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Highlights

- A Research Study on "Co-operative and Peace"
- Two of the member co-operatives celebrated their Silver Jubilee (SSM and Sangini Child-care co-op)
- Shop no. 40 started a new cold-storage for vegetable storage

By faithfulness we are collected and wound up into unity within ourselves, whereas we had been scattered abroad in multiplicity.

- Saint Augustine

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SAHAKARITA

It is my privilege to share the fourth quarterly news letter of the federation with you.

The federation has setup certain indicators for better governance and efficiency of the co-operatives: (a) Turnover of more than Rs. 1 crore, (b) Reserve fund of more than 20 lakhs (c) Have their own office with computerized accounting system, (d) Awarded 'A' grade in audit and (e) Distribution of more than 20 lakhs wages to its members. The Federation is also emphasizing the importance of improving the internal processes and systems to become competitive in the new economic environment to provide quality products and services.

The prices of edible items are soaring like mercury. Added to this is the artificial shortages, underweight and poor quality of goods. The time is ripe to consider the formation of consumer co-operatives of women for women. We can avail of financial assistance from the government schemes.

Your feedback is most valuable to us as it encourages us to work more for the members of the co-operative and update you of the activities.

- Lalita Krishnaswami,
President, GSWFCS.

A Research Study on "Co-operative and Peace"

The study was conducted by the GSWSCF in collaboration with Canadian Co-operative Association. The case studies presented illustrations how members of SEWA Coop. Federation and its member co-operatives participate in peace building and conflict mediation in their daily lives. It emerges that conflict, violence and strife are intimate parts of women's social realities. They themselves realize the existence of violence and injustice in various social contexts – at home, at the work-place, and in society at large – and understand that true peace is possible only when these injustices and sources of conflict can be addressed. The case study also reveals the various ways in which women members of the Federation and its allied co-operatives handle other social problems. Employing both Gandhian principles and collective action, they have addressed intra-household conflict, communal violence and have been able to build peace within their own households, as well as in their communities. Further, these stories illustrate how women's co-operatives have emerged not only as important sites for women's mobilization against injustice, but also as resources for peace and well-being in contexts of generalized social violence, conflict or disharmony. The ways in which women have used co-operatives as platforms for peace building and for mediating conflict reveal women's organized strength. The study also emphasizes the vast social benefits that communities gain with the emergence of women's co-operatives and their members as peace leaders.

Saundarya Cleaning Co-op and Sangini Child-care Coop celebrated their Silver Jubilee

SAUNDARYA CLEANING CO-OPERATIVE



SSM is a member co-operative of Gujarat State Women's SEWA Co-operative Federation Ltd, which celebrated its 25 years on 21st May, 2011. 'In 1986, NID was our first client where we sent 31 women to keep its campus clean. Today the cooperative is an organization of 500 women who once were roadside rag pickers and now work as cleaners or sweepers in prime organizations. In these 25 years, SSM has not only managed to survive, but it has also carved out a new path for rag pickers. From rag picking to offering professional housekeeping services, the co-operative has come a long way.' Mrs. Lalita Krishnaswami, President, Gujarat State Woman's co-operative Federation said.

A quarter of a century ago, when std 5 pass Ragiben Parmar joined Saundarya Safai Mandali (SSM), she was merely focused on earning a decent livelihood by sweeping and mopping floors rather than picking rags on the road. Today she is 81 and celebrating 25 years of SSM's existence.

Trushna Parmar (20), the third generation of Ragiben Parmar explains, 'My grandmother knew only sweeping and moping and hence when my mother, Hemaben joined SSM, she too started with doing the same. However, today with advanced training and good communication skills, she is a member of Board of Directors at SSM. She is HSC (Commerce) passed woman.'

Trushna is currently working in SSM's administration department and earns Rs 5000 a month. She is a graduate in commerce from CU Shah Commerce Collage and will now pursue her Master's degree to earn more by working as an administrative officer and not a rag picker or sweeper.

Manjulaben Waghela, president of SSM elaborates, 'Currently, women are working at SPIPA, at IIMA, Mudra, PRL and other prestigious institutions. These women work on a rotation policy every three months and work for 2-8 hours daily. They earn Rs 2500 to RS 4500 a month with dividends awarded when the coop makes a surplus. We have recently started with pension schemes, insurance schemes, i-cards, health check-ups and more. These women at the association are now trained in operating vacuum cleaners, jets, various toilet cleaning devices, housekeeping and more.' According to her, this is the only co-operative in the country, which has a dress code for its members.

To celebrate its 25 years, SSM also felicitated 10 women who have been part of the collective even before it was registered as a cooperative. They also identified their problems and sought to find suitable and durable solutions. SSM also helped to setup similar associations at Indore. It has started organizing in Surat and Baroda.

Sangini Child-care Co-operative

The first co-operative of SEWA for childcare services has completed its 25 years. To celebrate this event, a children's fair was organized at Khandubhai Desai Hall, Asarwa. 900 kids participated with their parents. 27 child-care centers provide services to 925 kids in Ahmadabad city. 60 women are working with the co-operative. Shree Miraiben Chatterji, Chair Person, Social Securities explained the importance of child care co-operatives. She said, 'The grass root women are unable to be self sustainable without childcare services as they have to spend much time and energy throughout the day at work and in domestic as well as child care responsibilities.'

Sherbanu, a member said, 'My granddaughter goes to the child care centre. The knowledge and information given at the child care centre is very useful. In our Muslim society, a girl child gets married in the childhood only. But now my grand child will get married only after she is 18 years old'.

#1

Marine Products Export Development Authority (M.P.E.D.A) organized a training program for “usage of fish waste.” 40 vendor women now collect the fish waste and sell it and make extra income. They are also drying the waste and crush it in to powder, which has medicinal uses.

#2

A centre for upscaling the skills of artisans was inaugurated by Samir Khan-Municipal Councilor at Sarkhej road.

#3

Health care co-operative organized an eye check-up camp for the children of fish vendors. 43 children participated and 13 received spectacles.

#4

Matsyagandha has purchased a marketing outlet cum distribution center at Chamanpura Ahmadabad. It will procure fish on wholesale basis and distribute to its members. This will reduce their dependence on the wholesaler.

#8

The Federation conducted its 19th Annual General Body Meeting on 17th May, 2011. 45 member representatives of 30 cooperatives of the Federation attended the Meeting. All the board members were present.

Livelihood of Rs.12 crore is generated through 103 member co-operatives of the Federation. The co-operative federation distributed 15% dividend to its members.

Ratanben, Manager of Rachaita Co-operative said, ‘The federation has helped us to write accounts, audit and file the income tax return. This has helped us to get back TDS from the income tax department.’



New child care centre by Sangini Bal-SEWA Co-operative in Chamanpura area

#5

Sangini Bal-SEWA Co-operative opened a new child care centre in Tarwali Chali, Chamanpura for 30 children of fish vendors.



Laghu vima workshop organized by NCUI, Delhi.

#6

A training was organized by Sangini Bal SEWA Co-operative on ‘learning to play child’ at Chandanivas. Various organizations like Chetna, Akhand jyot, Young Citizen of the India (Mehsana), Shree Santshtrey Education Trust (Bhavnagar), Shishuvihar (Palanpur), Child care in Anand and Kheda and other organizations working for child care participated in the programme. The training was conducted by Shree Mayaben Gaytode from Balmandir Research Foundation, Chennai and Shree Minaxiben from Chetna Organization, Khadia, Ahmedabad.

#7

Vimo SEWA Co-operative organized a workshop on Micro Insurance in collaboration with National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI). Vice President of NCUI, Shree Ghanshyambhai Amin was the chief guest.



AGM of the Federation, conducted on 17th May, 2011

Shop no. 40 started a new cold-storage for vegetable storage

The Shop No.40, Agriculture Produce Market Committee, Jamalpur, run by the Federation has set up a cold storage service for the members of Shree Vatrak Mahila Mandal, a vegetable SHG in Kheda – Bhatha village with the support of Bayer company.

The purpose of this cold storage was to get the benefit of the premium price of the vegetable. They could also reduce the transportation cost, manage large orders and sell directly from the farm and save time without suffering losses.



TRAININGS

Name of the training	No. of training programs	No. of members participated
Member Education	7	220
Social Issue	1	25
Learning through Video Replay	1	28
Total	9	273

15 members of varied coop participated in the Two Leadership Training Programs organized by National Co-op. Union of India at New Delhi.

Manjula Raval and Aruna Parmar, members of Video SEWA Co-operative were trained in Italy for editing and the use of new technologies in the video production.

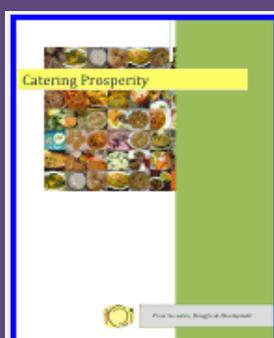


EXPOSURE VISIT

37 members of Trupti catering coop. participated in an exposure visit to Vanlaxmi Co-operative, Ganeshmpura. They learnt and observed eco-friendly production and use of vegetables by the co-operative in their eco tourism venture.



PUBLICATIONS:



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