



Sericulture and Weaving in Meghalaya



At a glance

Sericulture, or silk farming, is an integral part of Meghalaya's culture and economy, with the state being particularly renowned for its production of Eri silk, also known as Ryndia. This silk is unique for its softness, durability, and ethical production process, as it allows silkworms to complete their life cycle before the silk is harvested.

Meghalaya's climate, characterized by moderate weather and high humidity, along with the abundance of suitable plants like castor and tapioca, provides an ideal environment for silkworms. The traditional knowledge of silk production, passed down through generations, adds to the state's strengths in this sector. Till date around 15,900 families are involved in handloom activities and 16,000 families in Sericulture farming.

Key metrics



15,900 FAMILIES
Handloom activities



16,000 FAMILIES
Sericulture Farming



3 OUT OF 4
Produced in Meghalaya



400 TONNES
Current silk production which could be tripled with management

FURTHER READING

<https://megseriloom.gov.in/schemes.html>

[growth of sericulture](#)

primemeghalaya.com

SERICULTURE VALUE CHAIN



Stage	Activities	Stakeholders	Challenges
Silkworm Rearing	- Breeding and nurturing silkworms - Feeding and health management	- Sericulturists - Extension officers	- High mortality rates - Disease outbreaks - Lack of technical knowledge
Cocoon Harvesting	- Harvesting mature cocoons - Sorting and grading cocoons	- Sericulturists - Local cooperatives	- Inconsistent quality - Timing of harvest
Cocoon Processing	- Boiling and reeling of silk - Dyeing and finishing	- Processing units - Small-scale entrepreneurs	- Low technological adoption - Poor infrastructure
Weaving	- Designing and weaving silk fabric - Quality control	- Weavers - Craft clusters - Artisans	- Skill gaps - Limited access to raw materials
Marketing and Sales	- Promoting silk products - Selling through various channels	- Marketing agencies - Retailers - Exporters	Poor marketing networks, low bargaining power - Competition from other regions
Distribution	- Logistics and supply chain management - Distribution to markets	- Logistics partner - Retail partners	Poor roads, exploitation by middlemen, high costs

CHALLENGES



Lack of Skilled Weavers: The weavers are not trained which makes the overall production process longer and not effective.



Raw Material Supply: Meghalaya's sericulture faces challenges due to the need to import cocoons and the lack of quality seeds and yarn-making machines. This forces farmers to sell cocoons to Assam for yarn production, increasing costs. Without proper reeling facilities, most cocoons are exported to neighboring states.



Lack of processing Machine: Farmers face production challenges using handlooms, which result in uneven garments and longer production times. With machines, a garment that takes two weeks to produce manually could be completed in a day. Only 40-50 gm of yarn is spun on handloom by each weaver per day whereas with proper facilities this could go upto 5-6kg.



Poor Marketing and Logistics: Meghalaya's hilly terrain complicates and increases transportation costs, while a fragmented supply chain and lack of strong branding limit the market reach of Eri silk. Addressing these challenges through improved logistics, coordinated production, and better marketing could enhance market access and expand the reach of Meghalaya's silk products..



Infrastructure Dependency: The lack of storage facilities, market hubs, and processing units hampers the value addition and preservation of produce.

BUSINESS IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES: ✓

1

Silk Farms and Cooperatives:

- **Integrated Silk Farms:** Entrepreneurs can establish farms that manage the entire silk production process, from growing feed plants to producing silk fabrics, using modern techniques for profitability and scalability.
- **Community Cooperatives:** Small-scale farmers can form cooperatives to pool resources, access better technology, and market products more effectively, boosting production and profits.

2

Weaving Studios and Fashion Brands:

- **Boutique Weaving Studios:** Small studios can create high-end, handcrafted silk garments and home decor, collaborating with designers for exclusive collections in luxury markets.
- **Ethical Fashion Brands:** Entrepreneurs can launch fashion brands focused on the sustainability and cultural heritage of Eri silk, reaching global, eco-conscious consumers online and commanding premium prices.

3

E-Commerce and Digital Marketing:

- **Online Marketplaces:** E-commerce platforms can sell Meghalaya's handloom products directly to consumers, with customization options to enhance the shopping experience.
- **Digital Marketing Campaigns:** Promoting Eri silk's ethical and sustainable qualities through digital marketing and influencer partnerships can attract more customers and increase brand awareness.

4

Tourism and Cultural Experiences:

- **Sericulture Tourism:** Offering tours that showcase silk farms, weaving workshops, and direct purchases from artisans can generate additional revenue.
- **Cultural Heritage Tours:** Entrepreneurs can create tours highlighting traditional silk weaving practices, including visits to weaving villages, hands-on workshops, and opportunities to purchase authentic silk products.

SCHEMES ✓



The Meghalaya
Sericulture &
Weaving Scheme



Rashtriya Krishi
Vikash Yojana
(RKVY)



Handloom
Development
Scheme



Cluster
Development
Programme
under National
Handloom
Development
Programme
(NHDP)

GLOSSARY

Economic Potential:

Current Status: Meghalaya is a significant producer of Eri silk in India, with the potential to boost production and economic returns through increased investment and modern techniques.

Revenue Generation: The global silk market is expected to reach \$17 billion by 2026. Meghalaya could potentially generate over ₹1,200 crores annually by capturing a small share of this market, leveraging the ethical appeal of Eri silk.

Export Opportunities: Meghalaya's Eri silk could capture premium prices in international markets like Europe, North America, and Japan, tapping into the growing demand for sustainable textiles.

Employment Opportunities

Job Creation: Expanding sericulture could create thousands of jobs, particularly benefiting women and rural communities.

Women Empowerment: Growth in this sector could provide consistent income for women, enhancing economic empowerment.