

# QUARTERLY UPDATE

## Swayam Shikshan Prayog

October - December 2023

### Highlights of the Quarter

#### One Acre Farming to Scale Women led Climate Positive Food Systems

The Oak Foundation supported 3-year project, started from November 2023, focuses on increasing the credibility of SSP's climate-positive food systems model beyond Maharashtra through partner-led pilots in two new states of Kerala and Karnataka.

The project focus is to empower 8 to 10 local implementation partners across four Indian states to replicate the model independently in their intervention areas; Increase advocacy channels and improve policy influencing effectiveness for SSP through its advocacy interventions.



#### Nutrition Behaviour Change Among Cotton Growers of Wardha in Maharashtra and Kutch in Gujarat

The Welthungerhilfe/GIZ supported two-year project aims for nutritional behaviour change among cotton growers in 2 blocks of Wardha district in Maharashtra and four blocks of Kutch district in Gujarat. SSP will work as a resource organisation in partnership with Welspun in 68 villages.

#### Building resilient communities by generating livelihood opportunities for Women

The Citibank N.A. supported 17-month project, started in November 2023, focuses on identifying 18,000 women participants and training 15,000 of them across 3 blocks of Pune, Latur and Solapur Districts each. This will better position them to tackle aspects of food access, affordability, availability and community resilience, based on SSP's training tools and approach.

#### Providing Livelihood support to the women from small and marginal farming families in Latur

The Axis Bank Foundation-supported project spanning from January 2024 to March 2028 is designed to support 22,000 vulnerable households within the small and marginal farming community, comprising farmers and agricultural labourers. The initiative targets 150 villages across three blocks: Ausa, Nilanga, and Deoni in the Latur district. The primary goal is to enhance the sustainability of their current farming livelihoods and establish alternative sources of income, ultimately contributing to the overall improvement of their living standards and economic statuses.

## Program Updates

### Scaling up access to innovative energy efficient solutions for rural populations in India through a women led micro-entrepreneurship model (SAREP)

This project is being implemented by SSP in five districts of Maharashtra and Bihar, and supported by South Asia Regional Energy Partnership (SAREP). Through this initiative, Women micro-entrepreneurs or Swayam Sakhis are trained and supported in promoting clean energy products through a self-entrepreneurship model.

- 507 women entrepreneurs trained on biogas products
- 505 women trained on digital literacy
- Income earned by sakhis - Rs. 59.65 lakhs as of Dec 2023
- Carbon emission reduction from the 3,889 bio-digesters installed until Nov 2023 - 11,719.76 metric ton
- Booking done of 5,184 bio-digesters and 4,298 bio-digesters installed as of Dec 2023. Target to install until July 2024 is 7,572

### Clean Energy Program in Nalanda and Gaya districts of Bihar

SSP partnered with the private sector company ReNew to promote the use of improved cookstoves within poor rural households in Gaya and Nalanda Districts of Bihar, making affordable clean energy solutions more accessible to all (SDG7).

- Improved Cook Stoves (ICS), promoted by SSP in partnership with ReNew, were distributed at minimal cost to 2,000 families. This program increased community awareness on our level of environmental knowledge and they learned about tree conservation and advanced cooking practices.
- Over 60 women presenting 66 villages participated in a Cooking Competition organised at the Block-level between December 14-16.
- Three SSP leaders participated and exhibited Biogas stall at Bihar Dairy and Cattle Expo, from 21 to 23 Dec organised at Veterinary college Ground, Patna. They have distributed leaflets and information about biogas to 5000+ people and 10+ stakeholders.

### Building a Resilience Shield: Rural Women lead Economic Recovery project in Solapur district

The project supported by SJNEFFL, Hongkong focuses on supporting 1500+ women entrepreneurs engaged in farm and nonfarm activities, provide training on entrepreneurship, digital literacy, examine their business model in the light of current economic conditions and on linkages to enable women to strengthen their businesses.

- 750 women were identified and attended a 3-days training in Akkalkot on business orientation, market, sales, and financial planning.
- 150 Women accessed domain specific training on various products such as handmade millet products.



## Swabhiman project supported by Citibank N.A. in Latur and Pune districts

The project focuses on identifying 18,000 women participants and training 15,000 of them across 3 blocks of Pune, Latur and Solapur Districts each. This will better position them to tackle aspects of food access, affordability, availability and community resilience, based on SSP's training tools and approach.

- 7854 women on boarded for EDP training
- 297 Sakhi's onboard
- 40 Batches Started - 40 - Latur 14, Pandharpur - 8, Velhe - 1, Shirur Anantpal - 7, Indapur - 5, Mangalvedha - 6

## ISUDWOG - Women's Entrepreneurship and Value Chains Project

The European Union supported project 'ISUDWOG - Inclusive and Sustainable Development for Women and Girls' is being implemented in Osmanabad district of Maharashtra state. The global objective of the project is to strengthen the ability of civil society and its organisations to be influential in socioeconomic development, through participatory bottom-up processes, strategies, and actions for the main benefit of women. The major achievements in the last quarter include:

- Milk value chain members provided employment to 23 women in the new dairy enterprises.
- Goat value chain - 18 women initiated their own enterprises through goat farming (buying of goat kids and selling of goat generated revenue of Rs. 1,80,000)
- Vegetable value chain - 23 entrepreneurs successfully promoted to start their own earning opportunities through retail services (sold of 252 kg chilli powder, generating a revenue of Rs. 1,51,200).
- Pulses value chain - bought new small dal mill machines for processing of dal and started marketing (439 kg of pulses has been sold)
- Bank linkages Rs 92,75,000/- to 383 beneficiaries
- Government linkages Rs. 46,23,000/- to 889 beneficiaries
- 97 meetings organised with 1263 participants for all value chain related issues.
- Total revenue from the businesses in the last quarter is of Rs 5,66,820 (from selling dal, khowa, chilli, neem oil, goat feed, chatan bricks, vermicomposting).
- Total 502 government (seed) linkages through DSS officer of total cost Rs 200,000





## **Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Program supported by MSRLM-UMED in Jalna district**

SSP is implementing the Start Up Village Entrepreneurship Program (SVEP) in partnership with Maharashtra State Rural Livelihood Mission-UMED in Jalna District, Maharashtra. The program aims to create sustainable self employment for women and youths in non-agriculture enterprises. SVEP considers entrepreneurship as the important base of economic growth and development.

- In Bhokardan and Jalna Blocks, women entrepreneurs have prepared 1,445 business plans (target till March 2024 is 1200 enterprises per block).
- 305 women entrepreneurs are supported with Community Enterprise Fund of Rs. 1.20 crores and 63 bank linkage proposals have been prepared and submitted to banks.

## **Strengthening Grassroots Women entrepreneurs through building business development ecosystem**

This project is being implemented in Solapur and Latur districts in Maharashtra supported by HSBC, India.

- 92% women entrepreneurs became economically empowered with their businesses such as milk business and agri or agri allied businesses.
- Most of Women involved in the milk business as they have their own farm and livestock.
- This training leads to women in the digital world like, online marketing transactions, upgrading their skills like management, communication, access to land.
- Improvement in maintaining Bank CIBIL- possibility increased in accessing documents as well govt schemes.

## **One Acre Experiment to Scale Women led Climate Positive Food Systems in Bidar and Wayanad districts supported by OAK Foundation**

The project focuses on increasing the credibility of SSP's climate-positive food systems model beyond Maharashtra through partner-led pilots in two new states of Kerala and Karnataka.

- Completed staff orientation and CRPs orientation
- 1000 women farmers identified from 11 villages for program implementation
- Baseline survey of 500 women farmers was completed
- Digitalization of 500 women farmers profile completed
- Curriculum for awareness meetings was finalised
- Visited KVK and Soil Testing Lab, Ambalavayal and gathered data of different schemes and trainings in agriculture and allied sector.
- Visited Sai Agro Innovations and identified Dr. Rajendran the former ADR of RARS as a resource person for training.



## Repositioning rural women as Advanced Entrepreneurs and Business leaders

This project, supported by Avendus Capital, is being implemented in 90 villages in Deoni and Latur blocks of Latur District, Maharashtra for the period of April 2023 to March 2024. It aims to develop rural women's entrepreneurship by providing skills to women from marginalised backgrounds and increase their earning potential.

- 900 women entrepreneurs across 90 villages from Latur completed the comprehensive 6-day Entrepreneurship Development training.
- 207 Udyam Adhar registrations (a registration mechanism MSMEs introduced by the Government of India) were facilitated.
- 386 women entrepreneurs have submitted bank proposals with comprehensive business plans and supporting documentation to seek expansion for their businesses.
- 47 women entrepreneurs have successfully secured bank loans totalling Rs. 30,55,000
- 81 women benefited with local government on seeds, fertilisers and seed treatment.
- The AUSA Road Outlet in Latur city, a space for women entrepreneurs to showcase and sell their products, has been successfully operating. It is providing a platform for 357 Women Entrepreneurs (WE) from 70 different villages in Latur.

## Micro Enterprise Promotion Programme to set up 500 enterprises in Osmanabad District

The MEPP Programme, supported by SIDBI, focuses on promotion and facilitation of 500 women entrepreneurs with the stakeholders in the Osmanabad district for credit linkage with Nationalised Banks, DIC etc. in the project period of April 2023 to March 2026.

- 95 women entrepreneurs have been registered under the MEPP programme so far.
- Rs 12,82,000/- invested as capital in promoted units.
- 53 Loan applications were submitted to DIC & Bank.

## Promoting community resilience and growth: Health & Nutrition Project

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) has been implementing a Health and Nutrition project with the support of Kamal Udwardia Foundation (KUF) in 30 villages under the SonkhedPHC in Loha block of Nanded District in Maharashtra since 2019.

- On October 26, 2023, SSP organised a District Level Dialogue Workshop in Nanded City. Over 40 participants, including women leaders, government officials, and dedicated individuals from Nanded, joined the discussion on the results of this program.



## **Project SENU (Securing Nutrition Enhancing Resilience) for improved food and nutrition security and practices of effective community nutrition education**

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) is implementing the SENU (Securing Nutrition Enhancing Resilience) Poshanam Project with the support of GIZ and WHH In Washim District. This project emphasises on Nutrition & Health education. One of the key strategies of the SENU Project is Improving Knowledge, Awareness and Practices (KAP) of target households on diet diversity, maternal- child care and WASH.

- SSP participated in Torch Bearers Meeting at Khajuraho on 3rd and 4th November 2023, organised jointly by GIZ and WHH for MH SENU Partners teams, for sharing learnings emerging from program implementation.
- On 5th December 2023, a training for Community Resource Persons, for effective communication strategies to increase impact, was organised in Wardha by GIZ, in which SSP's team participated.
- A team from The EKA Foundation, Bhopal visited Washim from 6th to 9th Dec 2023 for the collection of Impact Stories. They compiled data on the topic adopting daily hygienic practices and interacted with the Anganwadi workers.
- As Part of Poshnaam Abhiyaan, SSP's team selected well-known Cultural Groups from the community and oriented them on social behaviour change (SBC) and how to work in the community.

## **Marathwada District Transformation Model**

The three-year project 'Marathwada District Transformation Model' supported by Hindustan Unilever Foundation (HUF) focuses on Implementing a Sustainable Water for Agriculture model to improve water security and wellbeing of one lakh women farmers across 6 blocks of the drought prone Osmanabad district of Maharashtra

- Set up 750 demo farms showcasing implementation of the one-acre farming model, with cultivation of millets and pulses.
- 2300 improvement practice demonstrations (like Seed treatment, Pest and weed management, Plant growth, Irrigation, Fodder management) were conducted on demo plots and 19200 farmers participated in this demonstration.
- Conducted a District Level Dialogue Workshops with District level officers of all departments (MGNREGS, Agriculture Department, Zilla Parishad, Forest Department, and Panchayat Samiti) which will support Water conservation and government schemes convergence.
- Farm ponds are being constructed with community participation in 27 villages and we will conserve around 10 lakhs litres of water. This work will be completed before the next monsoon in June 2024.
- The Gram Sabhas were attended by 150 Sakhis, who undertook tasks such as water conservation, generating demand for work under the MGNREGS, and collaborating with the Agriculture Department, with the support of the Sarpanch and Gramsevak. As a result, we obtained 75 copies of the proceeding Village Development Plans.
- The data collection of 57,000 Kharif adopter farmers has been completed, and it has been updated on the online platform.



## FAIR FOR ALL Program

The Fair for All program supported by Huairou Commission focuses on climate change, and agricultural value chain at scale across Wayanad district in Kerala, Osmanabad district in Maharashtra. The project aims to strengthen women farmers' roles in value chains and build the capacity of civil society organisations in mobilising communities in value added products, market and fair price to develop an inclusive and sustainable environment and promote women's economic empowerment. The project targets 7500 grassroots women from 35 villages in Osmanabad, Maharashtra and 15 villages in Wayanad, Kerala.

- Mobilised 3711 grassroots women farmers and spread awareness on economic empowerment and women's rights in agriculture and value added products
- 662 women were trained in basic businesses and 360 women entrepreneurs participated in advanced entrepreneurship training to sharpen the business skills, launch their business with value added products and earn a better income thru Farmer Producer Organisation platform.
- 2 dialogue workshops were organised in Bhoom with an objective of initiating a dialogue between women farmers /entrepreneurs and government departments in coordination with ATMA and PoCRA departments.
- The District Dialogue and Advocacy Workshop organised in Osmanabad was participated by over 350 women farmers to engage with government officials, including representatives from the District Industries Center, Police Department, and Department of Agriculture.
- A Dialogue Workshop on 'Women-Led Climate Resilient Farming Model and Entrepreneurship' was organised, with the participation of 130 women farmers and government department officials at Wayanad on Nov 30, 2023. 12 types of vegetable seeds were provided to the women farmers with the support of Krishi Vigyan Kendra.
- Six capacity building trainings were conducted for 96 Kera Vriksha FPO members on marketing and value addition of products.
- Seven varieties of millets were distributed to Sakhi Framers Group Members.

## MIS system of the organisation supported by Astanor

With the support of Astanor, our collaboration with Dhvani RIS in the SSP Management Information System (MIS) has led to the integration of new assessment tools, enhancing training quality. A Form dashboard now displays form-level metrics, and field teams have commenced data entry via the app. Further functionalities have been incorporated based on invaluable feedback from the field teams.





## Women-led Resilient Development and Leadership: Improvement of the socio-economic conditions of women from poor households

This Misereor supported project focuses on community driven resilience and change that is women-led. The project envisions women-driven change in communities, markets and local governance systems, and aims to reach 50,000 farmers across 500 villages in 10 blocks in Latur, Solapur, Osmanabad, Nanded and Jalna districts of Maharashtra.

- The SSP team organised training for 16,040 women farmers, covering soil testing, land preparation, seed treatment, and more.
- SSP provided leadership training for 5,008 VAG leaders across 500 villages, with assessments for 5,138 members in progress.
- We conducted 100 workshops for 2,620 women farmers on rabbi pest control and organised 500 demos reaching 26,996 women farmers. Basic entrepreneurship training was given to 1,800 women entrepreneurs.
- A total of 661 women accessed land entitlements, while 2,382 women availed government schemes amounting to INR 20,43,000. Additionally, 2,188 women accessed credit opportunities totaling INR 45,39,100 for businesses like dairy and goat rearing.
- Six value chains are under development across four districts, involving 6,000 farmers. In value chain business development, 2,520 women received training on vermicompost, eggs, vegetables, pulses, Jowar, and Turmeric.





## Voices from the Field

### Empowering Through Entrepreneurship: Archana Patil's Journey of Transformation and Community Impact

Archana Patil comes from an orthodox community, where women's mobility is restricted and working outside the house is frowned upon. However, her family's poor economic situation and the need to provide for their growing children pushed Archana tai to attend a tailoring course and begin a small business within her home. In 2016, Archana tai was introduced to Swayam Shikshan Prayog through their Entrepreneurship Development Program. She soon began to expand and diversify her business, using the business and financial management skills she had learned from the training. Today, Archana Patil runs a tailoring, bangle, textile and stationery shop, earning a monthly income of Rs.15,000.



Since 2016 Archana tai has mentored and supported over 70 women in her village in starting their own businesses. Fifty women have accessed schemes related to agricultural inputs, irrigation infrastructure, ration, medicine kits etc. from the Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and NABARD.

Link: [https://www.facebook.com/swayamshikshanprayog.org/posts/636661678628920?ref=embed\\_post](https://www.facebook.com/swayamshikshanprayog.org/posts/636661678628920?ref=embed_post)

### Kavita Pawane's Tale of Single Parenthood, Resilience, and Rural Entrepreneurship

Kavita Baliram Pawane, a 42-year-old resident of Chinchpur Khurd in the Osmanabad district of Maharashtra, India, found herself facing the challenges of single parenthood when her husband passed away while she was pregnant. With limited education and a family of seven to support, Kavita returned to her parents' home and began working on their 1.5-acre farm to make ends meet. Her life took a significant turn when she discovered the world of goat farming and joined the Swayam Shikshan Prayog initiative two years ago.

In 2021, Kavita began her goat rearing business with 1 goat, which she bought using her personal savings. With no prior experience or knowledge, she faced challenges of maintaining the animals' health until she joined SSP. Through SSP, Kavita received training on goat rearing and health management including cleanliness and age-specific care. She became adept at identifying and treating common diseases, managing the diet of her goats, and ensuring access to clean water and food. She also learned about first aid for her goats, which became crucial in emergencies. Kavita's journey inspired and empowered 30 other women in her community. Through her training and guidance, these women also learned about goats rearing and began their own small-scale goat farming ventures.

Link: [https://www.facebook.com/swayamshikshanprayog.org/posts/648470804114674?ref=embed\\_post](https://www.facebook.com/swayamshikshanprayog.org/posts/648470804114674?ref=embed_post)

## **Championing Sustainable Farming: The inspiring journey of Jayshree Mali from Ter village in Osmanabad District of Maharashtra.**

In 2018, a remarkable journey began for Jayshree Mali when she joined SSP and began to implement the Women-led Climate Resilient Farming (WCRF) model of agriculture. She embraced sustainable farming practices, including vermicomposting, and creation of bio-insecticides, bio-pesticides, and natural fertilisers. Her dedication to eco-friendly methods laid the foundation for long-term success.

Throughout her journey with SSP, Jayshree's focus lay in empowering her community. She facilitated the creation of three different farmer groups, uniting 60 women, all of whom were small land-holders with 1-5 acres of land. Despite initial challenges, she mobilised these women to begin 'one-acre' farming and worked towards food security and improved the nutrition of families, particularly women and children. With Jayshree's guidance, these women embarked on a collective farming journey, working together on one-acre plots across various farms. In 2021, Jayshree initiated the promotion of biogas technology.

Jayshree Mali's exemplary work in organic farming, vermibeds, and biogas has not gone unnoticed. She is regularly cited as an inspiration for visiting government officials and agriculture college students, serving as a beacon of hope and a model for positive change in agriculture and sustainability.

Link: [https://www.facebook.com/swayamshikshanprayog.org/posts/652610180367403?ref=embed\\_post](https://www.facebook.com/swayamshikshanprayog.org/posts/652610180367403?ref=embed_post)

## **Kavita Pawane's Tale of Single Parenthood, Resilience, and Rural Entrepreneurship**

In the Bhoom block of Maharashtra, farmers have been facing the harsh reality of frequent droughts. Cash crops like sugarcane, which were once the economic lifeline, are failing due to uncertain and infrequent rains. However, there is a silver lining to this challenging situation - a return to the roots of traditional farming. For generations, Bhoom's farmers thrived on cultivating millets and other food crops. But in recent years, a push for cash crops led to the abandonment of these age-old practices. However, change is in the air, and it's coming from a unique source - the Sarayi Sakhi Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO).

Established in February 2023 with the support of SSP, Sarayi Sakhi Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) has connected with 260 women farmers, all of whom own small parcels of land between 1 - 5 acres. The FPO's women leaders have been diligently imparting training on millet cultivation, rekindling the knowledge that was once the backbone of Bhoom's agriculture. In July 2023, the FPO initiated a one-acre demonstration plot, expertly managed by the directors. This endeavour bore fruit, with a successful millet harvest. The FPO didn't just stop at this; they decided to propagate the seeds and distribute them to women producers, as millet seeds were becoming increasingly scarce in the market. Securing seeds involved a multi-pronged approach. Some seed types were sourced through the government's Central Government's Millet Mission, while others were obtained through fellow farmers. The FPO's success story didn't go unnoticed. Community members, agricultural officers, and extension officers visited the plot to witness their groundbreaking work.

Link: [https://www.facebook.com/swayamshikshanprayog.org/posts/655488160079605?ref=embed\\_post](https://www.facebook.com/swayamshikshanprayog.org/posts/655488160079605?ref=embed_post)

# Major Events

## FPO Field Visit to Pune

On September 27th 2023, SSP organised a field visit for 15 women leaders from the Bharari Sakhi Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO), based in Solapur District. The leaders, many of whom are Directors of the FPO, visited the Pune-based Abhinav Farmers Club to understand their organic vegetable cultivation and marketing model. The objective of the visit was to demonstrate to women farmers how to scale-up vegetable cultivation using innovative techniques and marketing methods. The women also visited the Club's farms and saw how innovative planning allowed them to cultivate 25+ vegetables on a small plot of land.



## SSP's Participation in State Workshop on Enabling Women-led Development

SSP was invited to participate in the 1st State Workshop on 'Enabling Women-led Development', organised by NITI Aayog and the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) in Goa on October 3, 2023. The objective of the workshop was to discuss how a supportive ecosystem can be created for grassroots women entrepreneurs at the state-level to catalyse and scale up women's entrepreneurship, and how to increase the impact of the WEP at the community level.



Naseem Shaikh, Associate Program Director at SSP participated in the event, along with Seema Sayyed and Sumitra Shiral, who serve as Directors Farmer Producer Organisations in Osmanabad District of Maharashtra. Speaking about her experience, Naseem says that, "It is very encouraging to see how narratives around entrepreneurship are changing, with the government recognising grassroots women's entrepreneurship potential and articulating the needs of women entrepreneurs in both rural and urban areas to promote women-led development."

## SSP organises Cooking Competition to evaluate functioning of ReNew's Improved Cookstoves

To gauge the impact of SSP's initiative in promoting Improved Cook Stoves (ICS) in vulnerable households, a Cooking Competition was organised at the Block-level in Gaya and Nalanda Districts between December 14-16. The event served a dual purpose: evaluating the adoption of the Improved Cook-Stoves within the community and gathering valuable feedback from participants. Over 60 women enthusiastically participated in this event, representing 66 villages in Bihar.





## SSP's women leaders invited to speak at VAMNICOM's 'Mahila Kisan Diwas' celebrations

Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management (VAMNICOM), in collaboration with the Center for Gender Studies (CGS), celebrated 'Rashtriya Mahila Kisan Diwas' on October 16, 2023. The theme for this year's celebration was 'Sustainable Agriculture through Gender Inclusion and Participation.'

One of the remarkable voices at the event was Smt. Malan Raut from the Swayam Sakhi Shetmal Farmer Producer Company in Latur, a 100% women-owned FPO. She shared her personal journey as a woman farmer, discussing the challenges she overcame, especially during the trying times of the COVID-19 pandemic when she provided employment opportunities to other women, a feat deserving of commendation. Another inspiring speaker was Smt. Priya Rakhunde, representing the Prema Gopalan Farmer Producer Company in Osmanabad, Maharashtra. She expressed how she got influence from the Swayam Shikshan Prayog training programme, empowering her to engage in various agri-allied activities such as Copalan, worming compost fertiliser production etc.



## Empowering Change: SSP's participation in F3E's Global Collaboration for Ecological Transformation

On November 14, 2023, Swayam Shikshan Prayog participated in a public event organised by F3E, which brought together a diverse group of contributors from around the world to explore innovative methodologies and share experiences for integrating ecological concerns into empowerment initiatives. This gathering was a culmination of a 10-month participatory writing process, uniting minds from various backgrounds—community representatives, international organisations, researchers, and consultants.

Naseem Shaikh and Jiji Sebastian from SSP were invited to contribute recommendations for solidarity actors. They highlighted how women's limited land ownership hinders their involvement in agriculture decision-making. To address this issue, it is crucial to enhance women's participation in networks spanning local to global levels and foster solidarity with marginalised communities. SSP's involvement in this year-long process is a testament to our commitment to sustainable processes and empowering communities.



## SSP's State Level Advocacy Workshop Unveils Women's Leadership in Climate-Resilient Farming

Swayam Shikshan Prayog organised a State-Level Advocacy Workshop in Kalpetta, Wayanad, Kerala, on November 30, 2023. The event, focused on the theme of "Empowering Women's Leadership in Climate-Resilient Farming and Agricultural Value Chains," was attended by over 100 grassroots women leaders, civil society organisations, and government stakeholders.

Kicked off by Ms. Lissamma Samuel, General Manager of District Industries Centre (DIC) Wayanad, the event featured thematic sessions led by women farmers and experts from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), NABARD, ATMA, and the DIC. The workshop disseminated crucial information on climate-resilient farming practices and highlighted women's pivotal role in agriculture and agri-allied value chains. The panel discussion provided insights by government officials on accessing various agriculture sector schemes, and methods to foster collaboration and dialogue between communities and the government on new ventures for sustainable development. During the event, Dr. Safiya N.E of the KVK distributed seed kits to participants, showcasing SSP and KVK's collaborative effort in promoting kitchen gardens for food security and nutrition in the community.



## Taking forward SSP's mission of Women Empowerment: News from the Recent Peer Exchange Event in Kyrgyzstan

Swayam Shikshan Prayog recently visited Kyrgyzstan as part of the EU-supported project, "Inclusive and Sustainable Development for Women and Girls of Osmanabad". This visit brought together key civil society players from India, and Kyrgyzstan with the aim of establishing trilateral cooperation among the organisations to empower women and girls in their respective communities. Taking place from October 30th to November 4th, 2023, this event was a unique opportunity for SSP to engage with women leaders, government officials, and local entrepreneurs from Kyrgyzstan.

The primary objective of the event was to share knowledge and experiences on various aspects of women's empowerment and sustainable development. SSP gained valuable insights during their interactions, including the importance of counselling for distressed women, utilising local opportunities for building sustainable businesses, identifying and diversifying enterprise types based on women's potential, and involving multiple villages in skills development and cooperative creation.



## Dialogue workshop on Health & Nutrition

On October 26, 2023, Swayam Shikshan Prayog organised a District Level Dialogue Workshop in Nanded City. Over 40 participants, including women leaders, government officials, and dedicated individuals from Nanded, joined the discussion. The primary goal of this workshop was to share and celebrate the results of the Kamal Udwardia Foundation supported Health & Nutrition program in Loha Block, Nanded. During the workshop, SSP's team and women leaders shared insights on the project, which focuses on combating anaemia and malnutrition through provision of Antenatal and Postnatal Care to women, as well as promoting agri-entrepreneurship and skill development for women and youth.

## SSP's Participation in Avendus Capital's 'Joy of Giving' Week

From October 18 to 20, 2023, Swayam Shikshan Prayog took part in the 'Joy of Giving' week, or 'Dan Utsav,' organised by Avendus Capital in Mumbai. At this event, women entrepreneurs from the SSP-supported Swayam Sakhi Shetmal Producer Organisation (FPO) showcased an array of value-added products, all crafted by talented women farmers from Latur District. They shared insights into SSP's impactful work, focusing on livelihood diversification and entrepreneurship development. The FPO not only found new admirers but also sold products worth approximately Rs. 25,000, in addition to receiving generous cash donations.

Ms. Radha Bhingole, one of the women entrepreneurs who took part, shared her thoughts: "This was a wonderful opportunity for us to interact with and learn new marketing tactics to attract urban clientele. My family and community are very proud of us for travelling all the way to Mumbai to promote our FPO's products."





## In the Media

### Celebration of Global Entrepreneurship Week - The case of Swayam Shikshan Prayog'

As we celebrate Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW), let's recognize Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), a recipient of the USAID's SAREP Partnership Fund's commitment to promoting sustainable community development by repositioning rural women as change makers and fostering collective leadership. SSP provides skills in entrepreneurship, agriculture, health, and renewable energy, enabling women to improve their livelihoods and contribute to community development.

SSP fosters solidarity among rural women through community-based groups, where they share knowledge and collaborate on initiatives that promote sustainability by encouraging eco-friendly practices and the use of renewable energy.

Join us in celebrating Global Entrepreneurship Week by learning more about the impactful work of SSP and how you can support their mission.

Watch video here: [https://www.facebook.com/watch/SouthAsiaRegionalEnergyHub/?ref=embed\\_video](https://www.facebook.com/watch/SouthAsiaRegionalEnergyHub/?ref=embed_video)



### Empowering Rural Women, Fostering Sustainability: Witness SSP's Impactful Energy Solutions

As Global Entrepreneurship Week 2023 unfolds, let us shine a spotlight on Swayam Shikshan Prayog to celebrate the spirit of innovation and empowerment.

Witness the transformative power of Swayam Shikshan Prayog energy solutions in this enlightening video as one of the women entrepreneurs imparts the significance of educating individuals in a simplified manner about the importance of Biodigester and Subjee Cooler.

The ongoing project aims to be implemented across 500 villages selling 7,000 energy-efficient products towards achieving a cleaner and greener environment.

USAID and SAREP urge the community to be mindful of their consumption, as collective efforts are essential in promoting sustainability.

Watch video here: [https://www.facebook.com/watch/SouthAsiaRegionalEnergyHub/?ref=embed\\_videoL](https://www.facebook.com/watch/SouthAsiaRegionalEnergyHub/?ref=embed_videoL)



## **Global Entrepreneurship Week: Featuring the achievements of Swayam Shikshan Prayog**

As Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) 2023 draws to a close, we reflect on the remarkable achievements of Swayam Shikshan Prayog, an organisation that has transformed the lives of countless rural women entrepreneurs.

Their commitment to providing essential business skills, financial literacy, marketing support, and linkages to large companies has been instrumental in empowering women entrepreneurs to expand their businesses, earn sustainable incomes, and become community leaders.

SSP's journey is a testament to the power of collective efforts. USAID is proud to have partnered with SSP under its SAREP program in its mission to empower women and promote sustainable practices.

The campaign was a conversation starter to foster a sustained dialogue on #PoweringSustainableLivelihoods, #gender equality, and #rural women empowerment. Stay tuned to the page for more such groundbreaking stories.

Watch video here: [https://www.facebook.com/watch/SouthAsiaRegionalEnergyHub/?ref=embed\\_video](https://www.facebook.com/watch/SouthAsiaRegionalEnergyHub/?ref=embed_video)

### **Shaping a Sustainable Future: Advocating for Women in Climate Action!**

Dive into The Pioneer's enlightening article published on Nov 20, 2023, penned by Upmanyu Patil, Director of Programs, Swayam Shikshan Prayog. This newspaper article highlights the pivotal role of rural women in combating climate change. Vulnerability to climate change isn't equal, and women are disproportionately affected. SSP's 'Women's Entrepreneurship in Clean Energy' Program is transforming lives in Maharashtra and Bihar, with Sakhis at its core.

SSP's initiative goes beyond clean energy, breaking historical societal inequalities in energy systems. These women are not just entrepreneurs; they are champions of last-mile delivery, connecting communities with sustainable energy solutions.

Read the full article to discover how SSP's program is creating resilient and sustainable communities, reducing carbon emissions, and showcasing women as leaders in climate action.

Link to the article: <https://www.dailypioneer.com/2023/columnists/empowering-women-to-be-harbinger-of-climate-change.html?>

### **Proudly marking Global Entrepreneurship Week 2023!**

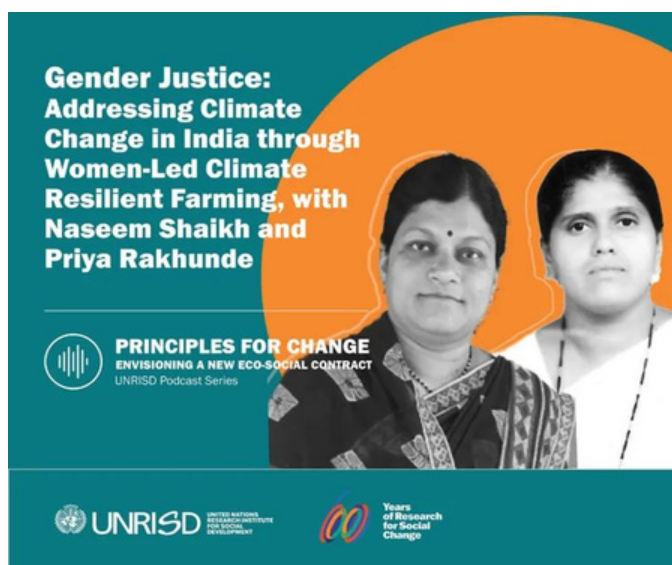
Swayam Shikshan Prayog has been instrumental in empowering women micro-entrepreneurs, enabling them to promote the adoption of innovative energy-saving solutions such as bio-digesters and Subjee coolers. Bio-digesters cut household and cultivation costs for small-scale farmers, while Subjee coolers offer portable, energy-free storage for perishable farm produce, reducing harvest wastage.

As of October 31, 2023, SSP has installed 3492 biodigesters and 20 Subjee coolers across Maharashtra (Latur, Osmanabad, Solapur) and Bihar (Gaya, Nalanda). Surpassing the goal, 527 Sakhi's are trained in bio-digester tech and market strategies via digital channels. The first round of training concluded on Nov 11th.

Dive into SSP's impactful journey here: <https://sarepenergy.net/events/spf-grant-monitoring-visit-to-ssp/>

## Gender Justice: Addressing Climate Change in India through Women-Led Climate Resilient Farming, with Naseem Shaikh and Priya Rakhunde

In this episode, UNRISD Senior Research Analyst Maggie Carter and UNRISD Senior Research Associate Manish Desai speak with Naseem Shaikh, Associate Director of Programs of Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP)—an organisation dedicated to inclusive and sustainable development through the empowerment of women in low-income climate-threatened communities - and Priya Rakhunde, a farmer and community organiser who has been working with SSP for the past five years.



In this episode, UNRISD Senior Research Analyst Maggie Carter and UNRISD Senior Research Associate Manish Desai speak with Naseem Shaikh, Associate Director of Programs of Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP)—an organisation dedicated to inclusive and sustainable development through the empowerment of women in low-income climate-threatened communities - and Priya Rakhunde, a farmer and community organiser who has been working with SSP for the past five years. They discuss a grassroots initiative led by SSP that simultaneously addresses food insecurity, gender inequality and climate degradation in four Indian states using a model of Women-Led Climate Resilient Farming (WCRF), locally known as the one acre model. In this discussion, they reflect on the process of designing, implementing and growing the programme, the hardships and triumphs that women farmers participating in the program experience, and lessons they've gained that can inform and inspire similar efforts to transition to more sustainable livelihoods and empower vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Link to the article: <https://shows.acast.com/unrisd-podcasts/episodes/gender-justice-addressing-climate-change-in-india-through-wo?>





# Publications

**Celebrating 25 Years of Excellence - SSP's Annual Report for 2022-23 highlights our remarkable journey over the past quarter-century!**

We're thrilled to share with you our Annual Report for the last year. In this comprehensive document, we present a detailed account of our activities, achievements, and the incredible progress we've made over the past year. We're committed to transparency, and this report is a testament to our dedication to keeping our partners, and supporters, informed about SSP's work.

In this report, you'll find:

- Key Achievements & Milestones
- Impactful Projects & Initiatives
- Financial Highlights
- Stories of Change from the Field

We encourage you to explore the report, learn more about our achievements, and see the real-world impact of investing in grassroots women's leadership and empowerment in rural India.

Link: [https://swayamshikshanprayog.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Annual-Report-of-SSP-FY-2022-23-fv\\_small\\_size.pdf](https://swayamshikshanprayog.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Annual-Report-of-SSP-FY-2022-23-fv_small_size.pdf)



## Our Partners:

Axis Bank Foundation | Astanor |  
Aventus | ADM Cares | Citibank N.A. |  
DASRA | European Union | GIZ &  
Welthungerhilfe | Give | Hindustan  
Unilever Foundation | HSBC | Huairou  
Commission | KamalUdwadia Foundation  
| Misereor | Nasscom Foundation | Oak  
Foundation | Samhita | Shapoorji Pallonji  
Group | SIDBI | Shaikh Jaffer and  
Nematullah Ebrahim Family Foundation |  
UNICEF | USAID-SAREP | Maharashtra  
State Rural Livelihoods Mission-UMED.

To know more write to us at:

Email: [sspindia1@gmail.com](mailto:sspindia1@gmail.com) ; [connect@swayamshikshanprayog.org](mailto:connect@swayamshikshanprayog.org)

Phone: +91 8605016700, 9323557456

[www.swayamshikshanprayog.org](http://www.swayamshikshanprayog.org)