

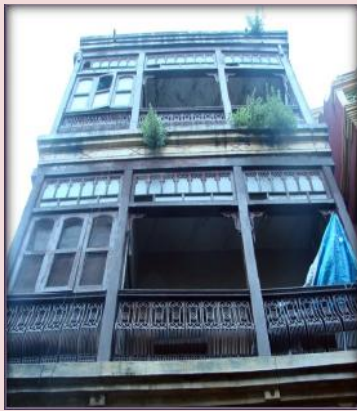


# SAHAKARITA

## GUJARAT STATE WOMEN'S SEWA CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION

### CONTENTS

- Sewa ni Haveli -  
Heritage building
- Mushaira ...ek koshash
- Workshops
- Trainings
- Updates
- Visitors



Mushaira at Mehndi Nawaz Jung Hall

“Co-operative training is not merely a prerequisite but a permanent condition of co-operative activities.” - Vaikunthbhai Mehta, Pioneer of Co-operative Movement in India

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The co-operative movement has been playing a distinct role in the socio-economic development in India. But the co-operative movement has moved away from the weaker section of the society especially women. Women continue to remain on the fringes of community life.

Specific programs of action to improve the position of women to activate the participation in the co-operative movement is very limited.

The evolution of economic institutions and structures has so far not resulted in building a statistical base.

“Only women’s co-operatives” ranged from 1.3 to 2.1% of the total number of co-operatives. This is after more than 100 years of co-operative movement!

- Lalita Krishnaswami.

### Sewa ni Haveli - Heritage building

Sewa ni Haveli, where the artisans sit and craft their products is being restored and repaired. The 100 years old SEWA ni Haveli, where the Design Sewa is housed has been listed as a heritage building by Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC).

The restoration and repairs will make the building congenial for the artisans to work in more aesthetic environment. The restoration is being supported under the CSR activities of Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) through National Culture Fund (NCF).

### Mushaira ...ek koshash

In celebration of SEWA Chalisi (40 years of Self Employed Women’s Association), a Mushaira (a poetry recitation session) was organized. This Mushaira is the result of a workshop, in which, the grassroot members belonging to various co-operatives and trades including incense stick rollers, bidi rollers, field labourers, masons, artisans, paper pickers and domestic workers participated. For most of the women, this was their first experience of creative writing on subjects of their choice. The program was organized at Mehdi Nawaz Jung Hall, Paldi, Ahmedabad. The women wore the colorful anarkali dresses in keeping with the festive occasion.

300 women enjoyed the program of hearing their friends and colleagues recite poetry with elan. Shri Elaben Bhatt, Founder, SEWA was the Chief Guest. Shri Anjum Rizvi, Principal, Chhipa Girls’ High School was the special guest.

## Workshops



Workshop on occupational health for women workers in Informal Economy

Lokswasthya Sewa Mahila Sahakari Mandli organized a workshop in Delhi on Occupational Health for women workers in the Informal Economy. 77 women workers from 4 different states attended.

The objectives of this workshop were to highlight occupational health issues of women workers; to share experiences on developing tools with and for workers. With the support of technical organizations to initiate dialogue on integrating occupational health with primary health care, especially in the context of the proposed Universal Health Care.

Participants from all over the world put forward their views for enhancing their bit for the women workers far and wide.

The video documentary of the workshop was recorded by Video Sewa Co-operative.

16 artisans from 5 co-operatives participated in Design Development workshop held at Apparel and Leather Technology (ALT) College, Khokhara, Ahmedabad.

16 samples in fabric painting, stitching, tie & dye, embroidery etc. were developed.



Design development workshop at ALT College



Members of Design Sewa participated in a workshop at EDI

10 organisations from government and non government participated in two workshops organised by Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India. One on Skill Development and Employment Generation - issues and best practices, in which 10 members of Design Sewa participated. The second workshop was on Micro business centers, in which 8 members of the Federation participated. The Federation team presented their Best Practices followed by discussion.

## Trainings

450 members of Artisan, Homecare, Rachayeeta Construction Workers', Matsyagandha, Saundarya Cleaning Co-operatives and the staff of the Federation participated in 18 different training programs including educational, micro enterprise development, technical and skill upgradation trainings.

Several trainings were partnered with organizations like Friends of Women's World Bank (FWWB), ALT College, Gujarat Fisheries Department, Mahila Sewa Academy, Child Care Cooperative etc.



Training in Patchwork at Design SEWA

Rukaiyaben Guniwala in Patchwork Training said, "Though we were from different backgrounds and communities, we worked together as a family. I learnt the skill in patchwork which will now help me to generate income for my family. I will also use the skill to decorate my home and make the best products out of textile waste."

"I have learnt that it is important to make the list of my strengths and weaknesses, available market, government policies before starting a business. I must keep all records for the development of my business."  
Ayeshaben, an artisan said.



Training on micro entrepreneurship development



Value based training to the members of Homecare Co-operative



Pattern making training for the artisan members

Training kits for skill development training were given to 20 master crafts persons to enable them to provide the trainings very efficiently.

Geetaben Solanki, a Master Crafts Person in Patch work said, "After I received the training kit, it will be easy to prepare myself for the trainings. I will not demand the raw materials like threads or needle. I do not have to remember the smallest things accept the kit before leaving to give training.



Safuraben Guniwala, receiving the training kit for Badlawork

## Updates

- Women's International Day was celebrated by 30 women artisans and staff members of The Federation. Mrs. Lalita Krishnaswami explained the importance of 8<sup>th</sup> March and the importance of heritage and culture in our social life.
- Sewa Mahila Co-operative Bank opened its three new branches: in two districts in Chandkheda and Lambha in Ahmedabad and Mehsana district
- With the support of The Federation, Karyasidhh Kagajkam Co-operative was able to negotiate for 50% increase in remuneration.
- Matsyagandha Co-operative will now do the business of coloured fish in collaboration with Gujarat Fisheries Department.
- The Federation organized various training programs like animal husbandry, agriculture and micro enterprise development for 600 agricultural workers in Vyara Taluka of Tapi District. The members proposed a co-operative, which will be looking after marketing, training, production and technology.
- A team of eight members of Sanklit Sewa went to South Africa for need assessment and to plan the development of livelihood programs.
- 30 members of Fish Co-operative participated in the exhibition of varieties of aquariums of different types of coloured fish. The exhibition was organized by Gujarat Fisheries Department.



Celebration of International Women's Day was published in 8 news papers

## Visitors

“Members from various NGOs and organizations including Agakhan, Afghanistan, Homenet Bangladesh Women' Group, Nirmal Mahila Kalyan Kendra, Bihar, Indo Global Social Service Society, (MP), Action for Community Empowerment, Rajasthan, Nirmala Samaj Kendra, Vadodara visited The Federation.

“The visit to different co-operatives of Sewa Federation was very informative to us. Sewa Federation is working for a very noble cause. The visit enlightened us as to how Sewa Federation implemented the laws enacted by government and it has become a ray of hope for the women workers.” –said Shivangi, Nirma University, Ahmedabad.



A team from Afghanistan visited The Federation

### Readers' Feedbacks:

Thanks very much for sending across your newsletter, it is an excellent publication. We're delighted to upload it to the ICA website, you can view it here: <http://ica.coop/en/media/library/newsletters/gujarat-state-women%E2%80%99s-sewa-co-operative-federation-vol-3-issue-3> - **Nicola Huckerby**, Director of Communications, International Co-operative Alliance

Thank you for sending me your News Letter. I hope you and your team are doing great. Keep up the good work. We commend the efforts of your organization in helping women in your city. – Christiana, WCCI

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Your Feedback is welcome