



# SAHAKARITA

Gujarat State Women's Sewa Cooperative Federation

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"Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent"

- Eleanor Roosevelt

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*"8<sup>th</sup> March is a global day for social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. It has been observed from 1900s. The United Nations accepted it in 1975 as the International Women's Day.*

*The story of women's struggle for equality belongs to no single woman or organization, but to the collective efforts of all, who care about women's right.*

*Most pressing issues which women face today is connection between women's rights and women workers' rights.*

*In Solidarity, we march on!*

*Happy Women's Day!"*

- Lalita Krishnaswami.

Skoch award conferred to Traditional Crafts Heritage Project of SEWA Cooperative Federation



"Reviving Crafts and Heritage and Providing Sustainable Livelihood to the Artisans" project, funded by Rural Electrification Corporation of India, supported by the National Culture Fund received SKOCH Technology Award on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 at New Delhi under the category of skill development.

### Highlights of the project

- 850 artisans from 5 districts of Gujarat participated in the skill upgradation training in various crafts
- 50 artisans are now master crafts persons with expertise in their own craft, along with skills in training and leadership.
- Artisans have access to technology, markets and traditional designs which enhances their livelihoods.
- Design SEWA, is housed in SEWA ni Haveli, a 120 year-old building which is listed as a heritage building by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC). The building was restored under the project and has now become a forum, where artisans come, meet and exchange ideas and designs, share difficulties and learn from each other.
- Sewa Federation is a founder of the program 'Hamaari Virasat' along with Mahila Sewa Housing Trust. It has taken up Dhal Ni Pol as a model pol and started campaign for livelihood through traditional craft and cleanliness in the pol.
- Lalita Krishnaswami has been one of the Founder of Ahmedabad Cultural Heritage Cluster
- The building is not just a structure, but showcases living crafts for the public to generate awareness of our rich cultural heritage. It gives visitors the opportunity to experience live craft demonstrations like patch work, embroidery, block- printing, bandhani, tie and dye, bead work etc.
- Sewa Kalakruti has launched its new logo and unique brand image.
- Artisans become designers through skill development and allied services of health care, savings, pension and insurance facilities.



Design Sewa, Housed in  
SEWA NI HAVELI

### Cleaning as a means of Livelihood

Saundarya Cleaning Cooperative team was invited by NDTV to participate in the "Banega Swachh India Campaign" at Film City, Mumbai on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2016.

Manjulaben Vaghela, Chairperson of Saundarya Cooperative participated in the panel discussion along with Mr. Amitabh Bachhan, Brand Ambassador of the campaign, Mrs. Jaya Bachchan, Actor and member of Parliament, Ms. Dia Mirza, well-known actor, and the promoters of the event.



Executive committee of Saundarya  
Cooperative with Bollywood's Dia Mirza



Manjulaben with Shri Amitabh Bachchan and Jaya Bachchan  
at the Banega Swachh India Campaign

Manjulaben and the Executive committee of Saundarya who accompanied her, pledged to contribute two hundred thousand hours to keep the country clean.

Manjulaben said, "We are working for cleanliness for many years. For us, cleanliness campaign means, clean mind, clean body, clean home, clean surroundings and clean country."

## Recycling 'e-waste' is good business



Manjulaben of Geetanjali Cooperative talks about e-waste management

The word e-waste is new for the members of Geetanjali Waste Paper Pickers' Cooperative. To understand the meaning of e-waste and new opportunities in e-waste management, the members of Geetanjali Waste Paper Pickers' Cooperative visited Pune. The used electronic items like mobile phones, and computers are disposed of and result in many issues related to the environment. The cooperative soon started to collect e-waste as a new source of income. The new concept of e-waste brought new challenges.

The cooperative members visited schools to persuade and advised the principals and students to explain the effects on environment if e-waste is dumped into landfills, and rivers.

The members also convinced them that collection of e-waste and supplying it to the waste recycling units could generate income and provide livelihood to the members of the cooperative. The cooperative has provided containers for e-waste collection to 35 schools.

"I collect the waste from Manek Chowk. I used to break 'e-waste' into pieces and sell it to the scrap collector. After some time, black spots started to occur on my legs and I was facing breathing problems. After learning how to use e-waste, we sell the e-waste to the recycling unit. 'e-waste' today means my livelihood. I take care of my health and contribute to the environment." – Madhuben.



e-waste collection by students

## 5 Women's Cooperatives participated in Satvik Food Festival - 2016



Members of Megha Cooperative at Satvik Food Festival 2016

Megha Adivasi Women Farmers' Cooperative, Abodana Block Printers' Cooperative, Kadi Khuddar Hastkala Utpadak Cooperative, Vanlaxmi Nursery and Farm Cooperative and Video SEWA Cooperative participated in the Satvik Fair, organized by Srusti at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad.

Megha Cooperative also participated in a Satvik Fair at New Delhi.

Sewa Kalakruti participated in 5 exhibitions: Pratibimb at Mumbai, Satvik Food Festival at Ahmedabad, Sabala at Karnataka, Dastkar at New Delhi and MRIT at Baroda.

## State Level Workshop on "Revisiting Women Empowerment"

Mrs Lalita Krishnaswami was the Guest of Honour at a state - level workshop on "Revisiting Women's Empowerment" at R.J. Tibrewal College of Commerce, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad. She spoke on economic activities of SEWA and its integrated approach. She also mentioned the economic empowerment of women through traditional skills and heritage.

## Vimo SEWA – Top performer amongst micro-insurance agents in India

National Vimo SEWA Cooperative collected premium of Rs 2.21 crores, its largest collection ever, this year.

## Trainings

Sewa Cooperative Federation organized non-traditional skill training for security guard in collaboration with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Ladies Organization (FLO). 7 members participated.

Mrs. Mirai Chatterjee, Chairperson, SEWA Federation and Ms. Archana, Chairperson, FICCI FLO signed an MOU to collaborate in future for trainings like driver, tourism and e-commerce. The meeting was held at Hotel HYATT, Usmanpura, Ahmedabad.



Training in Security guards at G4S Security Services Pvt. Ltd.



Mrs. Mirai Chatterjee, Chairperson of the Federation presenting the activities to the ambassador of India at Ethiopia with other representatives.

## Workshop in Ethiopia

A team of 5 senior SEWA organizers visited Ethiopia as part of the SETU Africa programme. A two days' workshop on "Solidarity with People's Organizations in Ethiopia" was organized in collaboration with Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE). 26 representatives from 18 Ethiopian NGOs participated, along with government representatives.

## Visitors' feedback

15 groups of doctors, students, staff members, artisans, professors from U.K., Germany, France, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Surendranagar, Anand and Vadodara from various organizations like Hitachi, VOLAC, National Institute of Design (NID), Navrachana School visited the SEWA ni Haveli.

"The effort to make women self-reliant using traditional craft is really commendable. We got new direction and information regarding crafts. We wish you all the best for future." – Neeta Patel, VOLAC.

"Beautiful space, well-kept and lovely work that preserves the tradition."  
- Tanishka Kachru, NID.



## Tribute to Subhadraben – A Cooperative Leader

Subhadraben, a board member of Lokswasthya Healthcare Cooperative has provided her services for the last 25 years. She had been a board member of Sewa Cooperative Federation since last eight years and provided invaluable services and guidance to the Federation. The Federation remembers Subhadraben with deep gratitude.



Subhadraben Patel

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