

Dress Making activity changed the life of Jay Dutt Guru Self Help Group

The case of Jay Dutt Guru Self Help Group undertaking tailoring activity in Dhamani village of Dharampur block of Valsad district located at about 51 Km from the district headquarters demonstrates how successful the rural women could be as small entrepreneurs if necessary training and credit are provided to them along with some guidance and encouragement.

Group Formation and Functioning :

Eleven members of Dhamani village came together and formed into a SHG called Jay Dutt Guru in the year 2009. They met once in a month and contributed savings at the rate of Rs.50 per month. Later, they were provided training for tailoring activity in Dharampur Block office, under SGSY scheme for one month during Feb-2011.

All the members of Jay Dutt Guru are into agriculture or labor activity. They run their families utilizing the income earned by their husbands, who were the sole bread earner of their families. Thus, managing the household expenses was always a major problem. At times, members had to cut down their food expenses in order to meet the children's education. Members were in the wake of this severe financial crunch. All women members of this group belonged to ST caste.

Initiation into Tailoring Activity:

During the training which was conducted in 2011-12, they could pick up the skills with much ease as they possessed right aptitude for the task on account of their familiarity with stitching activity earlier. Noticing their enthusiasm, DRDA provided them revolving fund and also provided an opportunity to make use of the same machine on which they were given training to make dress and stitch the sarees for certain period. Members also visited private tailor for advance skills.

Functioning of the dress-making unit :

In convergence with DIC under Manav Kalyan Scheme, SHG were provided with stitching machines. Also they procured raw material i.e cloth worth Rs. 5000/- and other materials/equipment such as tables, boxes, etc., from Dharampur block of Valsad district, Gujarat. Members stitch products at their own residence and later collect it together. Bank also sanctioned cash credit of Rs. One lakh under Mission Mangalam Scheme, Government of Gujarat

They sell the product at gram hatt at retail price and take orders to make school uniform. They also sell their products based on the customised needs of the clients.

Regarding the main constraints encountered in the trade, they felt that apart from inadequate finance towards working capital requirements, irregular electricity supply is impeding their production. They have to go to different places to sell their products. To overcome the problems in marketing, they are planning to explore options to open a stall in district headquarter.

Impact :

The manufacturing of dress and stitching activity has certainly contributed to some addition to their household income in the sense that they could get gainful employment without moving from their village. It has also increased the self-confidence of members and boosted their self-esteem to some extent. They could now interact with the strangers, meet the officials to get the orders and market their products with much ease. They could now proudly proclaim themselves as small entrepreneurs who could succeed in their collective venture and stand as a model to other rural women interested to pursue such activities.