



SWAYAM SHIKSHAN PRAYOG

From Margin to Mainstream



QUARTERLY REPORT

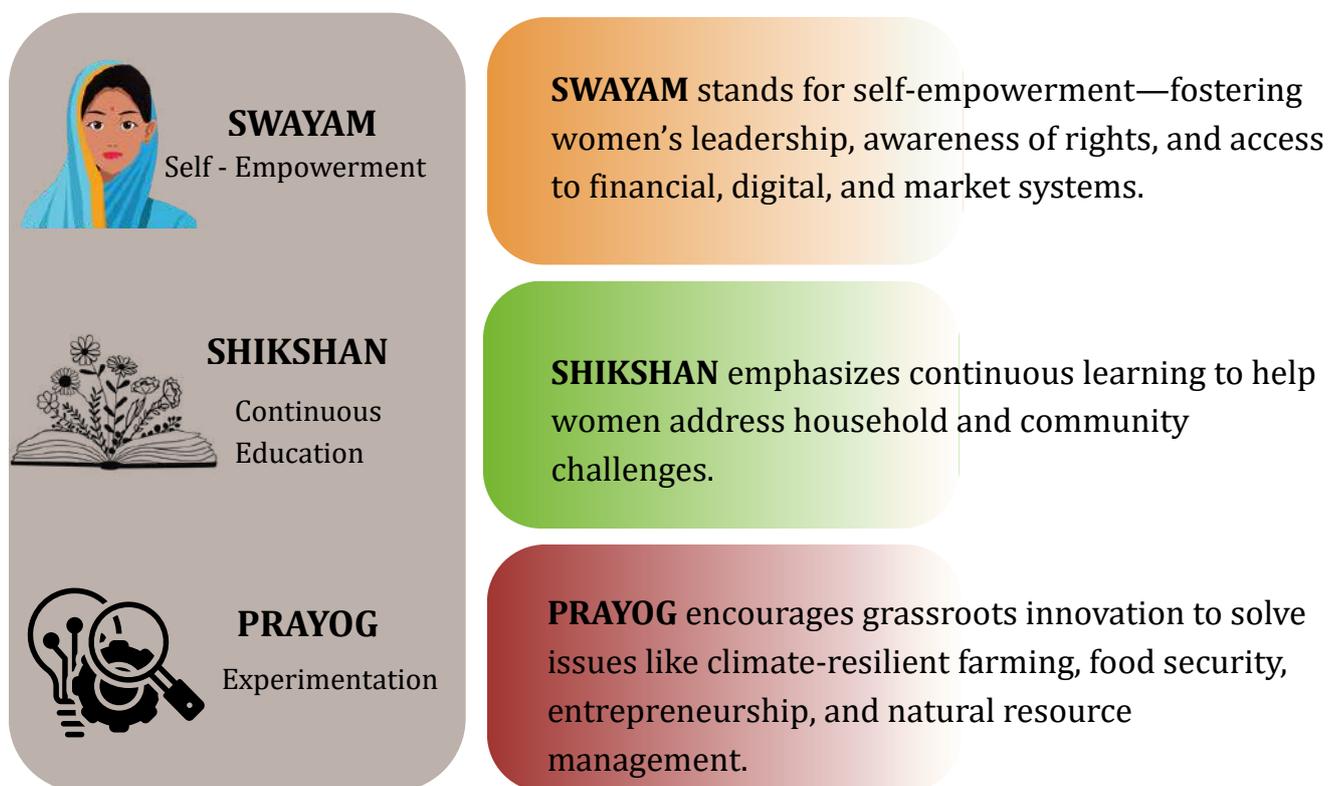
Oct'25-Dec'25

About SSP

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) was established in 1998, four years after partnering with the Government of Maharashtra on the Latur earthquake reconstruction project (covering 1200 villages), where SSP reshaped a beneficiary program into a successful community women led effort.

With a vision to empower grassroots women to move from “Margin to Mainstream”, the late Prema Gopalan and SSP have developed a model of livelihood diversification.

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) promotes inclusive, sustainable community development by empowering women in low-income, climate-threatened regions. It strengthens women’s collectives by training them as farmers and entrepreneurs, enhancing their social and economic resilience.



Overview

Vision

To build a robust partnership ecosystem that enables grassroots women's networks to access skills training, financial and digital literacy, and technology and marketing platforms.



Mission

To promote inclusive and sustainable community development by empowering women in low income climate threatened communities/regions. Swayam Shikshan Prayog repositions women's collectives by training them as farmers and entrepreneurs and thereby increasing their economic and social resilience.

OUR KEY SECTORS



Women-Led
Climate Resilient
Farming



Women's
Entrepreneur-
ship

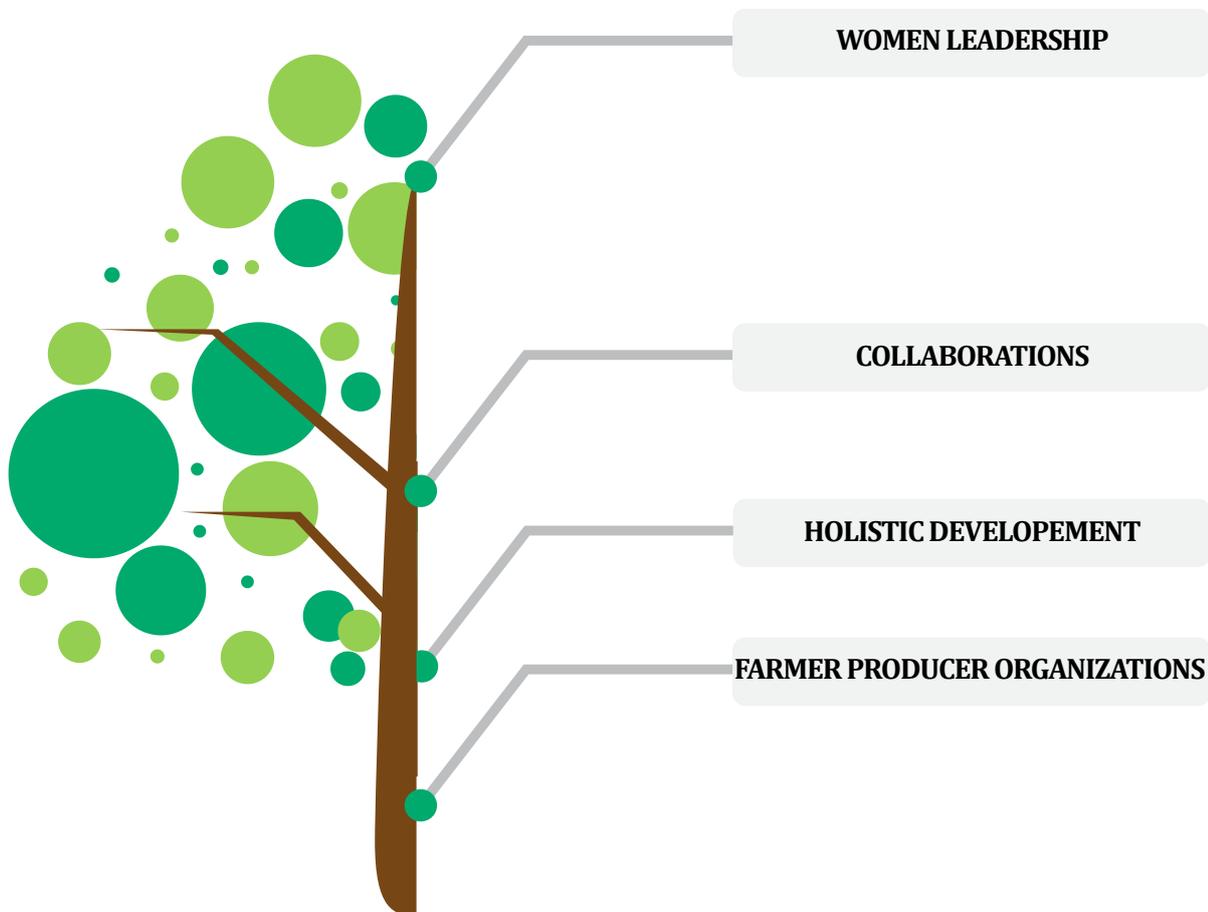


Health, Water,
Sanitation &
Hygiene



Clean Energy &
Environment

OUR INITIATIVES



STRATEGIC APPROACH

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) supports community development by empowering women in low-income and climate-threatened areas. SSP helps rural women in problem solving, decision making and provides insights to tackle issues like water scarcity, food security, sustainable farming and improved livelihoods.

Women trained through SSP cultivate fast-growing, climate-resilient crops, manage diversified agricultural practices, and adopt strategies that reduce dependency on debt—resulting in improved cash flow, greater food security, and enhanced household income.

SSP focuses on transforming the society by building skills, providing technical support and leadership development.

Trained groups of SSP Sakhis, women's collectives, and Village Action Groups (VAGs) lead these efforts, working with local governments and market systems.

GEOGRAPHY



Outreach (Oct'25-Dec'25)

Empowering rural women for 3 decades

Quarterly Outreach (OCT'25-DEC'25)



71887

rural women

Provided awareness and trainings



12400

women farmers

Empowered with women led climate resilient agricultural practice (WCRF)



4886

rural women

Received entrepreneurship related training and handholding



32601

rural people

Trained in Health, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



22000

people

Provided awareness related to Clean Energy and Environment

Collaborations

1.05 Cr

Government Scheme Linkage (Amount in Rupees)

2.96 Cr

Bank Scheme Linkage (Amount in Rupees)

CORE PROGRAMS

WOMEN-LED CLIMATE RESILIENT FARMING (WCRF)



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WCRF Trainings

Seasonal Challenges: The quarter in Latur district was shaped by heavy rainfall and peak farming pressures. Flooding damaged Kharif crops and delayed Rabi sowing. Many women farmers were engaged in recovery work, affecting participation in some trainings. Despite this, programme activities continued with a focus on water conservation, climate-resilient agriculture, and women-led livelihoods.

Community Mobilisation: PRA and Village Livelihood Action Plans strengthened collective planning and prepared the ground for future interventions. During the quarter, 1,164 households were trained in improved farming practices, while 407 households built skills in livestock and poultry management, supporting more sustainable agriculture.

Water and Scheme Access: Block-level workshops across three blocks reached 1,794 participants, improving awareness of key government schemes. This resulted in 243 households accessing benefits worth ₹88.29 lakh, exceeding planned targets and strengthening household resilience.

Non-farm Livelihoods: Entrepreneurship training was completed by 325 participants, with 75 women receiving micro-enterprise skill training and 50 women supported with packaging and labelling materials. Vocational training benefited 165 participants, while exposure visits and refresher trainings at KVK Latur reached 1,218 farmers. This project is supported by Axis Bank Limited (ABL).

Hands-on Learning and Soil Management

Throughout the quarter, WCRF trainings focused on experiential learning approaches. Women farmers learned to prepare jeevamrutham, botanical pest repellents, and organic nutrient solutions using locally available materials. Demonstration plots and homestead farms functioned as practical learning spaces, allowing farmers to directly observe crop responses, build confidence, and strengthen peer-to-peer learning.

Soil health remained a core focus for building long-term resilience. Soil-testing campaigns, conducted in convergence with government departments, helped farmers understand soil fertility, pH levels, and nutrient status. Women farmers were trained in proper soil-sample collection and the importance of soil-test-based nutrient management. These efforts promoted more scientific decision-making at the farm level and encouraged sustainable soil health practices essential for climate-resilient agriculture.



WOMEN-LED CLIMATE RESILIENT FARMING (WCRF)

Seasonal Transition and Programme Progress:

Under Oak Foundation supported initiative in Kerala, the quarter marked a key transition from monsoon to Rabi season in Wayanad amid climate variability and early heavy rains. October focused on field preparedness through soil testing, WCRF trainings, demonstration plots, and CRP capacity building, supporting women farmers in managing monsoon-related crop stress. November strengthened institutional processes, including approval of a Bio-Input Resource Centre under the National Mission on Natural Farming and cross-learning exposure visits. December consolidated learning through partner workshops, action research, World Soil Day activities, and validation of the women-led WCRF model.

In Bidar, Karnataka, floods affected women farmers' livelihoods during the quarter. Programme efforts focused on completing planned trainings, NGO partner workshops, National Farmers' Day events, and government engagements. Convergence with departments was strengthened alongside improved reporting and documentation systems to support effective implementation.

Establishment of a Bio-Input Resource Centre

under NMNF: SSP facilitated the establishment of a Bio-Input Resource Centre (BRC) in Kottathara, Wayanad, under the National Mission on Natural Farming, in partnership with Keravriksha FPC and ATMA. The centre provides locally produced bio-inputs, demonstrations, and training for women farmers. This is significant as it institutionalises access to affordable natural inputs and reduces dependency on external markets.

Rabi Season-Based WCRF Refresher Trainings: WCRF refresher trainings were conducted for 232 women farmers in Wayanad, Kerala, focusing on rabi season crops, climate-resilient land preparation, multi-tier cropping, organic inputs, and integrated pest management. Women farmers showed increased confidence in adopting raised beds, mulching, and soil test-based nutrient management, with many initiating WCRF practices on small plots before scaling up.

Bio-Input Preparation Training for Tribal Women:

Demonstration-based bio-input preparation training was conducted for over 15 tribal women farmers at Kuzhivayal Colony, Wayanad. Participants learned hands-on preparation of bio-inputs using locally available materials and applied them directly in their vegetable fields. The training helped reduce dependence on chemical inputs and external markets. High levels of engagement and continued use of bio-inputs reflected increased confidence among tribal women to adopt natural farming practices despite land and resource constraints.

On-Farm WCRF and Mushroom Cultivation Trainings:

On-farm trainings were organised at the fields of women model farmers such as Madhavi Kelu and Janaki Sasidharan, combining WCRF practices with allied livelihoods like mushroom cultivation in Wayanad. These sessions enabled participants to observe real-time organic crop management, bio-input usage, and income-generating activities. The trainings were led by trained women farmers with support from SSP coordinators, reinforcing peer-led learning. Around 50 women farmers participated across the sessions.

WCRF Kharif Season Trainings:

In Bidar, Karnataka, 245 women farmers from 10 villages received WCRF training on climate-resilient Kharif cultivation, including raised-bed preparation, multi-tier cropping, organic input use, and spreading awareness among other lead farmers. The sessions strengthened farmers' practical skills for sustainable production and improved income generation. This project is supported by Oak Foundation.



WOMEN-LED CLIMATE RESILIENT FARMING (WCRF)

Holistic Community Development in Tribal Villages

Under Mankind supported Prosper project, this quarter marked significant progress in the holistic development of 10 tribal villages in the Trimbakeshwar block. Key activities included the installation of 50 streetlights, which inspired nearby Gram Panchayats to repair existing lights and install additional ones, enhancing safety and community visibility. Wadi plantation activities demonstrated strong farmer ownership, with one farmer independently raising 50 cashew saplings—double the initial target—reflecting high community motivation. School infrastructure improvements, including renovations and the introduction of interactive boards, transformed learning environments and increased student engagement across multiple schools.

Dialogue Workshop

A dialogue workshop at Trimbakeshwar fostered coordination among local leaders and government officials for future development initiatives. Mushroom cultivation was introduced in 10 villages through practical demonstrations, and PRA-based water budgeting sessions were conducted in four villages with active community participation. A rural health camp in Aswaliharsh benefited 249 community members. Village-level initiatives such as kitchen gardens, water projects, and livelihood activities, including goat rearing and mushroom cultivation, have created sustainable income pathways.

Community-Led Infrastructure and Livelihood Initiatives

In Samundi village, a farmer's initiative to raise 50 cashew saplings from 100 seeds reflects strong community ownership, with farmers actively nurturing Wadi crops and planning future plantations. The installation of 50 streetlights encouraged nearby Gram Panchayats to repair 10 existing lights and install additional ones, significantly improving safety and night-time mobility. The renovation of Humbachimet School, including the introduction of an interactive digital board and development of a playground, has transformed the learning environment, boosted children's motivation, and strengthened community pride.

As part of the WCRF programme, 1,000 vermicompost beds were distributed under a collective business model, strengthening access to organic inputs and shared livelihoods. Building on this effort, an exposure visit was organised for 50 women farmers from Pune district to the Krushi Vigyan Kendra, Baramati. The visit provided hands-on learning through live demonstrations on vermicompost production and the preparation and application of bio-pesticides. Seeing these practices in action deepened the farmers' understanding and sparked strong motivation to adopt them on their own fields. The experience reinforced the value of organic inputs and climate-resilient farming, encouraging women farmers to integrate these sustainable practices into their regular farming systems. This initiative is supported by ORCALE Financial Services Ltd.

Seed Distribution Drive Strengthening Women-Led Climate-Resilient Farming

Under Misereor supported project in Bihar, a total of 1,100 Women-Centred Resilient Farming (WCRF) leaders participated in the programme across three crop cycles—oilseeds, pulses, and wheat. During the drive, 550 kg of mustard seeds, 2,200 kg of lentil seeds, and 5,500 kg of wheat seeds were distributed. Seeds were provided to each woman farmer as per crop-specific norms, enabling cultivation across a total of 349 acres. The cumulative value of the distributed seeds amounted to ₹5,77,500, resulting in significant cost savings for participating households.



WOMEN-LED CLIMATE RESILIENT FARMING (WCRF)

This quarter, Swayam Shikshan Prayog reached a significant milestone by training 500 women farmers under the WCRF model. This initiative focused on shifting traditional practices toward climate-resilient agriculture, directly strengthening both food security and rural livelihoods.

Advocacy and Leadership

Beyond the fields, we conducted Block-level Advocacy Workshops to bridge the gap between women farmers and local governance. These sessions empowered participants to navigate institutional systems, enhancing their leadership and ensuring their voices are heard in local decision-making.

Infrastructure and Impact

To enhance income and reduce post-harvest losses, two key processing units were successfully integrated into the programme. A solar dryer was installed, enabling value addition and helping farmers significantly cut post-harvest losses. In addition, a dal mill was established to localize pulse processing, allowing women farmers to retain a larger share of profits from their crops. Together, these infrastructure interventions not only improved efficiency but also strengthened women-led enterprise, creating more sustainable and profitable farming practices at the community level. This initiative is supported by SBI Foundation.



Under Kadoori Charitable Foundation (KCF) supported project, extensive WCRF trainings and village-level sessions were conducted to promote climate-resilient agricultural practices. These trainings were particularly important as many women farmers faced rising input costs, water stress, and climate uncertainty. Through practical guidance on the one-acre model, mixed cropping, and organic inputs, women learned low-risk and sustainable farming options. Led by SSP field teams and Sakhis, with support from KVK officials, the sessions encouraged visible changes: many women farmers adopted diversified cropping and reduced chemical inputs, resulting in lower costs, improved soil health, and enhanced household food security.

Sakhi-Led Water Planning and GP Engagement: Sakhis played a pivotal role in preparing village-level water plans through capacity-building workshops on watershed management and water budgeting. This initiative was crucial, as villages face recurring water shortages and lack structured planning. Sakhis identified priority water works and submitted the plans to Gram Panchayats for inclusion in local development processes. Gram Panchayat members, women farmers, and project staff actively participated, ensuring collaborative planning and community ownership of water management initiatives.

Block-, district-, and state-level workshops were organized to share programme progress, challenges, and learnings with government officials. These platforms were crucial, as access to schemes and institutional support is essential for sustaining women-led farming initiatives. Women farmers, Sakhis, Gram Panchayat representatives, and officials from Agriculture, MGNREGA, and KVK actively participated. As a result, coordination between communities and local administration improved, awareness of government schemes increased, and many women successfully accessed credit and benefits, strengthening trust in the programme and enhancing its visibility across multiple levels.



WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Project launch: Under the AFCONS supported project, the team focused on building strong foundations by selecting all 40 villages, completing a detailed baseline survey, mobilizing women, and establishing a robust community support system through the identification and training of Sakhis. By the end of the quarter, the project had transitioned from planning to action, with awareness activities reaching more women than planned and Entrepreneurship Development Trainings rolled out at scale, training over half of the target women. Sakhis actively engaged in discussions, exercises, and practice sessions on data collection and follow-up, gaining confidence to guide women farmers and support them in adopting sustainable agri-based enterprises.

Entrepreneurship Development Training (EDP): During the quarter, EDP training was conducted in multiple batches, reaching 677 women farmers. The six-day training focused on business fundamentals, financial planning, and practical agri-based enterprise options. This was particularly important as most women had farming experience but limited confidence in managing businesses. Led by SSP trainers with support from Sakhis, the sessions used participatory methods and real-life examples. Women actively engaged in discussions and group activities. By the end of the training, many participants spoke confidently about income goals and business plans, reflecting a visible increase in self-belief and readiness to start or strengthen their enterprises.

Expanding Women Entrepreneurship Across Rural and Urban Blocks: This quarter marked significant progress in mobilizing and training aspiring women entrepreneurs across multiple blocks. In Renapur and Chakur, 320 women were mobilized, with 280 completing foundational training. The enthusiasm in these regions was notable, as many more women expressed interest after seeing the first groups of ten from each of the 50 villages. This initiative is supported by Avendus.

In Udgir, handholding support for 203 women from the previous cohort has led to tangible outcomes, with several participants expanding existing enterprises or launching supplementary businesses; top earners now reach monthly incomes of nearly ₹30,000. Urban outreach also gained momentum, with 103 women in Latur and 33 in Solapur completing training to become Urban Lakshmi entrepreneurs.

A highlight of the quarter was the Avendus visit to Ghansargaon, where the team observed the drive, intelligence, and innovative spirit of rural women entrepreneurs. These milestones bring the project closer to training 500 women and establishing a strong Urban Lakshmi sales network through 200 partners. This initiative is supported by Avendus.

WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Strengthening Women's Leadership and Livelihoods in Wayanad: Under Fair For All project, activities in Wayanad were carried out amid seasonal transitions and local socio-economic dynamics, requiring adaptive planning and community engagement. SSP Wayanad focused on strengthening grassroots advocacy, promoting women's participation in development processes, and enhancing capacities for sustainable livelihoods. In December 2025, District and Block-level Advocacy and Dialogue Workshops provided interactive platforms to discuss women's roles in developmental planning, inclusive growth, and local governance. These engagements highlighted the importance of collective advocacy and investments in women's health, agriculture, education, and leadership. Complementing this, an Advanced EDP Training for Sakhi Farmers Group members enhanced skills in business planning, budgeting, marketing, and climate-resilient livelihoods. Assessments showed over 90% of participants gained confidence and knowledge to initiate or manage income-generating activities effectively.



Women-Led Buffalo Dairy Support

Under the ORACLE-supported intervention, 74 women from Pimpranwadi, Shevadi, and Karegoan purchased buffaloes through the Loha market, strengthening household incomes. Between 15 November and 31 December 2025, while the dairy setups were being established, beneficiaries sold milk locally, generating ₹3,65,472 from 7,643 litres at an average of ₹47 per litre. This early income highlights the immediate impact and strong market potential of women-led dairy enterprises in the project area.

Strengthening Livelihoods

This quarter marked a steady post-monsoon recovery in Jalna district, with improved village mobility and renewed participation of women in livelihood activities. Focused efforts strengthened rural enterprise ecosystems through entrepreneurship training, credit access, and continued handholding. As a result, 98 new women-led enterprises were established—59 in Bhokardan and 39 in Jalna—across sectors such as grocery, tailoring, dairy, food processing, beauty parlours, and petty trade, closely aligned with local market demand.

Alongside new enterprises, sustainability of existing businesses was prioritised. Thirteen women-led enterprises received counselling and improved financial linkages to stabilise and grow their operations. Access to capital improved significantly, with 35 women entrepreneurs receiving CEF support amounting to ₹17.20 lakh. This support was routed through SHGs, VO, CLFs, and Block Resource Centres, ensuring transparent, community-led decision-making and reducing dependence on informal credit sources.

Developing Enterprise Systems at Block Level

Enterprise systems at the block level were further consolidated during the quarter. A total of 145 business plans—41 in Jalna and 104 in Bhokardan—were approved through Block Resource Centres, with a cumulative value exceeding ₹68 lakh. The streamlined approval process enabled faster access to finance, reduced delays, and improved coordination between community institutions and programme teams. Overall, the quarter reflected strong consolidation, system strengthening, and growing acceptance of women as capable entrepreneurs within their communities. This project is supported by Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP).



WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Strengthening Women's Leadership through VAGs

During this quarter, the Ford Foundation project focused on enhancing women's leadership through three-day foundational Village Action Group (VAG) trainings conducted in Chakur, Bhum, Mukhed, Dharashiv, Pandharpur, and Mangalwedha blocks. Despite the busy agricultural season, with women managing household, farm, and livelihood responsibilities, participation remained strong. The trainings emphasized the purpose and functioning of VAGs, inclusive representation of women from all castes and communities, and motivating home-bound women to engage in social action. Participatory tools such as PRA and gender equality games encouraged dialogue, confidence, and collective thinking. A Training of Trainers (TOT) model was employed to extend outreach across clusters, ensuring wider village-level coverage and sustained community engagement. This initiative is supported by Ford Foundation.

Trainer TOT for VAG Leadership Development

A two-day Training of Trainers (TOT) was conducted to equip women trainers to lead VAG leadership development trainings at cluster and village levels. A total of 65 trainers from Dharashiv, Solapur, Latur, and Nanded districts participated. This initiative was crucial for ensuring local ownership, continuity, and scaling of the VAG programme. Participants learned participatory facilitation techniques, the VAG training module, PRA tools, and key gender concepts, preparing them to effectively guide village-level groups and strengthen women's leadership across the project areas.

Leadership Development Trainings

Three-day VAG leadership development trainings were organized at the cluster level in Chakur, Bhum, Mukhed, Dharashiv, Pandharpur, and Mangalwedha, reaching 1,961 women members. The sessions focused on the purpose of VAGs, inclusive representation, leadership skills, PRA-based village analysis, and gender equality. By conducting the sessions in nearby clusters, participation became more accessible, enabling women to actively engage, build confidence, and develop the skills needed to take leadership roles in their communities. This initiative is supported by Ford Foundation.

Strengthening Women's Skills and Climate-Resilient Farming

Under the KCF-supported project, this quarter focused on supporting women farmers during the Rabi season, with emphasis on farming practices, water management, and livelihoods. Despite local water challenges, activities were successfully implemented. Awareness meetings on agriculture, entrepreneurship, water, and government schemes reached 4,145 participants, while WCRF trainings enhanced farming knowledge for 4,636 women. Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) trainings across 11 clusters benefited 500 women farmers and entrepreneurs. Capacity-building workshops on watershed management and water planning involved 565 participants in 20 sessions. Advocacy and coordination were strengthened through block-, district-, and state-level workshops with government officials. Overall, the quarter reinforced skills, awareness, and collaboration, promoting women-led, climate-resilient farming practices.

Confidence-Building for Women Farmers

The October–December 2025 quarter under the LIC HFL HRIDAY project in Dharashiv and Wayanad focused on consolidation, learning, and confidence-building for women farmers. Despite heavy and erratic rainfall in October affecting land preparation and crop schedules, women remained actively engaged in homestead cultivation, soil sampling, and Women-led Climate Resilient Farming (WCRF) trainings.

As weather stabilized in November and December, efforts shifted to strengthening skills, improving soil health, and developing model and homestead farms as live demonstration sites. Practical exposure to organic bio-inputs, eco-friendly pest management, and climate-informed crop planning helped women apply learning on the ground. The quarter also featured a donor monitoring visit in December, validating progress. Overall, it saw increased adoption of natural farming, stronger community ownership, and improved institutional convergence.



CLEAN ENERGY



Advanced EDP Training for Women Entrepreneurs

SSP conducted a two-day Advanced Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) for 100 women entrepreneurs from Gaya district, Bihar, held in two batches at Riddhi-Siddhi Guest House, Tapowan, on 26–27 and 28–29 of the scheduled period. The training, based on a structured Advance EDP module, aimed to strengthen entrepreneurial skills, business planning, and market understanding. A blended approach engaged government and private-sector resource persons, providing practical insights alongside policy and institutional perspectives. Sessions covered enterprise strengthening, financial literacy, market linkages, compliance, and leadership development. Interactive discussions, real-life cases, and experience-sharing enhanced engagement, learning, and confidence among participants.

Refresher EDP Training for Women Entrepreneurs

As part of its ongoing capacity-building efforts, SSP conducted a two-day refresher Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) for 200 women entrepreneurs from Gaya and Nalanda districts, building on the Basic EDP held last year. The training aimed to refresh key entrepreneurial concepts and reinforce practical business skills. Organized in four batches of 50 participants each, the sessions focused on strengthening business planning, financial literacy, market linkages, and enterprise management. Interactive discussions, experience-sharing, and practical exercises enhanced learning, helping women entrepreneurs consolidate their skills, boost confidence, and apply improved strategies for managing and expanding their enterprises.

Network Meetings with Product Partners and Sakhi Entrepreneurs

During the reporting quarter, SSP organized both district- and cluster-level network meetings to strengthen business linkages and technical knowledge among women entrepreneurs in Gaya and Nalanda districts. A key district-level meeting held on 30 October 2025 in Rajgir brought together 50 women entrepreneurs, SSP staff, and representatives from private and institutional partners. Divya Jyoti Animal Feed shared insights on feed products, usage practices, and market demand, while Inera Bio provided guidance on organic fertilizers and field application.

At the cluster level, monthly network meetings were held across Gaya and Nalanda, with ten meetings per month over three months, totaling 24 sessions. Participation averaged 75–80 percent, with around 175 Sakhis attending each month. These meetings facilitated technical exchange, product familiarization, and strengthened business linkages, supporting income-oriented entrepreneurship and continuous learning for women entrepreneurs.

Micro-Enterprise Training for Sakhis: During the reporting quarter, a 14-day Micro Enterprise Development Training (MEDP) on jute bag making was conducted for women entrepreneurs in Nalanda district from 11 to 24 December 2025. Organized by the Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) with support from SSP, the training engaged 35 women Sakhis from four blocks of Nalanda. The programme aimed to equip participants with practical skills in jute bag production, enhance their enterprise capabilities, and promote income-generating opportunities through sustainable, women-led micro-enterprises.

GENDER TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME (GTP)



Teachers' Orientation on Gender Transformative Programme

During the quarter, Teachers' Orientation Trainings were conducted across 32 schools, with active participation from 265 teachers. The sessions focused on orienting teachers to the Gender Transformative Programme (GTP), its objectives, and implementation approach. Teachers were guided on effectively conducting Meena-Raju Manch (MRM) sessions in schools and engaging School Management Committees (SMCs) to strengthen coordination and long-term impact.

Meena-Raju Manch (MRM) Sessions with Students

In-person MRM sessions were conducted in 50 schools, reaching 2,882 students—1,556 girls and 1,326 boys. A total of 28 sessions were completed in 10 schools, while 13 sessions were held across 40 schools. These sessions enabled direct interaction with students, fostering dialogue on gender equality, rights, and respectful social norms.

Students' Champion Group Training

A Students' Champion Group training was organised in Dharashiv on July 2, 2025, under the GTP. The training aimed to equip selected MRM students with skills to conduct Gender Social Audits. Facilitated by Mr. Suraj Pawar, with participation from UNICEF representative Ms. Mansi Acharya and partner staff, the sessions introduced students to audit tools based on children's rights—participation, protection, development, survival, and education. Through group discussions and exercises, students learned to assess gender equality in schools and communities, strengthening their role as child rights advocates and change agents.

School Management Committee (SMC) Trainings

SMC trainings were conducted in 30 villages, engaging 232 members. The sessions clarified the roles and responsibilities of SMCs, introduced the GTP and MRM initiatives, and deepened understanding of the Right to Education Act. Personal reflections and discussions helped members recognise their active role in school development beyond being parents.

Orientation of Gram Panchayat Members

Orientation and sensitisation sessions on gender equity were held in 25 villages, reaching 156 Gram Panchayat members, including elected representatives. The discussions focused on gender-responsive governance, women's participation, and inclusive access to schemes. These sessions laid a strong foundation for integrating gender perspectives into village-level planning and governance.



INITIATIVES

Women's Initiative to Learn and Lead (WILL)



Strengthening Women's Leadership and Government Linkages

Supported by the Ford Foundation, this quarter the project strengthened partnerships with Gram Panchayats, line departments, and block- and district-level government offices—including Agriculture, Rural Development, Health, Panchayat Samiti, and Mahila representatives—across Dharashiv, Solapur, Latur, and Nanded districts. Government officials participated in VAG trainings and dialogue workshops, sharing scheme information and engaging directly with women leaders, helping position Village Action Groups (VAGs) as credible grassroots institutions.

Dialogue workshops in six blocks created advocacy platforms where VAG women raised village-level issues, asked informed questions, and sought support for livelihoods and social development. As a result, awareness of the VAG model expanded across Gram Panchayats, blocks, and districts. Increased visibility of women leaders strengthened their voices in local governance and facilitated smoother dissemination of government schemes to other women in the villages.



WOMEN LED FARMER PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS (FPOs)



Under the SBI Foundation-supported project, women-led Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) actively engaged in multiple initiatives to strengthen capacities and access markets. FPCs participated in SBI Foundation-organized exhibitions, promoting and selling value-added agricultural products, which enhanced brand visibility, product sales, and direct linkages with consumers and potential buyers.

The quarter also marked the celebration of World Egg Day, where SSP and FPC members organized sessions on backyard poultry management, egg production, and marketing, highlighting the nutritional and livelihood benefits of eggs and encouraging diversified, nutrition-sensitive livelihoods.

Additionally, SSP and the FPCs participated in national-level events, including the PM Dhan-Dhanya Yojana launch and National Farmers' Day celebrations organized by MSCDC, further strengthening recognition, networking, and exposure for women-led agricultural enterprises.

FPO Exposure Visits and Government Engagement

In a collaborative initiative with the Maharashtra State Cooperative Development Corporation (MSCDC) and Shekru Foundation, Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) organized an exposure visit for women farmers to Swayam Sakhi Shetmaal Producer Company Ltd., Ausa, Latur, and Manjiri Sakhi Farmer Producer Company Ltd., Dharashiv. Participants observed governance, operations, marketing strategies, and women's leadership practices in FPCs, gaining practical insights to strengthen their own enterprises.

In parallel, the project facilitated government engagement through the distribution of fertilizer protection kits to 500 women farmers in Dharashiv, supported by the Agriculture Department. These efforts combined capacity building, resource support, and institutional linkages, enhancing both skills and access to inputs for women farmers while promoting sustainable, women-led agricultural practices.



PARTNERSHIPS & ADVOCACY



Block-Level Workshops on Water Conservation and Government Schemes

Under the Axis Bank-supported project, three block-level workshops were conducted in Deoni, Nilanga, and Ausa, reaching 1,794 participants, including women farmers, landless families, Sakhi leaders, and Gram Panchayat members. The workshops aimed to raise awareness on water conservation and key government schemes, including POCRA, MGNREGA, PMFME, and CMEGP, with guidance from Block Development Officers, Taluka Agriculture Officers, and other officials. Participants learned about support for farming, livestock, water conservation, and small enterprises. As a result, officials committed to prioritizing women farmers and landless households for scheme benefits and actively supporting village-level water and livelihood initiatives, strengthening coordination between communities and government departments.

Strengthening Advocacy and Partnerships for Women's Empowerment

During the quarter, the Fair For All-supported project in Wayanad, Kerala, strengthened strategic partnerships with ATHMA and Hume to expand advocacy and visibility initiatives. Collaborative efforts focused on policy dialogue, community engagement, and promoting women's participation in local development processes. These partnerships enhanced the reach and impact of advocacy, creating stronger linkages with government stakeholders and amplifying women's voices in decision-making.

Strengthening Partnerships for Farmer and Women Entrepreneur Development

During the quarter, the organisation strengthened key partnerships to enhance programme reach, impact, and sustainability. Collaboration with Sky-Quest under the Bihar Beej Pariwartan Pariyojana, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, enabled distribution of free quality seeds to farmers, resulting in cost savings of over ₹10 lakh while promoting crop diversification and improved productivity.

Engagements with private-sector partners such as Divya Jyoti Pashu Aahar, Inera Jaivik Khad, and Women Farmers Producer Company Ltd. supported technical training and product knowledge for women farmers and entrepreneurs, particularly in animal feed, organic inputs, and collective production and marketing.

Advocacy and visibility efforts were strengthened through network meetings, cluster platforms, and linkages with RSETI and local stakeholders. These partnerships helped position women farmers and entrepreneurs as active economic contributors while supporting ecosystem development, capacity building, and programme visibility at district and community levels.

During the quarter, implementation was influenced by continuous heavy rainfall and seasonal farming pressures, which reduced women farmers' availability for trainings. Peak Rabi season and crop recovery activities required the project team to adapt schedules, cluster trainings locally, and increase coordination with Sakhi leaders for mobilization. Another key learning was managing beneficiaries' expectations for input support alongside capacity-building, highlighting the need for clearer communication on the purpose of trainings. This project is supported by Axis Bank Ltd.

PARTNERSHIPS & ADVOCACY



Strengthening Partnerships for Women-Led Climate-Resilient Farming

During the quarter, the project strengthened government and institutional partnerships in Wayanad, enhancing visibility and scale of women-led climate-resilient farming. Collaboration with the Department of Agriculture through ATMA, Krishi Bhavan, and Block officers led to the approval of a Bio-Input Resource Centre under the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) with ₹1,00,000 support. Partnerships with the Soil Survey & Conservation Department and Hi-Tech Soil Analytical Laboratory enabled large-scale soil testing and World Soil Day observance. Engagement with KVK, RARS, AIC, and the State Horticulture Mission supported action research, scheme access, and mushroom farming. Public events, demonstrations, and model farms increased recognition, while HUME-supported climate advisories strengthened farmers' adaptive capacity.

Research Team Visit for Public Policy Report

The research team conducted a three-day field visit to Kamalnagar to prepare a public policy report. During the visit, they carried out in-depth one-to-one interviews with 10 women farmers and held a focus group discussion at Madnoor village. To explore convergence opportunities, the team also conducted five meetings with government officials from the Agriculture Department, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Veterinary University, NRLM, and

Capacity Building Workshop with Partner NGO

In Bidar, Karnataka, a capacity building workshop was conducted for partner NGO Mahamaya to strengthen their understanding and strategy for implementing the Women-Centred Resilient Farming (WCRF) model and drafting action plans. Two NGO representatives attended the session, which covered core principles, implementation strategies, and leadership responsibilities of the model. Discussions emphasized empowering women farmers, integrating agri-allied activities, and building strong market linkages. The interactive workshop provided practical insights on leadership, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring mechanisms. An open discussion allowed participants to share perspectives and clarify doubts, making the session engaging, collaborative, and impactful in preparing the NGO for effective WCRF implementation.

Taluka-Level Dialogue and Community Engagement in Trimbakeshwar

On 24 December 2025, a Taluka-level Dialogue and Convergence Workshop was held in Trimbakeshwar, bringing together Sarpanchs, VKC Chairpersons, government officers, and community representatives. The workshop provided a platform for in-depth discussions on project objectives, progress review, and village development strategies, fostering strong commitment and coordination for future activities.



MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM



In the last three years, SSP has experienced rapid scaling up. Therefore, alongside the core function of program execution, effective support functions become paramount to ensure seamless overall operations. Therefore, SSP started implementation of The Centralised Data Management System from 1st July 2024. The system is being built using Dhvani's mGrant portal, tailored to SSP's multi-project, multi-state operations. The progress and key milestones achieved under the project are as follows:

- 100% projects on mGrant
- 100% Baseline data captured
- Activity data capturing in progress
- mGrant training provided in Nanded and Latur
- mGrant FAQ , training materials , training video created
- Organisation dashboard review conducted and changes communicated with Dhvani's Team in Delhi
- Cadre Management module preparation in progress



VOICES OF WOMEN

Growing Confidence through Organic Farming – The Story of Laxmi Biradar

Laxmi Biradar from Sonal village, Bidar district, turned to organic farming when her family's small service centre could no longer sustain household needs. Inspired by an SSP meeting in 2023, she adopted a one-acre organic farming model, using bio-inputs like Jivamrut, Nimboli Arka, and vermicompost on 20 gunthas of land. Though results were slow at first, improved soil health and yields in the next cycle helped her save ₹7,000 on chemical inputs. She later expanded organic practices, diversified into vegetables, increased her income by 30%, and now leads 40 women farmers while promoting climate-resilient farming.



Mushroom Story

In Kottathara village of Wayanad, Kerala, 20 women formed a collective to build livelihoods through mushroom cultivation. Mostly homemakers and small farmers, they received hands-on training from Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) with support from the Oak Foundation, covering cultivation, harvesting, and value addition. Despite challenges like limited space, irregular spawn supply, and weak market access, they persisted with guidance from Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Ambalavayal. In one season, they produced over 350 kg of oyster mushrooms, earning ₹1.33 lakh. Madhavi Kelu added income through mushroom pickle, earning ₹12,000. Today, members earn ₹1,500–₹3,000 monthly and are expanding under Kerala's 'Koongramam Padhadhi'.

VOICES OF WOMEN

When Change Begins at Home: Neelam Devi's Solar-Powered Journey

Neelam Devi, a 45-year-old homemaker from Ben Bajar village, Nalanda, Bihar, long confined her role to household responsibilities. Her perspective changed after witnessing her niece Pratima Kumari's growth through SSP-supported agriculture and clean energy initiatives. Inspired, Neelam joined Swayam Shikshan Prayog's Entrepreneurship Development Programme and invested in a solar dryer, contributing ₹42,000 from her savings and accessing a ₹20,000 government subsidy. Today, she solar-dries pickles, papad, chips, vegetables, and leafy greens, selling them in local markets and supplying fellow Sakhis. Earning ₹10,000–12,000 monthly, Neelam is now recognised as a confident rural entrepreneur driving change from her own home.



From a Small Farm to a Solar Dairy

Deepa Shinde from Chorakhali village in Dharashiv transformed everyday struggles into a sustainable livelihood. A homemaker for years, her journey changed in 2020 after attending an SSP programme and meeting women running successful dairies. Encouraged by their stories and her family's support, she started Laxmi Dairy with just 25–30 litres of milk sold door to door. Over time, trust grew, and today 35 farmers supply nearly 200 litres daily. Frequent power cuts once caused losses of ₹4,000–₹5,000 each month. With SSP's support, Deepa installed a solar system, eliminating spoilage and reducing electricity costs by ₹1,500–₹1,800 monthly.

MAJOR EVENTS

Women Rebuilding Resilient Communities | SSP at UNESCO Webinar

At the UNESCO webinar on “Build Back Better: Gender-Responsive Reconstruction and Resilience” held on 23 October 2025, Naseem Shaikh, CEO of Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), reflected on three decades of learning alongside grassroots women rebuilding their lives and communities in the face of repeated crises. Drawing from SSP’s journey—from the Latur earthquake in 1993 to the floods of 2025—she shared how women, when trusted with resources, knowledge, and leadership roles, emerge as first responders and long-term architects of resilience.

The session reaffirmed SSP’s core belief that investing in women’s leadership enables recovery that is faster, fairer, and more sustainable. UNESCO appreciated the presentation for its depth and diversity, noting that it powerfully demonstrated why gender equality and the leadership of marginalised groups must remain central to disaster risk reduction and reconstruction.



SSP at the Global Grassroots Green Accountability Academy 2025 – São Paulo, Brazil

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) was represented at the Global Grassroots Green Accountability Academy 2025 in São Paulo, Brazil, by Ms. Devkanya Arvind Jagadale, a grassroots woman leader from Maharashtra. Organised by the Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) and the Huairou Commission, the Academy brought together community leaders from across Latin America, Africa, and Asia to deepen learning on green accountability and climate governance.

Speaking from the lived realities of the climate-stressed Marathwada region, Devkanya shared how recurring droughts, sudden floods, water scarcity, and crop losses are reshaping everyday life—and how women leaders supported by SSP are responding through collective action, participation in local governance, and climate-resilient solutions. The learnings from the Academy will support SSP’s ongoing efforts to strengthen women’s leadership, transparency, and climate resilience across Marathwada—reinforcing the belief that sustainable climate solutions begin at the grassroots.

From Local to Global: SSP Shares Women-Led Agro-Economy Innovations at GSEF 2025

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) participated in the Global Social and Solidarity Economy Forum (GSEF 2025), held in Bordeaux, France, from 29 to 31 October 2025. Representing SSP, Chandran Puthiyottil engaged with global partners and shared experiences on strengthening local economies through community-led and sustainable agro-economy models. Oxfam Novib curated a series of exhibition stalls showcasing grassroots innovations from India, Palestine, and Nigeria. SSP presented the journey of the Keravriksha Farmer Producer Organisation from Wayanad, Kerala, highlighting women-led efforts in promoting just agriculture and fair local markets. On 31 October, Chandran participated in a roundtable on Agro-Economy Models, emphasising the importance of women-led business models and strategies for scaling them across regions. The event was supported by Oxfam Novib under the Fair for All project and facilitated by the Huairou Commission.

MAJOR EVENTS

Inception and Outcome Planning Workshop

The CRPP Phase 2 Inception and Outcome Planning Workshop in Kathmandu, Nepal, facilitated by the Huairou Commission, marked an important step forward in strengthening community-led climate adaptation across Asia and the Pacific. The Community Resilience Partnership Program (CRPP) supports countries and communities in addressing the interconnected challenges of climate change, poverty, and gender inequality, with a dedicated gender window that allocates resources for women-focused investments.

The three-day workshop was part of the Huairou Commission's approach within CRPP to institutionalize regular processes that enhance the participation of grassroots women leaders in climate adaptation planning. Central to this approach is the creation of solidarity-based systems led and owned by grassroots women, enabling collective, risk-informed problem-solving with communities and local governments.

Empowering Women Farmers: SSP Hosts State-Level Advocacy Workshop

On 22 November 2025, Chhatrapati Sambhainagar came alive as Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) hosted a State-Level Advocacy Workshop with 295 women farmers, Sakhis, and government officials from across Maharashtra. The event provided a rare platform for rural women to engage directly with senior officials and agricultural experts, bridging long-standing gaps between policy and practice.

Participants discussed climate-resilient farming, organic and mixed cropping, and agri-allied enterprises. Officials from MREGS, Krushi Vigyan Kendra, FWWB, and the Divisional Agriculture Office clarified government schemes and encouraged women to take active roles in farm planning and resource management.

The workshop also featured exhibition stalls where women entrepreneurs showcased their products, gaining confidence and visibility. Ganga Gutte from Parbhani shared how SSP's mentorship transformed her from a farm worker to an entrepreneur managing poultry and goat farming enterprises.



IN MEDIA

Climate Action, Food Security and Rural Leadership: A Deep Dive in SSP's Pioneering Women-Led Model

By: Sonal Dutta | Published: 29-Nov-2025



Climate Action, Food Security and Rural Leadership

CSRUniverse has published an in-depth feature titled "Climate Action, Food Security and Rural Leadership: A Deep Dive in SSP's Pioneering Women-Led Model." The article features an exclusive interview with Ms. Naseem Shaikh, CEO of Swayam Shikshan Prayog, reflecting on SSP's 25-year journey of empowering grassroots women as farmers, entrepreneurs, and climate leaders.

The feature explores how SSP's women-led model is driving transformative change across Maharashtra, Kerala, Bihar, and other regions, strengthening climate resilience, food security, and rural livelihoods. Ms. Shaikh also shares SSP's vision to scale its impact and reach one million women by 2030.

The article highlights SSP's distinctive approach to climate action, community-led development, strategic partnerships, and policy engagement—demonstrating how women's leadership remains central to building resilient and inclusive rural economies.



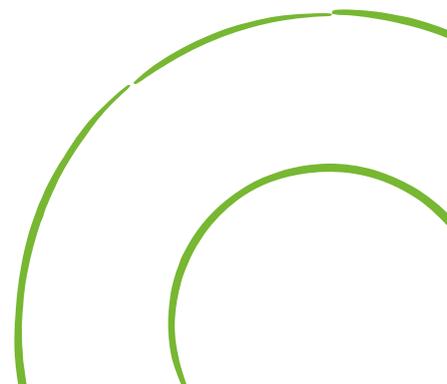
The Green Burden: Women, Climate Action, And The Unfinished Revolution In India – Analysis

December 16, 2025 | 0 Comments

By Dr. Manasi Sinha and Ejjala Likitha Pavani

The Green Burden: Women, Climate Action, and the Unfinished Revolution in India

Swayam Shikshan Prayog is featured in the article "The Green Burden: Women, Climate Action, and the Unfinished Revolution in India – Analysis," authored by Dr. Manasi Sinha and Ejjala Likitha Pavani. The article highlights SSP's work in Pune, where women farmers are leading climate-resilient farming initiatives, demonstrating the critical role of women's leadership in addressing climate challenges and advancing sustainable agriculture in India.



AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Manjiri Sakhi FPC Wins FPO Impact Award 2025

Manjiri Sakhi Farmer Producer Company, supported by Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), has been conferred the FPO Impact Award 2025 under the category Vijayalakshmi Das – Friend of Women FPO. The award recognises the organisation's outstanding performance, strong governance systems, and sustained commitment to enhancing farmers' livelihoods.

The prestigious award was presented at the Livelihoods India Summit on 4 December 2025 in New Delhi. Mrs. Dipali Kakasaheb Thodasare, Director of Manjiri Sakhi FPC, and Ms. Naseem Shaikh, CEO of SSP, jointly received the award on behalf of the organisation.

Manjiri Sakhi FPC is a 100% women-led enterprise with over 2,330 shareholders and an annual turnover of ₹1.54 crore. The FPC works across multiple agri-business verticals, including input supply, procurement, seed production and processing, and has established warehousing, grading, and processing infrastructure. It facilitates interest-free credit and access to discounted farm inputs for member farmers.



National Recognition for Women-Led FPC at CII FPO Summit 2025

Swayam Sakhi Shetmaal Producer Company (Swayam Sakhi FPC) received a prestigious national-level special recognition in the Best Women Leadership category at the CII FPO Summit 2025, held at the India Habitat Centre. The award recognises three years of impactful work by a women-led Farmer Producer Company that has emerged as a strong and resilient grassroots institution.

Working across 76 villages, the FPC has empowered 1,980 women shareholders through interest-free credit, access to government schemes, bank and market linkages, and initiatives promoting sustainable agriculture and rural entrepreneurship. These outcomes have been enabled through sustained facilitation, capacity building, and institutional handholding by Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP).

At the summit, Anjali Masalkar, Director and CEO, shared the inspiring journey of building the FPC, highlighting women's leadership, collective effort, and future opportunities. The recognition underscores the collective strength of rural women and marks a significant milestone toward inclusive and sustainable rural development.



Sustainable Development **GOALS**



SDG 1: No Poverty

SSP's Work: Micro-entrepreneurship Programs: SSP supports rural women in starting and growing micro-enterprises, which generate income and lift families out of poverty. Financial Inclusion: SSP facilitates women entrepreneurs' access to financial services, including savings, credit, and insurance.



SDG 2: Zero Hunger

SSP's Work: Food Security Initiatives: SSP promotes sustainable agricultural practices and provides training to women farmers, increasing food production and security. Nutrition Programs: SSP conducts nutrition education programs to ensure families, especially children, receive nutritious balanced diets.



SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

SSP's Work: Health and Sanitation: SSP implements community health programs, including maternal and child health initiatives, and promotes clean water and sanitation access. Health Enterprises: SSP supports women in establishing health enterprises that provide affordable healthcare services in rural areas.



SDG 5: Gender Equality

SSP's Work: Women's Empowerment & Leadership through its WILL process: SSP focuses on empowering women through leadership training, economic opportunities, and participation in decisionmaking processes. Gender Advocacy: SSP advocates for gender equality and works to change societal norms that hinder women's progress.



SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

SSP's Work: Water Management: SSP promotes community-based water management practices and the construction of sustainable sanitation facilities. Awareness Campaigns: SSP conducts awareness campaigns on water conservation and hygiene practices.



SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

SSP's Work: Renewable Energy Solutions: SSP supports adoption of clean energy solutions, such as solar lighting and clean cooking stoves and biogas in rural communities. Energy Enterprises: SSP helps women entrepreneurs establish energy enterprises that provide sustainable energy solutions.



SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

SSP's Work: Entrepreneurship Development: SSP fosters entrepreneurship and provides business development support thus creating decent work opportunities in rural areas. Market Linkages: SSP connects women entrepreneurs with markets, enhancing their economic growth and sustainability.



SDG 13: Climate Action

SSP's Work: Climate Resilience: SSP works to build climate resilience in rural communities through sustainable farming practices and disaster risk reduction initiatives. Environmental Education: SSP educates communities about climate change and promotes environmental stewardship.



SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

SSP's Work: Collaborative Networks: SSP builds alliances and networks of grassroots women leaders, civil society organisations, private sector companies and policymakers to work towards common goals. Resource Mobilization: SSP mobilizes resources and technical expertise through partnerships with various stakeholders, enhancing the impact of its initiatives.

Through these multifaceted approaches, Swayam Shikshan Prayog contributes significantly to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, fostering inclusive and sustainable development in rural India.



PARTNERS

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