

stakeholders talk & walk

For more effective project interventions and other cluster developmental activities we have reconstituted our Work Group Committee, comprising of 22 members representing different stakeholders of the industry to address the issues of the Alappuzha coir cluster. Workgroup members comprise SIDBI - Kochi branch, associations, state owned PSU s of the industry, non government agencies, lead bank, BDS providers, federation of the associations, large exporters, co op societies and small scale manufacturers. We are getting overwhelming support and cooperation from the WG members with ignited, novel & innovative ideas for coir cluster development. Some core and crucial issues of the prevailing scenario of the industry were seriously discussed and promising and inspiring suggestions and proposals were put across from the different sections of the WG. Associations, DIC, Lead Bank and NABARD felt immense pride for the SIDBI's Alappuzha BDS project and trust building among the cluster players. Participation of such Non Coir government agencies in workgroup activities takes our optimism to new heights in the upcoming cluster developmental activities. During the workgroup discussion the cluster players made requests to provide handholding support for reviving the chamber of commerce for the betterment of the coir industry.



Bank credit to Micro & Small Enterprises

D&B had arranged a workshop on "Bank credit to Micro & Small Enterprises " and role of the "Credit Guarantee" without collaterals for MSME under Credit Guarantee scheme at Alappuzha. This workshop was initiated under DFID, SIDBI SMEFDP for banks of the area. Almost all banks of the near by areas like Kochi, Kottayam, Kollam & Alappuzha had attended.

Pankaj Ahir (Project Manager) from Alappuzha BDS Project had presented the "Diagnostic study" of coir industry to explain the ground situation of the coir industry and MSMEs. He also focused on financial requirements and limitations of the coir MSMEs and how without collaterals, loans can help coir MSMEs to develop their business as it is a cottage based industry who don't have collaterals with them. He has given brief presentation about activities executed by the project for coir MSMEs till date.

Announcement :

Coir Design Competition - 2010

(Create Your Dreams on coir)

"Wake up the designer within you"

"Design nature, it designed you"

Registration starts on 23 Feb
& ends on 13 March '10

Awards and Citation on
27 March 2010



Implementation team



Jagat Shah
Project Director



Aref Adamali
Competitiveness Expert



Mignesh Parekh
BDS Expert



Koteswar Rao
Coir and SME Expert



Pankaj Ahir
Sr. BDS Manager



Ramesh
Cluster Manager



Binny
Admin Manager

Alappuzha Office : CRA 64, No :10/843A, Mantra light Road, Near Sahrudaya Hospital, Thathampally, Alleppey : 688013, Kerala, India.
Mobile : 96450 76657, 99471 33779 **Email** : info@clusterpulse.org
Web : www.alappuzhabds.com

H. O. : 312, University Plaza, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad - 380 009, INDIA.
Tele : +91-79-2791 3903 & 908 **Fax** : +91-79-2791 2742 **Mobile** : 098256 13772
Email : info@clusterpulse.org **Web** : www.clusterpulse.org

Alappuzha Coir BDS project



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News Letter

Year 2009-10 Issue - 3

"Cluster Speak"

SIDBI's Alappuzha BDS project arranged many innovative training programs & awareness workshops for coir MSME's on topics like The leaders - pioneers of prosperity, IT gyaanam yagnam, management mantram, Innovative BDS products, Understanding L/C for export management, domestic market access, FOREX, Coir dyeing, ISO certification, ICT adoption, SMERA, geotextiles, export market entry, IPR, B2B marketing, best design competition & best BDS award. The project continued to work closely with all stakeholders - ACCDS, Coir Directorate, FICEA, CSC, TCMMMA, ICA, ICEC, Coirfed, KSCC, DIC & SBT. As a result of these programs, 20 SME-BDS transactions were funded under the project & 40 plus transactions took place without funding support.

The project received good response from coir industry for workshops like How to count your forex money and The leaders - pioneers of prosperity. The project has been able to successfully work on the principle of inclusion, having worked closely with all - micro, small, medium & large coir firms as well as women groups in the cluster.



Mr. Rajendra Panicker

Sarvodayapuram Coir co-op society

"Previously we didn't know even the computer mouse movement ! Now we are doing billing, order booking, payment position and member accounts etc in computers.

Thanks to SIDBI's Alappuzha BDS project."

The project has published 6 newsletters & this is the seventh one. A BDS directory with 110 BDS providers was published recently and received overwhelming response. All the contact details of 100+ BDS providers are already available on the project website www.alappuzhabds.com. The coir value chain was prepared by a BDS in the first year of project for foreign buyers in the form of an animation film, which has proved to be a useful tool to promote coir in overseas markets. The project website has BLOG running, all activities listed, BDS directory & several articles & latest news on coir. The project conducted 5 coir workgroup meetings and received positive strategic directions from the coir work group members. Project is planning to conduct its 6th workgroup meeting in the month of February 2010. We thank the coir work group members, DFID & SIDBI - PMD & Kochi branch for their continuous support to the project.



Mr. M V Vishwanathan

G.M-Aspinwall & Co,

"A unique service from SIDBI's Alappuzha BDS Project "Organisational renewal workshop" became a breakthrough for our organisation."

Project Stages



Present Stage

CLUSTER Pulse

Cluster Pulse (CP) has been appointed by SIDBI as the implementing agency in Alappuzha coir cluster. CP is a not for profit NGO , for hand holding MSME's & artisans through Cluster development initiatives. CP has worked in 78 clusters in countries like India, South Africa, Switzerland, Sweden, Canada, USA, UK, Turkey, Brazil, China & Afghanistan. CP has worked with UNIDO, GTZ, USAID, DFID, IFC, World Bank, ILO, Microsoft, Govt. Of Canada, Govt. Of Croatia, ministries of Govt. Of India in several clusters. CP has led 78 trade delegations from India to abroad.

For details check : www.clusterpulse.org

What is Business development services (BDS) ?

"All those services which small enterprises need to survive and grow, such as training, advice and information." - International Labour Organization.



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Do something innovative

In order to foster the business development project interventions for the MSMEs of Alappuzha coir cluster, Alappuzha BDS Project had drawn in some innovative Business Development services for the benefit of the coir cluster. A seminar was arranged on the 23rd September 09 on the Innovative Business Development Services for coir industry followed by One to One meet of the MSMEs and BDS providers. This workshop also gave an opportunity to launch the first ever Coir B2B and B2C portal motivated by Alappuzha BDS Project: www.totalcoir.com. This was designed and hosted by one of the leading BDS provider Mr. Hasier Haris of Nova soft. The following were the innovative areas of business development services offered for the coir MSME community by Alappuzha BDS Project.

- Coir Marketing Audit by Mr. Rajan George of R G Consultancy
- Coir Business Audit by Mr. Gopalan Nair of Sit Business Services
- Innovative business orientation Workshop by Mr. Sasikant Prabhu of Margatreya Consultancy
- Lean & green manufacturing techniques by Mr. Durai Rajan of Kanzen Institute of Asia Pacific, Chennai.

Out of the above **Innovative Business orientation Workshop and Lean & green manufacturing techniques** were totally new and uniquely design for the coir industry and there was very good interaction from different corners of the participants. The feedback we received after the sessions were also quite encouraging and many SMEs were interacting with them at the One to One meet after the program was over which led to project supported business development transactions.



How to count your forex money

On a broad overview of documentation scenario in exports we understood that the SMEs need advanced learning of the payment instruments like Letter of Credit (L/C). Coir SMEs required some updating on the Letter of credit rules and amendments. Thus Alappuzha BDS Project arranged a workshop on "Saving money & time through better understanding of Letter of credit -UCP 600".

This workshop was intentionally conducted to enlighten the coir MSMEs and BDS providers on the various aspects of Letter of Credit like avoiding the inordinate delay by the bankers, new changes in L/C rules under UCP 600, parities and discrepancies in L/Cs, International Standard banking Practices etc. Mr. M. S. Vadiraja from Chennai who has over 28 years of working experience in the banking and financial services businesses was the BDS provider of the workshop. The subject was convincingly presented to the target audience with supply of case studies and interactive session. This initiative also allowed the SMEs to discuss their current problems with regards to L/C and they got the solutions from the experts. Mr. Arun Ashok of Mecklai financial services, Bangalore also made a presentation on "How to Manage Foreign Exchange" and how Mecklai can help them. FOREX is another area of concern for the exporters which was dealt during the workshop.



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The Leaders - "Pioneers of Prosperity"

Ever since the launching of our project we were planning a break through with something new every time for the coir fraternity. With that mood it was an effort on the 4th December 2009, when we arranged management training workshop exclusively for the Leaders/CEOs of the coir industry. Topic for the training was "The Leaders - Pioneers of Prosperity". Training was organized in a innovative informal way in the house boat with 9 top coir companies CEOs.

The session started in the morning and extended upto evening under leadership of BDS providers trained by the project. Training was all about the delegatable and the non delegatable powers of the Leaders, the visions and plan, the routine and the extraordinary works etc. It was a quite an experience for all who attended with interactive and experience sharing sessions throughout and with intermittent exercises. Most attractive part of the training was that the trainer was training without using any management jargons. It was more of a realization workshop for these coir leaders about what they really want to do? What they are doing now? What is their vision? Are they on right path? What better can they do for their organization? What are the unproductive activities they are doing on daily basis? What are not their duties which they are doing now and so on.....

Even though leaders lead the way they feel comfortable and profitable, the impact of this training session cannot be measured immediately. It has to work with the mental disposition of the owner or leader. Their mindset has to accept the merits of what they feel good of this program and reject what they disagree. It may take some more time for the transformation from existing system to the new concepts derived from the workshop. A few impact are depicted below.

- CEO's started delegation of unproductive daily work to company staff.
- Leaders have now clearly defined their Vision and goals and path to achieve the same.
- Participants can now segregate duties as a manager or as a leader and start acting on the duties which a leader can perform.

Some of the comments from the participants :

- "I am really impressed by the training arrangement and the way of teaching by the faculty. I suggest that such programs should be repeated at least once in a year so that the cream of the industry can meet at a very informal atmosphere and interact with each other and share their views".
- "I had very much enjoyed the interactive session and the valuable submissions of the faculties which would enhance my leadership skill".
- "We have worked like a manager only till this time, now we know how to work as a leader. We had never thought this way, workshop like this can change our style of vision as a leader..."



Forthcoming Activities under Alappuzha BDS Project

Sr.No	Activity	Tentative Date
1	IT Gyaanam Yagnam - 2010	Jan. 4th to Jan. 23rd 2010
2	Review for Management Mantra	Feb. 23rd & 24th, 2010
3	6th Work Group Meeting	March 8th, 2010
4	BDS Franchise Launching	March 9th, 2010
5	Design competition, Best BDS & Dissemination	March 27th, 2010
6	Loom Mechanization	Target to finish by March 27th, 2010



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