

SEWA transforms over 15000 smallholder Farmers and Landless Laborers Into successful Entrepreneurs, Leaders and Managers of their Individual and Collective Social Enterprises

I Background

“Poverty is the worst form of violence perpetuated by the consent of the society”
felt Shri Ela Bhatt, the founder of The Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA).

With the thought of helping the poor fight poverty and lead a life of self-reliance and dignity, Shri Elaben Bhatt founded, SEWA, a registered trade union in 1972, which has been organizing women workers for the last four decades and empowering them through full employment and micro-entrepreneurship opportunities.

SEWA practices Gandhian philosophy, valuing simplicity, honesty, and non-violence. It places great importance on developing the capabilities of women as leaders leading to their economic and social empowerment. By organizing the informal women workers to attain full employment, SEWA helps them to become autonomous and economically self-reliant, both individually and collectively. Following an integrated approach, SEWA’s strategy involves working around helping the women achieve the twin goals of :

- (a) **Full Employment**, ie employment that provides work, income and food security and
- (b) **Self-reliance** in financial matters and & in decision-making abilities

SEWA believes that economic power cannot only be left in the hands of those who have capital or to governments; but workers must also design, build and expand their own economic strength by establishing their own economic institutions. SEWA has been facilitating women members to build & manage various forms of members own organizations that includes producers’ collectives / service provider groups, co-operatives, for profit and not-for profit companies that directly link up with the economic mainstream. Each form of organization promoted by SEWA and its members has the following characteristics :

- They exist for the benefit of the self-employed women members
- They are owned by the self-employed women
- They are managed by them
- They are democratically run
- They aim towards self-reliance, both financially and managerially

In the last five decades, SEWA has grown into a family of member’s organizations as a Banyan tree with numerous branches, including member’s own groups, federations, and co-operatives that provide livelihood security, reduce vulnerability & lead to economic empowerment. Currently, SEWA has 3200 SHGs, 110 cooperatives, 15 economic federations and 3 producer companies under its umbrella.

This note focuses on SEWA’s 3 producer companies – i.e. the 3 Agri-Social Food Enterprises of SEWA which have transformed smallholder women farmers and landless laborers into successful owners, leaders and managers of their individual and collective enterprises.

II Introduction

1. The Challenge

SEWA currently has a membership base of 1.8 million women workers of the informal economy, across 18 states of India. With 2/3rd of this member base comprising of rural women workers and agriculture being one of their primary occupations, SEWA has been working relentless over the years to resolve the burning question of “*Why does the farmer remain hungry?*”.

The members of SEWA in the rural areas include small and marginal farmers as well as landless agricultural laborers with little or no land and share croppers. The reality of these rural workers is that they are the poorest of the poor. Although agriculture forms the backbone of the Indian economy, it is only the large farmers who have benefited and prospered. The smallholder agriculturists, being plagued by untold hardships and difficulties have been pushed further into a depressing abyss of poverty. Having a very small marketable surplus, they are forced to sell through “Distress Sell” at the time of harvesting due to lack of access to markets and proper storage facilities. They are also subjected to exploitation by a chain of middlemen or intermediaries between the producers and the market – from improper weighing to being offered low prices and delay in payments. All of this is augmented by the increasingly frequent climate and market shocks that has made agriculture unprofitable, unsustainable and unviable.

The conditions for the women smallholder farmers are even further worsened. Historically, despite taking care of major on-field and off-field activities, women have struggled to find a voice, a recognition of their contribution or an identity as a farmer in mainstream agricultural practices. The lack of visibility has resulted in disentitlement to benefits as well as lack of access to agricultural extension services; thereby reducing their overall income from agriculture. The employment opportunities available in rural areas are never constant due to severe competition, market trends and changing economic policies leading to landless laborers and daily wage earners too barely eking out a living.

2. The Solution

To address all these issues and to enable real and sustainable progress of the women farmers, the wage-earners and the landless laborers, SEWA realised there was a need for a comprehensive and inclusive approach that would radically transform the food system and integrate the small women marginal farmers and landless laborers seamlessly across the food value chain and provide game-changing solutions that would achieve the triple goals of building gender equality, sustainability and healthy food systems. Over a period of time beginning 2004, SEWA conceptualised, designed and delivered three innovative women-led, for-profit, Smart Food (*) based social enterprises - **RUDI (Rural Distribution Network)**, **Kamla** and **Fresh Greens** - which integrated small marginal farmers and landless laborers and connected them directly to the end-users through an innovative value chain led, owned and operated by themselves. Through these social enterprises, SEWA empowered women farmers and landless laborers as change agents and critical market actors, giving them entrepreneurship, employment and decision-making opportunities, enhanced their income generating potential and created a healthy, sustainable, resilient and equitable food system.

These social enterprises have catapulted into a movement with rural women smallholder agriculturists and wage-earners metamorphosing into confident, self-assured and successful entrepreneurs of their individual and collective enterprises. Their voices are being heard, their roles are being recognised and they are emerging as key decision-makers and influencers in their families, communities, villages and districts, leading to normalisation of their participation and involvement in mainstream agriculture and food processing system.

(*) *Smart Food is described as that which is good for the farmer, the consumer and the planet*

III The 3 Agri-Food Social Enterprises of SEWA

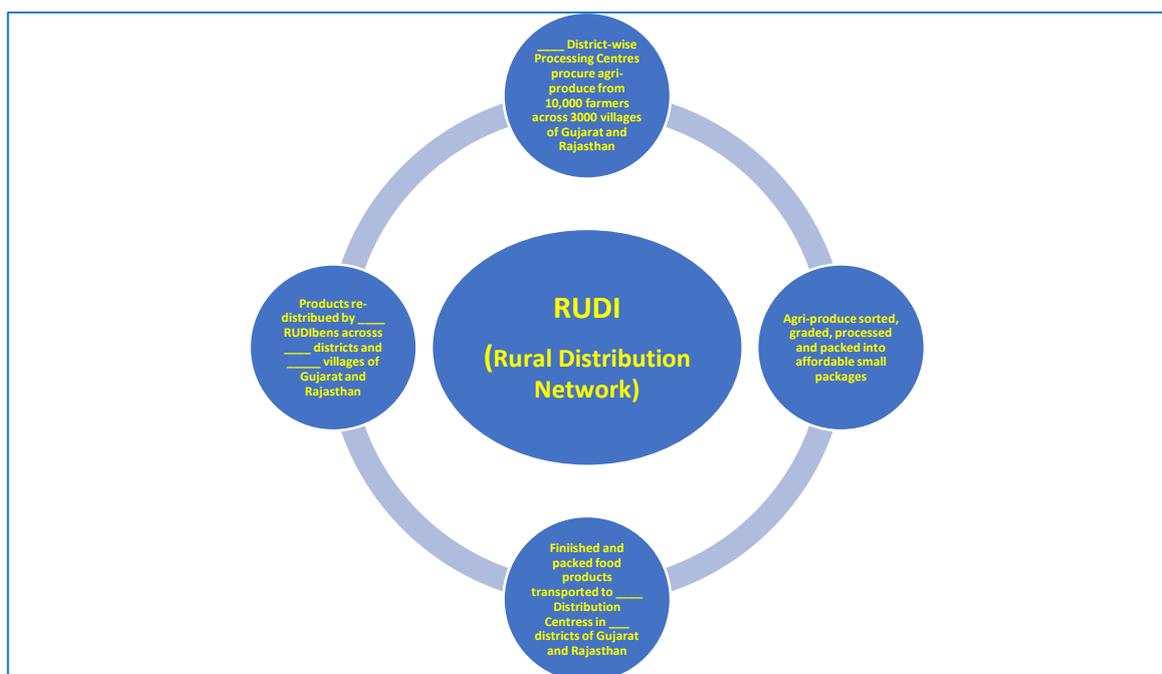
SEWA, through its three social food enterprises - **RUDI** (**R**ural **D**istribution Network), **Kamla** and **Fresh Greens** - is targeting a systemic transformation in the agricultural processes while catering to nine out of the seventeen UN Sustainable Development Goals (1,2,3,4,5,8,10,12,17). The models enable women agriculturists and laborers to acquire new skills and technology, market collectively, eliminate the chain of middle-men between the producer and market and increase their earnings. They provide end-to-end agri solutions to ensure food security for all, provide livelihoods, and encourage consumption of healthy, nutritious and smart foods. A distinctive feature of these models is the seamless integration of digital technology in creating an efficient value chain through a customized mobile application.

The guiding principle of the three business models is to meet the four bottom lines of Livelihood, Sustainability, Empowerment and Environment while simultaneously providing innovative, game-changing solutions of directly linking the small marginal farmers to the landless rural laborer, cultivating and processing healthy, nutritious food locally, generating multiple employment and livelihood opportunities for rural people at each stage of production and processing and creating enterprises led, owned and managed by smallholder farmers and landless women laborers.

1. **RUDI** : (**R**ural **D**istribution Network)

RUDI is an innovative business model for small and marginal women farmers with the objective of providing them direct market linkages to get better price for their products and value accruing activities by setting up processing and distribution centres managed by rural women.

It is an integrated food value chain, fully owned and operated by over 250,000 small and marginal women farmers. This for-profit agri-business enterprise directly connects farmers to the end-users, using its own procurement channels, processing centers, packaging units and a distribution network. Through RUDI, SEWA procures agri-produce from around 10,000 small and marginal farmers across 3,000 villages covering the states of Gujarat and Rajasthan. This agri-produce is graded, processed and packaged into affordable small packages and redistributed into the villages by Rudibens (SEWA's women sales-force).



RUDI's target is to internally rotate the scarce funds of the rural producers in their own villages in a way that fetches them maximum benefit and brings about positive changes in their lives. This in turn helps to reduce incidental expenses and build-up an integrated value chain which enhances the efficiency of agricultural activities, reduces hardships of the producers & processors and creates multiple employment opportunities along with an efficient supply of agro-products to rural members. RUDI provides access to the farmers about current market information to help them make informed decisions and creates awareness about the relevant State and Central Government schemes and interventions. It promotes usage of hybrid seeds, organic fertilizers, organic pesticides and makes use of seamless modern technology for its inventory management, sales and marketing activities.

The uniqueness of the model is that besides building a collective supply chain, it also has an integrated rural distribution network for consumption products. The value proposition for the retail customers of RUDI's products is quality and quantity, which is a big challenge for people in rural areas.

Conceptualized in 2004, RUDI has grown multifold and currently has an annual turnover of INR 10 crores. It has generated employment opportunities for more than 5,000 rural women who earn an average monthly income of INR 8,000-10,000. RUDI procures agri-produce directly from around 20000 smallholder farmers, across 1300 villages of Gujarat, Rajasthan, UP and MP.

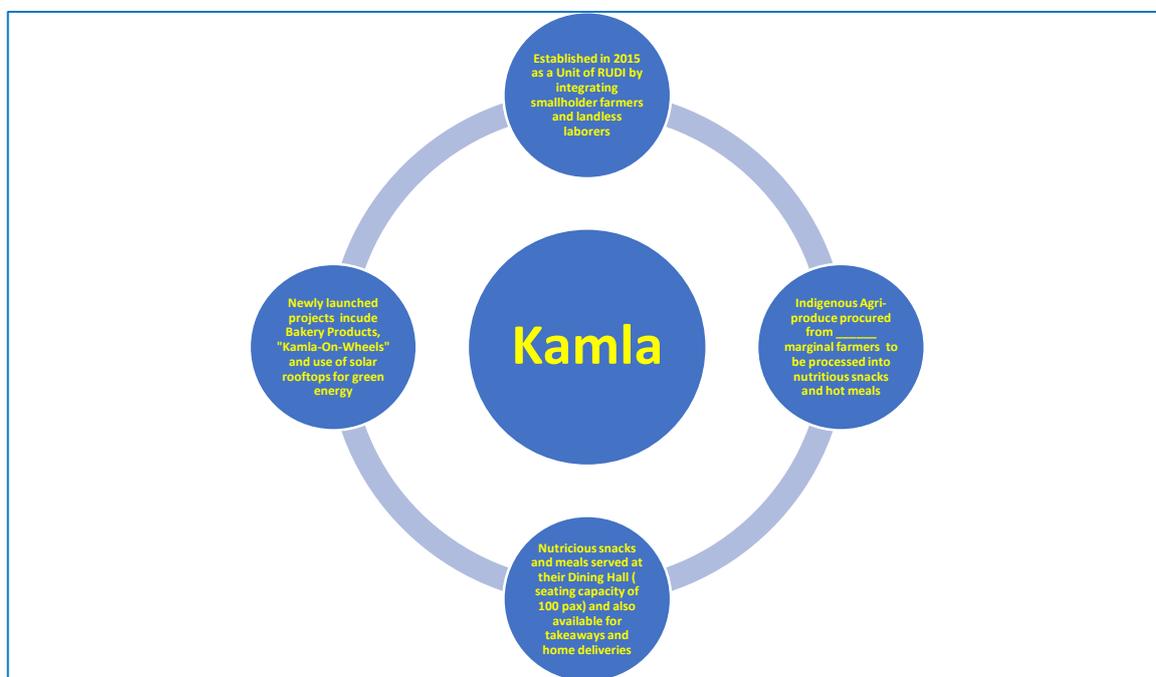
Year	RUDI	No of Villages covered	No of farmers agri-produce procured from	No of Empl	Avg Sal range	Annual Turnover
2004	- Established one processing unit in Surendranagar district of Gujarat with 65 products	50	1500	8	10000	1 Crore
2010	- No of Processing Centers increased to 9 - RUDI's presence extended to 9 districts of Gujarat - Product range extended to include over 100 items	900	15000	125	10000 – 25000	8 Crore
2015	- Initiated a Processing Center in Rajasthan State - Expanded RUDI's activities in 1 district of Rajasthan - Product range extended to include over 145 items	25	200	12	10000	25 Lakhs
2020	- Expanded RUDI's operations to UP and Mp states. - 4 Processing centers in each state - Rajasthan, UP and MP - Each Processing center covers around 25 villages	200	2000	45	Rs 8,000- Rs 10,000	10 Crores
2021 (est)	- Scaled up processing activities in UP, MP and Rajasthan to reach out to more small and marginal farmers	1000	5000	60	Rs 9,000- Rs 10,000	15 crores

Additionally, in order to strengthen the livelihoods of its small and marginal farmers from the states of Jammu and Kashmir, RUDI facilitated direct linkages of these farmers to urban niche market in Gujarat. Produces like apples, peaches, jams, and dry fruits grown by farmer members from Kashmir and Ladakh were also sold through RUDI in Ahmedabad, Gujarat resulting in a 30% increase in profits for the farmers. Over 3116 boxes of apples (5 Kg each), strawberries (1 kg each), plums and cherries (1 kg each) grown by farmers were sold through 'RUDI'.

2. **KAMLA** : With RUDI proving to be a success in integrating smallholder farmers into the food system, SEWA started focusing on integrating them along with landless laborers into an innovative "Smart" food chain system. It established Kamla in 2015, through which the landless women laborers become the owners, planners, and managers of their "Smart" food processing enterprise by procuring "Smart"

ingredients (whole food grains, millet, sorghum) directly from the marginal farmers and processing these into traditional, nutritious delicacies, snacks and meals for self-consumption and consumers.

Through Kamla, SEWA was also able to bring the rural micro-entrepreneurs who were involved in making Papads, Pickles and such other local, traditional items into mainstream food system by organising them and offering them a platform for selling their nutritious products on a large scale.



With a current annual turnover of INR 1.25 Crores, Kamala provides entrepreneurship opportunities to over 1000 women and employment opportunities to 75 women and youth and procures the ingredients directly from over 1500 small-holder food producers.

Year	KAMLA	No of Villages covered	No of farmers agri-produce procured from	No of Empl	Avg Sal	Annual Turnover
2015	- Established one processing unit in Ahmedabad district of Gujarat with 10 products	100	700	10	10000 – 20000	25 Lakhs
2018	- Trained over 500 women workers across 5 districts of Gujarat in Food Processing - Number of processing increased to 5 across in 5 districts of Gujarat - Product Range increased to include - Snacks / bakery / regular course of food	150	750	75	12000 – 20000	55 Lakhs
2020	- Started Marketing through Social Media - Developed the concept of “Kamla-on-Wheels” - Introduction of Kamla- on-Wheels	500	1200	35	15000 – 25000	1.25 Crores
2021 (est)	- 2500 sisters trained till date - Trained sisters run their own Kamala centers in their own villages	1000	1500	75	20000 – 30000	1.5 Crores

3. **Fresh Greens** : In the last few years, the demand for organically grown, indigenous fresh vegetables and fruits has been on the rise. Since RUDI and Kamla had firmly established the benefits of self-ownership and direct market linkages in the lives of marginal farmers, SEWA now began thinking about connecting the vegetable growers directly to rural and urban consumers. This need was particularly felt during the COVID 19 pandemic when the farmers were under tremendous stress as the local demand for fresh vegetables dropped drastically and they had no economically viable means to transport their produce to urban areas where the demand was high. In this scenario, during the peak of the pandemic, “Fresh Greens” was piloted by SEWA as an innovative supply chain solution in the state of Gujarat, linking the vegetable growers directly to urban consumers, using the existing redistribution channels RUDI and Kamla.

The pilot has been extremely successful in overcoming the challenges of the non-marketability of the modest produce of small-holder vegetable growers and providing them an assured ready market, fair returns and direct linkages to end consumers. With the elimination of the exploitative middlemen, the earnings of the vegetable growers has also increased by INR 8000 – 1000 per month.



While the demand for organically grown, fresh vegetables has been on the rise for the past several years, COVID 19 pandemic has escalated this behavioural shift like no other, proving that Fresh Greens is sustainable and scalable and has the potential to grow multifold in the state of Gujarat and across the country with the right interventions.

Year	Fresh Greens (Pilot)	No of Villages covered	No of farmers agri-produce procured from
2020	- Piloted in 2 district of Gujarat	25	98
2021	- Expanded to total 3 districts of Gujarat	35	298

IV Overcoming Challenges

While RUDI, Kamla and Fresh Greens are strong, value-based, democratically functioning organizations today, the women of these enterprises had to face several social, economic and cultural barriers before they emerged successful. A patriarchal mindset, having little or no access to affordable credit, lack of market linkages, working with limited working capital, dealing with inadequate market information and exploitative middlemen, limited sales and marketing skills, lack of technology, were some of the many challenges that had to be overcome by the women.

Through SEWA Manager Ni School (SMS), the capacity building arm of the organisation), SEWA created awareness amongst its members and provided need-based training programs, to develop the women and build a cadre of grassroots managers equipped with necessary managerial, technical skills and soft skills to efficiently operate their micro and small enterprises. SMS has adopted a decentralized training approach for and based on the understanding that learning is mostly demonstrative and emulative, master trainers are selected from the grassroots level and trained in technical skills, life skills, communication skills, digital skills and management of enterprises. These trainings are cascaded by the master trainers to the grassroots women and youth in the village-level Community Learning and Business Resource Centres (CLBRCs) established by SEWA. All training programs are need-based, designed to be hands-on, demonstrative and are developed with consultation from members and pre-tested prior to being finalised. SMS has partnered with various other organizations – ranging from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad to the World Bank Institute – in its efforts to train the rural people in becoming managers, leaders and owners of their enterprises.

Going forward, the three enterprises face the challenge of having limited access to innovative financing and technological solutions that would enable them to scale their operations while also building the resilience of the small and marginal farmers to increasingly frequent climate and market shocks. For this, SEWA is exploring the establishment of a “Women’s Livelihood Stabilization Fund” which would help them in their initiatives of cultivating, processing and redistributing Smart Food products. The other significant area in which the fund could be used would be in creating smart, creative and contemporary advertising and marketing campaigns (encompassing traditional and digital media) to raise awareness of the social enterprises, their products and the benefits of including Smart Food in one’s dietary habits.

V Benefits

RUDI, Kamla and Fresh Greens are ideally suited for rural women and local youth as they are not capital intensive and focus primarily on using the inherent capabilities of the people to empower them and make them self-reliant. At each stage of production and processing, the social enterprises are generating multiple entrepreneurial and employment opportunities and enabling the impoverished people to earn their own livelihood, become self-reliant and financially independent. The enterprises are agile and have an innate ability to innovate and adapt as a response to shocks and natural calamities, a quality, which was amply evidenced during the COVID pandemic. Despite the constraints of the lockdown, they enabled their small holder farmer members, landless laborers, RUDIbens' as well as the processing center operators to sustain themselves and their families and continued serving the community by repurposing their supply chains with immediate effect.

Systemic investments being made by the three enterprises are benefiting rural women and local youth in enhancing their participation and productivity in agricultural activities, bringing them into mainstream agriculture and food value chains and their contribution to farm productivity and production activities are beginning to be being recognized. On-going training and capacity building measures incorporate improved practices in agriculture and animal husbandry, leading to increased production and mitigation of climate and market shocks. Long-standing partnerships with skill and knowledge providers (e.g. State Agriculture Universities) provide for continuous upgradation of professional skills of the rural women and are in sync with the Government of India's commitment to empower the rural women through the National Rural Livelihood Mission which focuses on reducing the inequitable distribution of the country's resources, tackling gender injustice, strengthening & boosting local production and value chains, improving nutrition and making available affordable, healthy and safe food products to the people.

With each step of production and processing being done locally, with locally sourced ingredients, the enterprises are also successful in supporting the "Make in India" vision of the government. Additionally, the nutrition and health of the local population is improving due to the availability of nutritious, healthy and fresh food products. Being locally produced and processed, the carbon footprint is reducing, leading to a cleaner and greener environment, protection of the the local bio-diversity and preserving the tradition and skills of growing indigenous and nutritious food crops.

Overall, the smart food enterprises of SEWA are building healthy, sustainable, resilient and equitable food systems which are benefiting the smallholder farmers, landless laborers and rural youth and helping them lead meaningful, dignified and "*Atmanirbhar*" (self-reliant) lives.

Impact

RUDI, Kamla and Fresh Greens have successfully spearheaded an agri-food entrepreneurship movement and have proven to be successful models of social food enterprises in the states in which they operate – ie Gujarat and Rajasthan, India.

Their success in these geographies have organized small women producers and food processors together, built on their technical and soft skills, promoted on-farm and off-farm processing and given value-additions. This has empowered the women to capture greater ownership of the food chain system, take-on leadership positions and gain conviction of their decision-making abilities. Since the inception of the RUDI, the first social enterprise, there has been a positive impact on the rural women and their communities with an improvement in their standard of living and quality of life. Good quality, pure farm and non-farm products are available to the villagers at affordable prices at their door-step. It has created entrepreneurship opportunities for 5000 women, employment opportunities for over 300 women and youth who earn an average monthly income of INR 8,000 – INR 10,000. With the elimination of the exploitative middlemen, agri-produce is procured directly from over 15,000 smallholder farmers, resulting in an increase in their earnings by 30-35%.

Among the many changes experienced by women, the most remarkable have been an increase in their confidence and self-worth and a conviction in their ability to earn their own livelihood. Perhaps the most significant impact created by the food enterprises is the normalisation of women's participation, leadership and active involvement in the decision-making process in the food systems. Creation of women-led, managed and operated enterprises has ensured equitable access to resources, full and productive employment opportunities and decent work for all actors along the food value chain. They have empowered the women to become successful micro-entrepreneurs who own, manage and operate their enterprises either individually and collectively. Many others, with their additional skill-sets have become first-time income earners, setting them on the path of financial independence and self-reliance.



Improvement of equitable livelihoods has led to an increase in the influence of women in their families and their communities. The cascading effect of these enterprises is building healthier and stronger communities and the increasing the role of women is leading to them emerging as key influences not only in their families but also in their villages and districts. With quality, accessibility and affordability of nutritious foods improving, there has been a notable improvement in the families of the food system entrepreneurs, including their nutrition, educational opportunities for their children, and an increase in the health and social well-being of their communities, leading to economic prosperity and an strengthening of the rural economy.

IV Conclusion

RUDI, Kamla and Fresh Greens have proven to be successful in empowering communities through innovative women-led agri-social enterprises. They are bridging gender gaps and creating multiple agribusiness opportunities for small-holder farmers, landless laborers and wage-earners. They promote indigenous food crops, local production and consumption, protect the bio-diversity and are raising healthy and prosperous communities through nutritious and affordable food products.

The success of these enterprises in their limited geographies has demonstrated that organizing women producers together into micro-enterprises and building on their technical and soft skills, empowers women farmers to capture greater ownership of the value chain and market for their products, while ensuring food and nutrition security to the poor producers, their families and the rural households. These evolved women are emerging as key influencers in their families and communities.

Scaling of these enterprises to other parts of the country would ensure direct market access for more women producers while helping them gain more leverage and bargaining power in the market. A decrease in dependency on a chain of middle-men will enhance their livelihood potential, while enabling them to become critical market actors, strengthening both the efficacy and sustainability of the enterprise model. Moreover, based on the experience during the COVID crisis, there is even proof for upscaling of the value chains from rural to urban markets as well. The social enterprises have a huge potential for transforming the grave agriculture situation of smallholder farmers and landless laborers into successful smart food enterprises, providing sustainable food and nutrition security to the rural and urban households alike. They are driven by sustainability as a core value, and aim to build long term structures and local capacities of the workers in line with SEWA's goals of full employment and self-reliance, thereby enabling an acknowledgement of the contribution of smallholder women farmers and landless laborers in building healthy, sustainable, resilient and equitable food systems .

To further catalyze market expansion, there is a need to launch local and regional buyer platforms to increase market access and transparency. This requires advocacy for recognition of agriculture on par with industries and treatment of farm as an enterprise for which SEWA is working relentlessly to enable policies promoting formation and scaling of rural workers owned agribusiness / microenterprises.

Annexure 1

Case Study of Dhuriben

A successful and AtmaNirbhar (Self-Reliant) RUDI employee

"I am so proud to use my Savings from RUDIben's income for constructing my own house"

Dhuriben Dhurshigh Parmar is from Village Demai of District Arawali in Gujarat. Due to her family's financial constraints, Dhuriben could not study beyond Grade 7. While Dhuriben was an agricultural laborer, her husband was a construction laborer. Both of them used to get work for around 10-15 days in a month making it extremely difficult for them to make ends meet, leading to their family being poverty-stricken and malnourished.

In 2004, Dhuriben came in contact with SEWA when she was selected to perform in village stage-plays as a part of SEWA's publicity campaign. With this association, began Dhuriben's journey of self-awareness and financial independence, leading to her transformation into a self-confident and self-reliant woman. She travelled across villages and districts, performing and for the first time in her life, started earning a regular income of Rs 600-700 per month from her work.

Through her work, Dhuriben was amazed and proud to learn that the high quality yet affordable grocery and spices of RUDI were being produced and processed by the smallholder farmers themselves and thus was providing food and nutrition security in their villages and contributing to boosting their own village economy.

In 2008, she took a leap forward and joined as one of the five women to operate a RUDI centre at the block level and sell RUDI products. Her monthly income rose to 8000 INR and later, she also started selling RUDI products in her own village, as a "RUDIben" (SEWA's women salesforce). Through RUDI's sales she earned an additional amount of INR 1500 as sales commission.

In 2009, from her own earnings, Dhuriben purchased a mobile cell phone. Her income from commissions skyrocketed almost five-fold as she started taking orders on her cell phone. With her increased earnings, in 2011 Dhuriben and her husband could afford to build their own house.

Realising the importance of having the right technological tools to enhance her earnings, in 2017, she purchased Smart Phone and simultaneously attended a training program on the usage of RUDIs' customised application for inventory management and sales and marketing initiatives. This increased her confidence and her abilities increased in stock management and reconciliation her accounts and the ease with which she could use various online apps like Paytm, Zoom, etc. led to her being referred to as "Computerwalaben" (the lady with computer knowledge) in her village! Currently, Dhuriben has a monthly turnover of Rs 1.5 lakhs, which earns her a commission of around Rs 10,000 per month.

The house that Dhuriben had built in 2011 was with tin-roof. Dhuriben is extremely proud that in 2020, just before the lock-down, she re-built her house with concrete for which she used her own savings of Rs 70,000.

SEWA and RUDI have given Dhuriben the greatest assets in her life – ie the assets of respect and recognition by her family, community and village members.

Annexure 2

Case Study of Ansuyaben

A successful and AtmaNirbhar (Self-Reliant) Kamla employee

"I am so proud I am AtmaNirbhar (Self-Reliant) by preparing and promoting healthy and nutritious food for our poor women workers!": case story of Atma Nirbhar Nari Ansuyaben

Ansuyaben Chouhan belongs to Naaz, a small village situated 40 kms from Ahmedabad, Gujarat. She lives in a joint family of a feudal community of Gujarat, known for its patriarchal mindset. Ansuyaben practised her family occupation of farming and animal husbandry. In the early 2000's, her monthly income was a meagre Rs 2,500 per month. In 2004, she joined SEWA and with it began her journey of gaining self-reliance and financial independence.



Ansuyaben was a quick learner and after attending SEWA's training courses on Animal Husbandry, she started following the systematic approach to livestock rearing. She soon transitioned to become a trainer of the program which led to her monthly income doubling to Rs 5000-Rs 6000 per month. As a trainer, she also raised awareness and taught many other women in her village about animal care which led to cascading effect of increasing their monthly earnings as well.

In 2015, Ansuyaben got the opportunity to get trained in food processing and bakery under the initiative of Kamla. Ansuyaben says *"I had never dreamt that I would not only build my skills on what I used to love, but also give nutritional touch to the food and bakery sector. I was happy to contribute in bringing the disappearing but nutritious coarse grains back in the food circuit; to give modern form to serve palate of younger generation by making millet cookies and cakes"!*

After the training, Ansuyaben was employed at Kamla and started travelled 80 kms daily to attend practice sessions not only on baking a variety of nutritional products, but also on operating latest machinery such as ovens and spiral mixers for mass production. She mastered the art of maintaining consistency in quality and nutrition when handling bulk orders.



She soon started travelling across the country to conduct training courses for other rural women and till date has trained more than 200 women on nutritious food processing. From being to a trainee to have graduated to becoming a Master Trainer has brought immense joy, satisfaction and pride to her.

Ansuyaben has also started her own micro-enterprise of making seasonal pickles, snacks and papads and selling these in affordable packs of Rs 10-Rs 15 each. To maintain the highest quality and nutrition standards, she uses only home-grown or raw material purchased from RUDI bazaar.

With her hard work, zeal, and determination, Ansuyaben's earnings have skyrocketed to Rs 16,000 per month enabling her to become financially independent and affording a better lifestyle for her family. She has developed the confidence to voice her opinion and contribute in the decision-making process in her family, at Kamla and for her micro-enterprise. In fact, during the Covid-19 pandemic, Ansuyaben was one of the 4 women at Kamla, who stayed at the premises continuously for a period of 2 months, ensuring nutritious food was

supplied all through the lock-down period. The accomplishment of this tremendous feat led to online sales of Rs 2 lakhs, being featured in the local newspaper and her husband exclaiming with pride that *“Now you have gone ahead of me”*

With the continuous training session and opportunities afforded by SEWA, , Ansuayaben has started dreaming big and looks forward to a day when she opens her own café where she can server her customers hygienically prepared nutritious and healthy food at affordable prices. She has become truly “Atmanirbhar” and is confident of turning her dreams into reality.