

## Flipkart Foundation Unites with AIACA to Foster an Environmentally- Sustainable Ecosystem for Textile & Handicraft Enterprises

- *The initiative will be implemented in Birbhum district of West Bengal for a period of 12 months*
- *It aims at boosting the competitiveness of two local textile and handicraft establishments, with a focus on promoting green enterprises and empowering artisans from disadvantaged communities*

**Kolkata - April 12, 2023:** The Flipkart Foundation under the Flipkart Group has partnered with *All India Artisans and Craftworkers Welfare Association (AIACA)* to launch a project called *Greening the Way towards Success - Creating Sustainable Enterprises*. The objective is to establish a sustainable and replicable model that can foster the development and promotion of textile and handicraft based green enterprises in India. To kick-start this initiative, an entrepreneurial programme will be implemented in the Birbhum district of West Bengal. This programme is designed to empower two textile and handicraft -based enterprises to adopt eco-friendly practices and compete in the rapidly emerging conscious markets. Additionally, it aims at ensuring the social well-being of the craftspersons working with these enterprises, with a focus on empowering women artisans from marginalised communities.

AIACA focuses on developing sustainable livelihood models and ensuring market-led growth of enterprises in the handloom and handicrafts sector in India. This collaboration with the Flipkart Foundation, aims to boost the business potential of two establishments in Birbhum – Chowhatta Kantha Stitch Cooperative Society Ltd. and Tarasankar Panchagram Seva Samity, supporting them to compete in the emerging markets.. Tarasankar has 200 craftswomen, 77% belonging to SC/ST and OBC communities, producing banana fibre crafts. In total, this initiative will positively impact 1,265 individuals, comprising 265 direct and 1000 indirect beneficiaries.

The project activities comprise of:

- **Design Development** to help the groups create new designs in tune with the market trends
- **Capacity building** initiatives to develop business skills and green **practices in the enterprises**
- **Brand enhancement** through workshops about ‘Brand Building through Digital Platforms and creation and promotion of marketing tools . ’
- **Enhancing Social security of artisans** by generating awareness about various Government Schemes and their benefits among the artisans and linking them to the Schemes. **Advocacy for the sustainable green enterprises** through campaigns, with an aim to replicate the model in other areas

This collaboration advocates for the use of green practices in social business models, accruing economic benefits to artisans and craftspersons. The programme also endeavours to create a Hub & Spoke Model for Green Enterprises in India with the prospective purpose of establishing a network of smaller businesses linked to a central hub in Delhi called "National Resource Facility Network (NRFN)". The enterprises will be assessed for getting certified under Craftmark, and advocacy will be carried out with customers and government departments to create a

supportive ecosystem, with a focus on scalability and replicability. This initiative intends to create a sustainable growth model that can revolutionize the industry and create opportunities for craft based businesses to thrive.

Commenting on the partnership, **Rajneesh Kumar, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Flipkart and Board of Director, Flipkart Foundation**, said, *"At the Flipkart Foundation, we aspire to create a bright future for all through an inclusive approach and actively seek opportunities to make a positive social impact. Our partnership with AIACA is a reflection of this very commitment. By promoting eco-friendly means and technologies, we hope to create an environmentally viable growth model that will also empower skilled workers from marginalised communities in the textile handicrafts sector. Through these efforts, we aim to provide more opportunities for the community in Birbhum district. We strongly believe in the potential of community-driven initiatives and look forward to making a significant change through this project."*

Commenting on this association, **Meenu Chopra, Executive Director, AIACA**, said, *"Partnering with the Flipkart Foundation is a step in the right direction for us at AIACA, as we work towards creating a significant advancement for Craft communities, across India. With this programme, our aim is to generate sustainable livelihoods for women artisans working with the two enterprises while introducing a regenerative and sustainable Green model for Textile based enterprises, that can be replicated widely to promote sustainability in all aspects. This collaboration echoes our mutual commitment to building a better future for all, and we look forward to driving this change with the Flipkart Foundation by our side."*

This initiative by Flipkart Foundation and AIACA marks an important step towards building a more inclusive and eco-friendly ecosystem for enterprises in the textile and handicrafts sector, promoting sustainable livelihoods for artisan communities.. In the past year, Flipkart Foundation has worked with underserved communities across Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Karnataka, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal to serve, support, and empower unskilled and underprivileged sections of society in various sectors, to ensure maximum reach and sustainable impact.

### **About the Flipkart Group**

The Flipkart Group is one of India's leading digital commerce entities and includes group companies Flipkart, Myntra, Flipkart Wholesale, Flipkart Health+, and Cleartrip.

Started in 2007, Flipkart has enabled millions of sellers, merchants, and small businesses to participate in India's digital commerce revolution. With a registered customer base of more than 450 million, Flipkart's marketplace offers over 150 million products across 80+ categories. Today, there are over 11 lakh sellers on the platform, including Shopsy sellers. With a focus on empowering and delighting every Indian by delivering value through technology and innovation, Flipkart has created lakhs of jobs in the ecosystem while empowering generations of entrepreneurs and MSMEs. Flipkart is known for pioneering services such as Cash on Delivery, No Cost EMI, and easy returns, which are customer-centric innovations that have made online shopping more accessible and affordable for millions of Indians.

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