

## IMEDF Banana Fibre cluster, West Bengal receives GAP Challenge Fund



The IMEDF Labpur Banana Fibre cluster located in Birbhum district of West Bengal has been selected among 07 FPOs for Grant for Agroecology Program (GAP) Challenge Fund by ACCESS.

The cluster has 650+ artisans, including 150 women involved in production of value-added and eco-friendly banana fibre products such as bags, pen stands, home-decor items, among others. This endeavour not only reduces agro waste but also generates additional income streams for farmers promoting economic empowerment and environmental stewardship, realising the 'Doubling the Farmers' Income' vision of Government of India.

To scale the cluster, the convergence amount seeks to set up a production unit that will turn fibre into fabric. The cluster now has a vision to delve into textile manufacturing by converting yarn into fabric and textile products such as apparel wear and home furnishings.

Tarasankar Panchgram Producer Company Limited, the special-purpose vehicle of the cluster, is a rural community-driven enterprise and a beacon of entrepreneurial excellence. Under the programme, the SPV aims to:

- Obtain certifications like GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard) to build trust and credibility in both domestic and international markets
- Collaborate with fashion designers and brands to create exclusive line of clothing and accessories made from banana fibre
- Partner with textile producers to supply sustainable fabric for curtains, upholstery and bed linens
- Work with export and trade associations to reach global markets

Thus, the programme ensures economic opportunities, agricultural efficiency and environmental sustainability in 11 Gram Panchayats of Birbhum district. The project aligns with agroecology principles of:

- Recycling
- Soil health
- Land and natural resource governance

The programme covers 2000 farmers, 2155 acres of land and a proposed annual production capacity of 65MT

Name of Grantee	Theme	Channel
Ghummar FPC	Ber and Moringa	GAP-Regular
AN Spice	Kasundi and Mustard oil	GAP-Regular
Bhergaon FPC	Moringa and sweet lime	GAP-Regular
Mangrul Kambe FPC	Seed Production	GAP-Regular
Jaivik Sri FPC	Ginger	GAP-Regular
Yasashree Viroha	Cotton	GAP-Challenge
Tarasankar FPC	Banana Fibre	GAP-Challenge
Jay Sardar FPC	Cattle Feed	GAP-Challenge
BharatRohan Pvt. Ltd.	Cumin	GAP-Challenge

Tarasankar FPC under the GAP Challenge Fund