

**SUPPORT TO MICRO ENTREPRENEURS IN
VIEW OF ENFORCING THEIR BARGAINING
POWER :
THE CASE OF SALT WORKERS IN INDIA**

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SEWA

Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) is a Member-based Organisation of Poor informal sector women workers.



**SEWA's main goals are
Full Employment
Self Reliance**

Total Membership: 5,30,000 Rural Membership: 3,64,50

Informal Sector Women Workers

Home Based Workers

Vendors (all types)

Manual Labourers

Service Providers

SEWA's Approach To Fight Poverty

Capital Formation

- At the household level and their group level
- 100,000 members, 5 crore savings

Capacity

- To stay in the competitive market and to create their own assets-individually and collectively

Organising

- Collective organised strength to influence the policy making process in favour of the poor and deal with forces like globalisation
- 10000 SHG, 500 Producers groups, 11 federations

Social Security

- That covers their stress, crisis chronic problems of healthcare, shelter to protect the erosion of their valuable income and assets.
- 75000 members have been covered

SEWA's Approach to fight poverty

- Integrated
- Participatory
- Long term
- Community owned
- Need based
- Demand driven
- Women's leadership
- Joint action of struggle and Development
- Gandhian Approach

**Members becomes owners and managers of their own trade
And activity**



A Fact:

Importance of the Informal Sector

- **93 Percent of India's workforce comes from the informal sector**
- **60 percent of the informal sector workforce comprises of women**
- **40 percent of India's exports emanate from the informal sector**
- **Upto 70% of India's National Income is contributed by the Informal Sector**

SEWA Rural Development :

Main programmes

- Organising
- Livelihood security
- Supportive services
- Campaigns

Rural Development:SEWA

- Strong membership base of 3,70,000 in rural areas
- Spread of SEWA activities in –
 - 1200 villages
 - 27 Blocks
 - 11 districts of Gujarat
- Strong organizing of women into
 - 300 village level producers groups
 - 3000 village level Savings Groups
 - 7 district level women's association

Built a strong cadre of more than 700 barefoot managers / spearhead teams
- Healthy partnership and coordination with government of Gujarat – Village level, block level, district level and state level

Disaster Proofing

- **Drought Relief Prog. in 2000**
- **Housing Reconstruction and Village Rehabilitation after EQ**
- **Livelihood Security programme in EQ affected districts-covered 15000 families**
- **Needs assessment of 30,000 BPL families**



The Impact

- **Trauma Relief**
 - **Alternative Employment**
 - **Childcare**
 - **Empowerment**
 - **Health**
- Initiate a chain reaction which would lead to livelihood security, greater vulnerability reduction, health security, childcare, food security, shelter and asset building to families under women's leadership

Disaster became a Development Activity

Organising Salt workers – A Challenge

Salt : a necessity of life for everybody but hardly people knows how and in what condition it produced

- **Scattered**
- **Produce for traders only**
- **Always in a debt trap**
- **Lack of working capital**
- **No Storage facility**
- **Transportation**
- **No direct market Linkages**

**No scope for bargaining/negotiations
Price are decided before production**

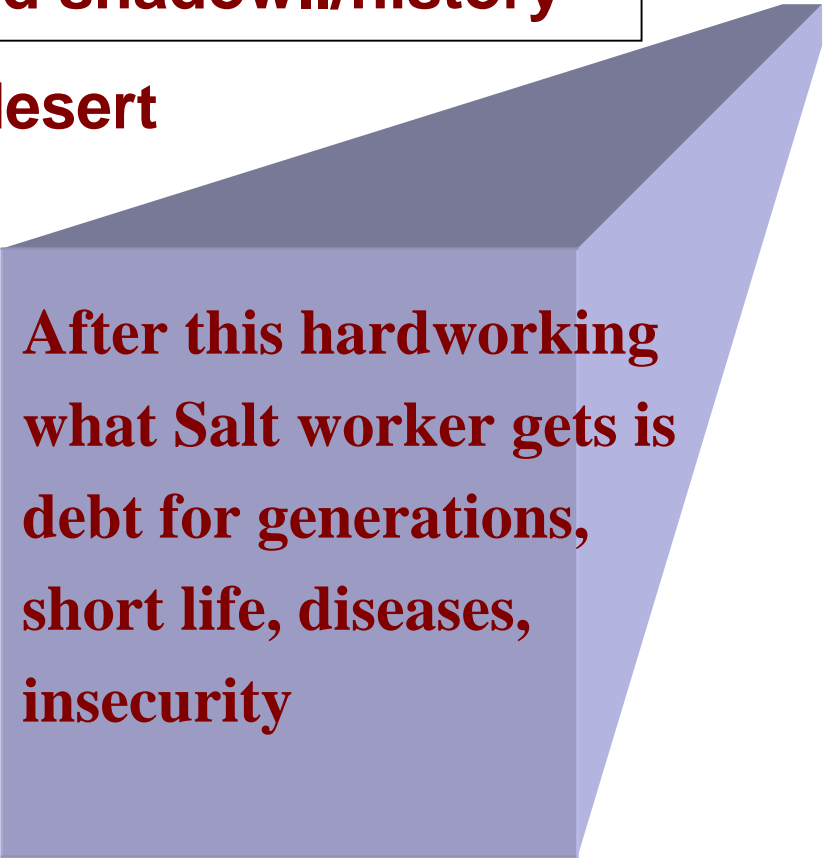
One could only think of survival

VIDEO CLIP

Organising Salt Workers : A Challenge

White salt has a black blood shadow../history

- **Requires continuous stay in desert with infants and family**
- **Seasonal Occupation**
- **Requires hard work**
- **60% work is done by women**
- **Digging Well**
- **Prepare Bunding**
- **Puddle and Trampled**
- **Loading and Unloading**



After this hardworking what Salt worker gets is debt for generations, short life, diseases, insecurity

Organising Salt Workers – A Challenge

In addition, challenges of..... Drought, Earthquake, Disasters again push them back into vulnerability and poverty.

SEWA's Intervention

- **Child Care- Child Development**
- **Nutritious Food**
- **Asset Building**
- **Housing**
- **Water Security – Women Water technicians**
- **Capacity building**
- **Trade related interventions**

- Surengranagar Mahila & Balvikas Mandal is countries first women salt workers association.
- The main objectives of SMBVM
 - To sustain the programme intervention to further built and expend the activities
 - The members do not merely remain workers or producers but also became owner and manager of their trades and organisation
 - Spearhead team are form leading to the salt workers movement

SEWA's Interventions

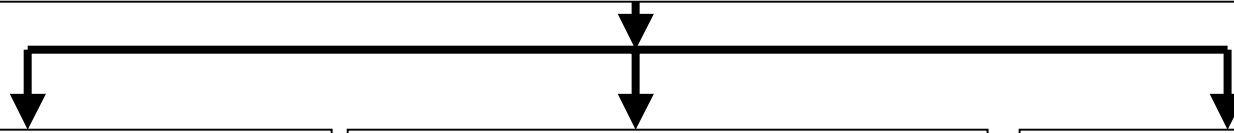
- **Child Care- Child Development**
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- **Capacity building**
- **Trade related interventions**

Mother Groups



**Surendranagar Mahila &
Bal Vikas Mandal**

SEWA's Interventions for Salt Workers



Trade related

Provide working capital

- Issuing I-card
- Identity as a worker
- Marketing facility
- Alternative employment
- Marketing facility
- Alternative employment

Social Security

- Child Development Centres
- Healthcare Facility
- Housing Finance Service
- Asset Building
- Shakti Packets – Nutrition's Supplements
- Water

Capacity Building

- Leadership training
- Management Training
- Business Plan & Monitoring

Linkages

Technical

- Rural Technical Institute
- Bavanagar Salt & Marin Research Centre
- Labour Department

Market Related

- Chemical Industries
- Private Companies

- Rural Workers Welfare Board
- Government Health, Rural Development, Housing Department
- Gujarat Water Supply & Sanitation Board

Life Education
Skill Upgradation

We were... we are.....

- We were.....
- Not organised and hence not having strength

Where do we go and who will listen to our voices.....?

- We are..
- Organised...
- Surendranagar Mahila and Balvikas Mandal is the India's first ever district level association of salt worker women

Member: 25000

Savings Groups : 725 (15000 women)

Mothers groups and village water committee,

Village development groups in each villages...!

Bare facts

Problems :

- Long working hours
- Low wage Rate
- No Medical facilities at work site
- Water Scarcity
- No access to basic amenities

One can not think on taking
bathe while drinking water is an
illusion..

Health Problem :

- Fungus and Cuts
- Skin Diseases
- Eye-sight , Night blindness
- Malaria, Diarrhea
- Tuberculosis
- Body ache

If I go to doctor ,will loose my
income for the day...

We were... we are

- We were vulnerable because...
 - Poor economic condition
 - Seasonal occupation
 - Credit @ 60% interest
 - Produce for traders only
 - **Employment which gives them income through out year and improve working condition**
- We are not vulnerable now because...
 - Employment provided
 - Support for the working capital with nominal service charge

We were.... We are..

- **Lack of improved and required tools and equipments**
- **No transportation capacity and storage facility**
- **Set up Tools and equipments library**
- **Transportation support up to the market from their own fund..**

We were.... We are....

Bare facts

- **Low production per salt pan..(500 tones)**
- **Throwaway price..Rs. 60 to 90 per tone**
- **Increased production per pan by 80% (650 to 800 tones)**
- **Direct increase in price Rs. 471 to 485 (as per the grade)**
- **Additional income by marketing the remaining wastage of salt and also the last remaining water**

The technical training and usage of technical tools made the increase in the salt production, also 80% production was of A grade

We were.....we are....

- **Debt for generations**
 - **Income increased by 300%**
 - **+ Profit of Rs.25000 in one season...!**
 - **Monthly savings of Rs. 25 to 50...!**
 - **Insured our life and risks**
 - **Migration stopped, came out from debt trap, step toward to live decent life....**
- **One can only think of survival....asset and savings is the dream...!**

We were.... We are...

Bare facts

- **No direct market linkages.**
- **Salt is sold @ whatever traders say at the time of credit**
- **No awareness of quality, the trade chain, and lack of technical knowledge**
- **No Institutional linkages**
↓
Linkages with CSMRI
- **Got the assured order directly from the GACLand other chemical agencies**
- **Received the export inquiry**
- **Based on the market research converted their edible salt into industrial salt**
- **Technical training, usage of bomimeter to test salinity, and gradation of salt**
- **Set up Laboratory to test the salt**

Trade Related Interventions

Supportive Services

- Storage
- Transportation
- Training
- Impact/ Feasibility
- Advocacy
- Processing Center
- Exposures

Market Research

- Usage of
- Salt
- Potential Buyers
- Supplier
- Costing
- Pricing

Technical Support

- Tools & Equipments
- Linkages With Technical Institution
- Training on Industrial Salt
- Laboratory For grade Testing
- Trainings

Financial Services

- Interest Free capital Loan
- Costing/ Pricing
- Assistance in Accounting, Record Keeping
- Fund flow
- Working Capital
- Business planning

Marketing Linkages

- Marketing Linkages For Industrial Salt and Vadagaru Salt
- Chemical Companies
- Alkalies

How....?

- **Technical training has removed the traditional, non productive methods..**
- **Provided total knowledge of the whole trade**
- **Market exposures**

SEWA's Interventions

- Holistic approach taken...
- Alternate employment programme such as
 - Water harvesting
 - Watershed development
 - Agriculture campaign (seed and spices)
 - Nursery and plantation, vegetation
 - Masonry training

**Also Converted disaster in to the opportunity,
taken up the long term earthquake rehabilitation
programme**

Productivity increased..

- Day care centres for the salt workers children at the worksite and at the bordering villages-Created Child development fund
- Health care-Preventive and curative-Mobile health van, Camps, referrals and trainings
- Food for work programme
- Mobile schools and Life education programmes
- Housing – Housing fund
- Set up livelihood security fund

I am a salt worker

- Identity as workers – Identity card
- Workers education classes
- Capacity building of members, leaders, executive committee members, trade councils, spearhead teams through movement training, leadership training, organising training, management training etc.

Conclusion :

- **Need for Livelihood Security Fund**
- **Access to market linkages**
- **Market intelligence**
- **Backward and Forward Linkages**



Thank You