to preserve the craft?</li><li>d. What are your group’s milestones?</li></ul>
What is the design process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Are the products you produce traditional products of the community? Are there weaves with cultural meaning?</li><li>b. Who usually creates the design?</li><li>c. Do you also get to design as weavers? What is your design process? Where do you find ideas and inspiration?</li><li>d. What are the considerations before completing the design for production?</li><li>e. What products are the weaves usually used for? (homeware, apparel, bags, etc.)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Are they inherited, donated, bought?</li></ul></li></ul>



What is your business process?	<div><div>a. What are your inputs (i.e. materials, equipment needed)?</div><div>b. Who are your suppliers? Where are they located?</div><div>c. Where do you get handlooms and other equipment?</div><div>d. How do you decide how to delegate and assign the orders that you receive?</div><div>e. What are your products?</div><div>f. How much are your products? Are there differences in pricing, especially for weaves with cultural significance?</div><div>g. How many are you able to sell in a day or week? Do you have targets?</div><div>h. How much on average do you earn (net profit) from each item?</div><div>i. Who are your customers? Where are they located?</div></div>	<div>Please identify problems and challenges related to weaving that you have experienced as a community over the current year, the previous year, 5 years ago, and 10 years ago. Rate each crisis from 1 to 10, with 10 having the maximum or highest impact, and 1 as the lowest.</div> <div><div>a. Economic<div><div>i. Are there a lot in the community who are willing to be employed as handweaver?</div><div>ii. What are the challenges in running a weaving business? Is it hard to deal with suppliers or customers?</div><div>iii. Is it hard to get customers? Is the group able to keep up with demand?</div><div>iv. What are the challenges in terms of finance?</div></div></div><div>b. Cultural<div><div>i. What are the challenges you face in trying to preserve the craft of weaving?</div><div>ii. Are there weaves with cultural meaning sold commercially? How has the community reacted to this?</div></div></div><div>c. Psychological<div><div>i. What are the aspect of weaving that weavers do not like?</div><div>ii. Are the weavers challenged by their craft?</div><div>iii. Do the weavers feel they can still further excel in their craft?</div><div>iv. Does the group have good dynamics? Does the group have good relations with head and other stakeholders?</div></div></div><div>d. Arts<div><div>i. Are you able to express your creativity?</div><div>ii. Is it difficult to come up with new designs?</div><div>iii. Are their skills enough for your business demands?</div></div></div></div> <table><tr><th>Crises / Risks</th><th>This year 2019</th><th>1 Year Ago 2018</th><th>5 Years Ago 2014</th><th>10 Years Ago 2009</th></tr><tr><td colspan="5"><div>Probing Questions:<div><div>a. Why did you give such rating?</div><div>b. How often do you experience these problems and challenges in your town/city?</div></div></div></td></tr></table> <table><tr><td>How can the challenges be addressed?</td><td><div><div>a. What is the solution to these challenges? Kindly provide specific solutions to each challenge, if possible.<div><div>i. Who can help?</div></div></div><div>b. What motivates you to continue despite these challenges?</div></div></td></tr><tr><td>What are the effects or impacts of these problems?</td><td><div><div>a. What are the impact or effects to your house?</div><div>b. What are the impact or effects to your livelihood?</div><div>c. What are the impact or effects to your health?</div></div></td></tr><tr><td>What are the usual coping mechanisms that you do when these happen?</td><td><div><div>a. Please specify the coping mechanisms.</div><div>b. Are these coping mechanisms effective?</div><div>c. What do you think can be done to prepare for the problems identified?</div></div></td></tr></table> <div>Is there anything else you'd like to add?</div>	Crises / Risks	This year 2019	1 Year Ago 2018	5 Years Ago 2014	10 Years Ago 2009	<div>Probing Questions:<div><div>a. Why did you give such rating?</div><div>b. How often do you experience these problems and challenges in your town/city?</div></div></div>					How can the challenges be addressed?	<div><div>a. What is the solution to these challenges? Kindly provide specific solutions to each challenge, if possible.<div><div>i. Who can help?</div></div></div><div>b. What motivates you to continue despite these challenges?</div></div>	What are the effects or impacts of these problems?	<div><div>a. What are the impact or effects to your house?</div><div>b. What are the impact or effects to your livelihood?</div><div>c. What are the impact or effects to your health?</div></div>	What are the usual coping mechanisms that you do when these happen?	<div><div>a. Please specify the coping mechanisms.</div><div>b. Are these coping mechanisms effective?</div><div>c. What do you think can be done to prepare for the problems identified?</div></div>
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Is weaving enough to support the needs and wants of your family?	<div><div>a. How much do you earn? Are you paid per weave or do you have a fixed salary?</div><div>b. What are other benefits you receive? (i.e. SSS, Philhealth, other employee benefits)</div><div>c. Have you had other jobs aside from weaving? If yes, what kinds of other jobs?</div></div>																	
Is there a difference between the craft before when you started and now? <i>Probe for: effects of the 4th industrial revolution (digital in general, the internet, etc. — ex. finding weaving techniques on YouTube), the circular economy, globalization.</i>	<div><div>a. If yes, what changes were observed?<div><div>i. Raw materials or inputs</div><div>ii. Methods or techniques in weaving</div><div>iii. Handloom and other equipment</div><div>iv. Design of weaves</div><div>v. Cultural significance to the community (i.e. weaves that are associated to certain life events or ceremonies)</div></div></div><div>b. What technologies are used now?</div><div>c. Do you like these changes? Have they been helpful to your craft and livelihood?</div></div>																	
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Have you received assistance from any stakeholders? (i.e. private, NGO, govt)	<div><div>a. Who?</div><div>b. What kind of assistance?</div><div>c. What are the changes you have observed after the assistance has been given?</div><div>d. How is your relationship with them?</div></div>																	

KII questions for head of weaving houses

Proceed to blue questions if head also joined the FGD.

Main questions	Probing questions
Demographics	<div>a. Name</div> <div>b. Age</div> <div>c. Sex (let's just take note of this)</div> <div>d. Educational attainment</div> <div>e. Number of Years employed / Age when first employed</div> <div>f. Number of years employed in the Handweaving Sector</div> <div>Age started as a weaver</div> <div>g. Marital Status (single, married, separated, widow)</div> <div>h. Number of Children</div>
How did you become a weaver?	<div>a. How long have you been weaving?</div> <div>b. How did you learn the craft?</div> <div>c. Why is handweaving your chosen craft? Was motivation economical? Cultural? Why handweaving over other crafts or livelihood?</div> <div>d. Why do you continue to weave today?</div> <div>e. What are your goals for yourself as a handweaver?</div> <div>If head of weaving house is also the business owner:</div> <div>f. How did you start the business?</div> <div>g. When did you start the business?</div>
How did you view handweaving when you started?	<div>a. Has your perception of handweaving change over time?</div> <div>b. If yes, how and why has it changed?</div>
How did you become the head of your weaving house?	<div>a. Number of years as head of the weaving house</div> <div>b. What do you like and dislike about being the leader of the weaving house?</div> <div>c. What motivates you to continue accepting the responsibility of being the leader?</div> <div>d. What are your goals for the community?</div>
How did handweaving start in your community?	<div>a. What was the purpose of handweaving when it started?</div> <div>b. How was it perceived by the community before? How is it perceived by the community now?</div> <div>c. Are there efforts in the community to preserve the craft?</div> <div>d. Is it registered? As what? (i.e. association, cooperative, PO, etc.)</div> <div>e. What are the milestones?</div> <div>f. Is it difficult to recruit new members?</div>
Is there a difference between the craft before when you started and now? <i>Probe for: effects of the 4th industrial revolution (digital in general, the internet, etc. — ex. finding weaving techniques on YouTube), the circular economy, globalization.</i>	<div>a. If yes, what changes were observed?</div> <div>i. Raw materials or inputs</div> <div>ii. Methods or techniques in weaving</div> <div>iii. Handloom and other equipment</div> <div>iv. Design of weaves</div> <div>v. Cultural significance to the community (i.e. weaves that are associated to certain life events or ceremonies)</div> <div>b. What technologies are used now?</div> <div>c. Do you like these changes? Have they been helpful to your craft and livelihood?</div>

What is the design process?

- a. Are the products you produce traditional products of the community? Are there weaves with cultural meaning?
- b. Who usually creates the design?
- c. Do you also get to design as weavers? What is your design process? Where do you find ideas and inspiration?
- d. What are the considerations before completing the design for production?
- e. What products are the weaves usually used for? (homeware, apparel, bags, etc.)

What is your business process?

- a. What are your inputs?
- b. Who are your suppliers? Where are they located?
- c. Where do you get handlooms and other equipment? Are they local
- d. Are they inherited, donated, bought?
- e. How do you decide how to delegate and assign the orders that you receive?
- f. What are your products?
- g. How much are your products? Are there differences in pricing, especially for weaves with cultural significance?
- h. How many are you able to sell in a day or week? Do you have targets?
- i. How much on average do you earn (net profit) from each item?
- j. Who are your customers? Where are they located?

Is weaving enough to support the needs and wants of your family?

- a. How much do you earn? Are you paid per weave or do you have a fixed salary?
- b. What are other benefits you receive? (i.e. SSS, Philhealth, other employee benefits)
- c. Have you had other jobs aside from weaving? If yes, what kinds of other jobs?

Do you continuously improve your knowledge and skills?

- a. Where do you go to look for additional training?
- b. Have you attended a seminar, training, or workshop in the past year?
- c. If yes, what were they, who was the facilitator, and where was it conducted?

Does a business association represent your sector?

- a. Are there associations specific for handweavers?
- b. Are you a member of these associations?
- i. If yes, what are the programs of your association to help the communities and your business interests?

What are the challenges faced by handweavers in the community?

- a. Economic
- i. Are there a lot in the community who are willing to be employed as handweaver?
- ii. What are the challenges in terms of operations? Is it hard to deal with suppliers?
- iii. What are the challenges in terms of marketing? Is it hard to get customers? Is the group able to keep up with demand?
- iv. What are the challenges in terms of finance?
- b. Cultural
- i. What are the challenges you face in trying to preserve the craft of weaving?
- ii. Are there weaves with cultural meaning sold commercially? How has the community reacted to this?



	<div>c. Psychological<div>i. What are the aspect of weaving that weavers do not like?</div><div>ii. Are the weavers challenged by their craft?</div><div>iii. Do the weavers feel they can still further excel in their craft?</div><div>iv. Does the group have good dynamics? Does the group have good relations with head and other stakeholders?</div></div> <div>d. Arts<div>i. Are you able to express your creativity?</div><div>ii. Is it difficult to come up with new designs?</div><div>iii. Are their skills enough for your business demands?</div></div>
How do you see the future of handweaving in the Philippines?	<div>What are the opportunities in the sector in terms of -</div> <div>a. 4th industrial revolution (digital in general, the internet, etc. — ex. finding weaving techniques on YouTube)</div> <div>b. Circular economy</div> <div>c. Competition in local market</div> <div>d. Global market (globalisation)</div>
Do you see any threats to the weaving industry?	<div><i>Epecially –</i></div> <div>a. Fast fashion</div> <div>b. Dying craft - unable to facilitate skills</div> <div>c. Younger generation losing interest in craft</div>
What do you think are the roles of the different players in the sector?	<div>a. Handweavers and community</div> <div>b. Suppliers</div> <div>c. Distributors and businesses that buy weaves</div> <div>d. Government</div> <div>e. NGOs and other organizations</div> <div>f. Other stakeholders</div>
Who has been the most helpful to you with regard to: <div><div>• Improving your business and the livelihood of the community</div><div>• Preserving the craft</div></div>	<div>a. What kind of help have you already received?</div> <div>i. What? (<i>capacity building, skills transfer, financing, product development</i>)</div> <div>ii. From whom? (i.e. NGOs, govt, other associations)</div> <div>iii. For what?</div>
Is there anything your community currently needs assistance with?	<div>a. Please enumerate.</div> <div>b. Who can provide help? Are there organizations who can provide assistance to you?</div> <div> </div> <div><i>**Probe for capacity building, skills development, skills transfer, financing, product development</i></div>

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

KII questions for SE

Main questions	Probing questions
Demographics	<div>a. Name</div> <div>b. Age</div> <div>c. Position</div> <div>d. Number of Years in the Handweaving Sector</div>
Do you work directly with weaving communities?	<div>a. What kind of weaving communities do you work with?</div> <div>b. How do you work with communities?</div> <div>c. How did you get started working with the communities?</div>
What is your working relationship with the weavers?	<div>a. What is the role of weavers in your business supply chain?</div> <div>b. How much do they earn?<div>i. What is your usual pricing arrangement — output-based or time-based/monthly?</div><div>ii. How do you decide on the pricing arrangement?</div><div>iii. Do the prices of the weaves come from the weavers? If not, how do you decide on the prices of the weaves?</div></div> <div>c. Do they receive other benefits?</div> <div>d. Do they have a target?</div> <div>e. How do you ensure that supply and quality will be met?</div>
What is your business process?	<div>a. What are your products?</div> <div>b. What are your business goals?</div> <div>c. What are the challenges in running this kind of enterprise?</div>
Where do you usually source your supply?	<div>a. Where are your suppliers located?</div> <div>b. What are technologies used for the products you sell?</div> <div>c. Is it difficult to source your raw materials?</div>
Who are your customers?	<div>a. Where are they from?</div> <div>b. To whom do they sell their products? (Trace the value chain as far as possible)</div>
What is your design process?	<div>a. Is design a big part of your work with communities?</div> <div>b. Who creates the design?</div> <div>c. What are the considerations before completing the design for production?</div> <div>d. Are the products you produce traditional products of the community, or are they innovations of it?</div>
When producing products with communities, what is important for you?	<div>Please rank in order of importance –</div> <div>a. Traditional designs</div> <div>b. Skillset</div> <div>c. Ability to innovate/change</div>
What are the things that you like about working with weaving communities/in the weaving sector?	<div>a. What are your motivations to continue working with them?</div> <div>b. What do you hope to achieve for weaving communities?</div>

<p>What challenges do you face when working with communities?</p> <p>What frustrates you about working with weaving communities/in the weaving sector?</p>	<p>a. Economic</p> <p>i. Does it provide a good opportunity to be able to fulfill the needs and wants of the weavers and their families?</p> <p>ii. Is going into the business of weaving financially sustainable and rewarding?</p> <p>iii. Are there a lot in the community who are willing to be employed as handweavers?</p> <p>b. Cultural</p> <p>i. Are the weavers aware that they are agents in preserving the tradition of weaving?</p> <p>ii. What are the challenges you face in trying to preserve the craft of weaving?</p> <p>iii. Are there weaves with cultural meaning being sold commercially? How has the community reacted to this?</p> <p>c. Psychological</p> <p>i. Do the weavers like what they are doing? Are they proud of what they are doing?</p> <p>ii. Are the weavers challenged by their craft?</p> <p>iii. Do the weavers feel they can still further excel in their craft?</p> <p>d. Arts</p> <p>i. Are you able to creatively collaborate with the weavers?</p> <p>ii. Is it difficult to come up with new designs?</p> <p>iii. What are the challenges of innovating in terms of material, products design, methods of production, distribution, marketing, and branding?</p> <p>iv. Is the quality of craftsmanship of the weavers enough for your business and design needs?</p>	<p>What do you think is the role of the following in the weaving sector?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Government</li><li>NGOs/Non-profits?</li></ul> <p>Do you need any form of assistance?</p>	<p>What interventions or assistance are needed in order for the sector to grow in terms of:</p> <p>I. Research and material innovation</p> <p>a. What kind? (financial assistance, policy making, etc.)</p> <p>b. Who will provide the intervention?</p> <p>II. Product development</p> <p>a. What kind? (financial assistance, policy making, etc.)</p> <p>b. Who will provide the intervention?</p> <p>III. Design collaboration</p> <p>a. What kind? (financial assistance, policy making, etc.)</p> <p>b. Who will provide the intervention?</p> <p>IV. Cultural preservation</p> <p>a. What kind? (financial assistance, policy making, etc.)</p> <p>b. Who will provide the intervention?</p> <p>a. What kind of help is needed?</p> <p>b. Who can provide help?</p> <p>c. For what?</p> <p><i>**Probe for capacity building, skills development, skills transfer, financing, product development</i></p> <p><i>What are their roles in the sector?</i></p>
<p>How do you see the future of handweaving in the Philippines?</p>	<p>a. What are the opportunities in the sector in terms of -</p> <p>b. 4th industrial revolution (digital in general, the internet, etc. — ex. finding weaving techniques on YouTube)</p> <p>c. Circular economy</p> <p>d. Local market</p> <p>e. Global market (globalisation)</p>	<p>Are there other important players in the weaving sector aside from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Handweavers and community</li><li>Suppliers</li><li>Distributors / SEs that buy the products/weaves</li><li>Government</li><li>NGOs and other organizations</li></ul>	<p>What are their roles in the sector?</p>
<p>Do you see any threats to the weaving industry?</p>	<p>a. Fast fashion</p> <p>b. Dying craft - unable to facilitate skills</p> <p>c. Younger generation losing interest in craft</p>	<p>Is there anything else you'd like to add?</p>	
<p>What do you think are the expected roles of the different players in the sector?</p>	<p>a. Handweavers and community</p> <p>b. Suppliers</p> <p>c. Distributors / SEs that buy the products/weaves</p> <p>d. Government</p> <p>e. NGOs and other organizations</p> <p>f. Other players</p>		
<p>Who has been the most helpful to you with regard to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improving your business and the livelihood of the community</li><li>Preserving the craft</li></ul>	<p>a. What kind of help have you already received?</p> <p>i. What? (capacity building, skills transfer, financing, product development)</p> <p>ii. From whom? (i.e. NGOs, govt, other associations?</p> <p>b. Are you part of any business associations that cater to the handweaving sector?</p> <p>i. If yes, what are the programs of your association to help the communities and your business interests?</p>		



Kii questions for government / NGO		<div></div> <div>How do you see the future of handweaving in the Philippines?</div> <div></div> <div>Do you see any threats to the weaving industry?</div> <div></div> <div>What do you think are the expected roles of the different players in the sector?</div> <div></div> <div>What do you think is the role of the following in the weaving sector?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Government</li><li>NGOs/Non-profits?</li></ul></div> <div></div> <div>Is there anything else you'd like to add?</div>
Main questions	Probing questions	
Demographics	<div><div>a. Name</div><div>b. Age</div><div>c. Position</div><div>d. Number of Years in the Handweaving Sector</div></div>	
Do you work directly with weaving communities?	<div><div>a. What kind of weaving communities do you work with?</div><div>b. How do you work with communities?</div><div>c. How did you get started working with the communities?</div></div>	
What kind of assistance do you provide to the weavers?	<div><div>a. What are your programs, what are their goals and how did each program plan to achieve them?</div><div>b. Who are your partner communities?</div><div>c. How long has your institution been involved in the sector?</div><div>d. What significant milestones have the programs achieved?</div></div>	
Besides your organization, who has been the most helpful to the communities with regard to – <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improving business and livelihood of the community</li><li>Preserving their craft</li></ul>	<div><div>a. What other help have the communities received?</div><div>b. From whom?</div><div>c. Are there any business associations that cater to the handweaving sector?<div><div>i. If yes, what are the programs of your association to help the communities and businesses that support the industry?</div></div></div></div>	
<div>For non-profits: What are the things that you like about working with weaving communities/in the weaving sector?</div> <div>What challenges do you face when working with communities?</div> <div>What frustrates you about working with weaving communities/in the weaving sector? How do you see the future of handweaving in the Philippines?</div> <div>Do you see any threats to the weaving industry? What do you think are the expected roles of the different players in the sector? What do you think is the role of the following in the weaving sector?</div>	<div><div>a. What are the things that you like about working with weaving communities/in the weaving sector?</div><div>b. What are your motivations to continue working with them?</div><div>c. What do you hope to achieve for weaving communities?</div></div> <div><div>a. Economic<div><div>i. Does it provide a good opportunity to be able to fulfill the needs and wants of family of the weavers?</div><div>ii. Are there a lot in the community who are willing to be employed as handweaver?</div><div>iii. Are the communities able to attend to their business-partners’ demands?</div></div></div><div>b. Cultural<div><div>i. Are the weavers aware that they are agents in preserving the tradition of weaving?</div><div>ii. What are the challenges you face in trying to preserve the craft of weaving?</div><div>iii. Are there weaves with cultural meaning being sold commercially? How has the community reacted to this?</div></div></div><div>c. Psychological<div><div>i. How have the weavers received the programs you’ve implemented?</div><div>ii. Do the weavers like what they are doing? Are they proud of what they are doing?</div><div>iii. Are the weavers challenged by their craft?</div><div>iv. Do the weavers feel they can still further excel in their craft?</div></div></div></div>	<div><div>d. Arts<div><div>i. Are you able to creatively collaborate with the weavers?</div><div>ii. Is it difficult to come up with new designs?</div><div>iii. What are the challenges of innovating in terms of material, products design, methods of production, distribution, marketing, and branding?</div><div>iv. Is the craftsmanship of the weavers enough for your business and design needs?</div></div></div><div>What are the opportunities in the sector in terms of -<div><div>a. 4th industrial revolution (digital in general, the internet, etc. — ex. finding weaving techniques on YouTube)</div><div>b. Circular economy</div><div>c. Local market</div><div>d. Global market (globalisation)</div></div></div><div><div>a. Fast fashion</div><div>b. Dying craft - unable to facilitate skills</div><div>c. Younger generation losing interest in craft</div></div><div><div>a. Handweavers and community</div><div>b. Suppliers</div><div>c. Distributor / SEs that buy the products/weaves</div><div>d. Government</div><div>e. NGOs and other organizations</div><div>f. Other players</div></div><div>What interventions or assistance are needed in order for the sector to grow in terms of:<div><div>I. Research and material innovation<div><div>a. What kind? (financial assistance, policy making, etc.)</div><div>b. Who will provide the intervention?</div></div><div>II. Product development<div><div>a. What kind? (financial assistance, policy making, etc.)</div><div>b. Who will provide the intervention?</div></div><div>III. Design collaboration<div><div>a. What kind? (financial assistance, policy making, etc.)</div><div>b. Who will provide the intervention?</div></div><div>IV. Cultural preservation<div><div>a. What kind? (financial assistance, policy making, etc.)</div><div>b. Who will provide the intervention?</div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div>

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