

Swayam Shikshan Prayog

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24



**“Ordinary Women can Trigger
Extraordinary Changes.”**

– Prema Gopalan

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Introduction

About SSP

“Ordinary women can trigger extraordinary changes. My vision is to create an ecosystem that empowers women at the grassroots. Enabling them to move from margin to mainstream, transforming not only their lives but their community, their villages and society – for the better”, the late Ms. Prema Gopalan, Founder – Swayam Shikshan Prayog (1956 – 2022)

With a vision to empower grassroots women to move from “Margin to Mainstream”, Prema and SSP have developed a model of livelihood diversification. It reduces risks and vulnerabilities while increasing the capacities of small and marginal farmers. The Women’s Initiative to Learn and Lead (WILL), focuses on women’s agency and leadership, enabling them to participate in governance, address critical issues at home and in the community, and empower other women. The climate-resilient organic farming model of SSP promotes the multi-cropping of indigenous, climate-appropriate food crops. This ensures household food and income security with good nutrition while conserving water and natural resources.

Through our Entrepreneurship Development Program, SSP has supported thousands of women to start businesses and grow by creating farmer-producer groups and farmer-producer Organizations.



Message from the Board



“ The year has been particularly significant for us as we celebrated our 25th anniversary, marking a quarter-century of empowering grassroots women’s collectives to lead social and economic transformation in climate-threatened regions of India. We proudly celebrated Swayam Shikshan Prayog – SSP’s 25th anniversary since our inception in 1998. The “Sakhi Prerana Divas: Birthday Remembrance of the Late Ms. Prema Gopalan”, the event on February 1, 2023 was a momentous occasion where women innovators from SSP’s operational areas were honoured with the ‘Prema Gopalan Sakhi Prerana Award’ for their transformative grassroots development work.

Throughout the year, our women leaders had the privilege of representing the rural grassroots women’s constituency at various state and national-level workshops, dialogues, and policy forums. Notable events include the “Women in Renewable Energy: A Dialogue on Policy, Technology, Skilling, and Finance” organised by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India, and dialogues like the “Advancing Women’s Leadership in Climate Action program” and “Scaling up access to innovative clean energy solutions for rural populations through women-led micro-entrepreneurship,” organised by USAID.

SSP’s new initiatives include: increasing the credibility of SSP’s climate-positive food systems model beyond Maharashtra through partner-led pilots in two new states; empowering 8 to 10 local implementation partners across four Indian states to replicate the model independently in their intervention areas; increasing advocacy channels; and improving policy-influencing effectiveness for SSP through its advocacy interventions. SSP has started working as a resource organisation on nutritional behaviour change among cotton growers in Wardha in Maharashtra and Kutch in Gujarat. Another initiative is that 15,000 women will be identified and trained across 3 blocks each in Pune, Latur, and Solapur districts and will be better positioned to tackle various aspects of food access, affordability, availability, and community resilience post the planned interventions, based on SSP’s proprietary training tools and approach.

SSP actively participated in national and international peer exchanges facilitated by esteemed partner organisations such as the Huairou Commission (International Women’s Network), PRADAN (India), F3E (France), and the Government of Kyrgyzstan. These exchanges have enriched our approach and strengthened our commitment to sustainable community development.

As we express our gratitude, we also look forward to the future with a vision. Over the next decade, SSP envisions the creation of robust rural value chains led by women-led Farmer Producer Organizations. Our goal is to systematise local processes, ensuring that every region becomes financially sustainable and functions independently as a ‘mini-SSP.’

Our achievements would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our partners, well-wishers, and, most importantly, our powerful women leaders, our ‘Sakhis.’ Your generous contributions of time, commitment, and participation are making a positive difference in the lives of these women, their families, and their communities across villages in India. Thank you for your support. ”

Best wishes,
Adolph Furtado
Chairperson, Swayam Shikshan Prayog

Overview

Strategic Approach



Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) supports community development by empowering women in low-income and climate-threatened areas. SSP helps rural women become problem solvers, decision-makers, and planners in tackling issues like water scarcity, food security, sustainable farming, and improved livelihoods. Women learn to grow crops that mature quickly, manage different farming activities, and avoid debt, thus enhancing their cash flow and diversifying their income sources.

SSP focuses on transformational change by building skills and providing technical support. Trained groups of SSP Sakhis, women's collectives, and Village Action Groups (VAGs) lead these efforts, working with local governments and market systems.

For over 20 years, SSP has created a movement of over 350,000 women leaders, transforming agriculture and health sectors in seven states of India. SSP's partnerships and capacity-building initiatives, help women effectively tackle challenges and seize opportunities.

The organisation honors the legacy of its late founder, Prema Gopalan, who established SSP in 1993 to help women in Maharashtra's poorest districts. SSP's governance is built on trust, transparency, and accountability, involving the Governing Board, Senior Leadership Team, Management Committee, and other stakeholders.



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 and positioning women's collectives in low-income and climate-threatened communities/ regions, especially by training them as farmers and entrepreneurs to increase their economic and social resilience.



Focus Areas

Climate Resilient Farming



Women's Leadership



Water, Sanitation and Health



Entrepreneurship



Clean Energy



Overview

Geographies

Currently, SSP focuses on low-income and climate-threatened communities in 3,729 villages across 13 districts in five Indian states, empowering over 497,650 women as farmers, entrepreneurs, and local leaders.



Core Programmes:

Activities and Outreach

Women-led Climate Resilient Farming

SSP's Women-led Climate Resilient Farming (WCRF) model attempts to reposition women as farmers, leaders and change agents who adopt food security and climate smart practices on their farms.

In the last year, SSP has scaled up the implementation of the WCRF model in Maharashtra and Kerala, creating awareness on sustainable farming methods, provided in-depth training and handholding support to women farmers to enhance food crop cultivation, prioritising ecosystem sustainability, and facilitated linkages with local government departments for access to inputs and schemes.

Highlights:

- SSP trained 200,000 **women farmers** in one acre farming and other climate resilient best practices in Maharashtra and Kerala. These included both theoretical and on-field demonstrations. Out of these women, 165,000 women have adopted the WCRF model.
- SSP built advanced capacities through Training of Trainers (ToTs) sessions, with **386 trainers** and Community Resource Persons (CRPs), with the aim of scaling up implementation of the WCRF model.
- Sakhis delivered 'Crop Advisory' IEC materials to farmers in the form of videos, digital leaflets and WhatsApp messages. They also organised meetings with Farmer Groups to share this information within their villages.
- SSP partnered with local government departments, including Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), Regional Agricultural Research Station (RARS), Integrated Farming Systems Research Station (IFSRS) and the ATMA department to organise joint trainings for women farmers in Maharashtra and Kerala.
- Distributed seed kits to over **6,304 women farmers** to promote the cultivation of vegetables and millets in Maharashtra and Kerala.
- Grassroots women leaders started a **seed bank** with the support of SSP in Wayanad, with various indigenous seeds of pea, beans, pumpkin, lady's finger, and bitter gourd, with the vision of conserving indigenous seeds and promoting their cultivation. Leaders provided indigenous seeds to dedicated and interested women farmers on the agreement of its multiplication. They also started to maintain a record book to collect the names and details of the seed donors and receivers.
- Leaders provided support and facilitated the creation of **753 'Model Farms'** across eight districts of Maharashtra and Kerala to demonstrate best practices in implementing the WCRF model. Farmers were given necessary guidance, and Sakhis conducted frequent field visits to support them in setting up demonstration plots.
- In response to drought conditions, extensive efforts were made to equip women farmers with essential skills for managing fodder effectively. Through targeted training sessions, a total of **2,645 women farmers** from Maharashtra received training on hydroponics and azolla cultivation. The training sessions focused on imparting practical techniques and strategies tailored to the specific needs of farmers facing water shortages.
- As a result of government scheme linkages, **7,808 women farmers** were able to access inputs worth **Rs.2,51,86,760** from various government departments.
- Under Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh's Natural Farming Mission, **718 women** from six blocks of Osmanabad District were chosen for specialised training in the government's organic farming initiative. Over a 3-year period, these women farmers will transition to fully organic farming, aiming for certification upon completion.



Peer Learning Exchange on the WCRF Model

On June 17, 2023, a team from Pragati Koraput, an NGO in Orissa focused on natural resource conservation and agro-ecological restoration, visited SSP in Latur District, Maharashtra, to learn about the Women-led Climate Resilient Farming (WCRF) Model. In Nagarsoga village, AUSA Block, they visited the farms of SSP leader Malan Raut and observed her climate-smart agricultural practices, fruit orchards, and agri-allied enterprises. The visitors were particularly interested in the feasibility of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), managing losses, and creating sustainable income streams.

In February 2024, SSP organised a two-day peer learning exchange between women farmers from Osmanabad and Wayanad Districts to study the WCRF model. Eight women leaders from Wayanad attended the exchange, where they saw the benefits of the long-term implementation of the WCRF model by farmers in Osmanabad. The training extensively covered each component of the WCRF model and explored strategies for implementing it in Wayanad, considering the region's agroecological characteristics. The program included theoretical and practical sessions, providing participants with a comprehensive understanding of the model's applicability and key field-level considerations.

Women's Entrepreneurship and Value Chain Development



SSP's training and mentorship eco system provides women business skills, financial literacy, marketing support and links to large companies through a last mile distribution network, and start-up capital.

In the last year, SSP focused on its Entrepreneurship and Value Chain Development initiatives in eight Districts of Maharashtra, Bihar and Kerala. This training to rural women as part of SSP's Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) included, hand holding and mentorship support from advanced women entrepreneurs and leaders, dialogue workshops for learning and reflection between entrepreneurs, local government officials and the private sector, as well as linkages to government schemes and bank loans, improving access to finance and inputs. SSP also facilitated the creation and scaling up of women-led Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) through capacity building and linkages to new producers and markets.

Core Programmes: Activities and Outreach

Highlights:

- Leaders carried out awareness raising activities at the village level, reaching out to over 23,012 women farmers in Maharashtra and Kerala on the importance of livelihood diversification, entrepreneurship and rural value chains.
 - Trained a total of 29,070 grassroots women as part of SSP's basic and advanced Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) in Maharashtra, Bihar and Kerala.
 - Identified and provided training for 734 Community Resource Persons (CRPs), Sakhi Leaders and Mentors to build their capacities and improve impact on the field.
 - SSP's team mapped women entrepreneurs business profiles, and carried out quantitative and qualitative surveys with women from Osmanabad and Latur District to understand the credit needs of women entrepreneurs.
 - Partnered with institutions like Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), RSECTI (Rural Self Employment Training Institute) to provide domain specific entrepreneurship training, which were attended by a total of 35 women entrepreneurs.
 - Leaders supported 1223 women entrepreneurs in accessing government schemes, which amounted to a total of Rs. 2,00,82,040.
 - Leaders facilitate linkages with private and public banks, microfinance institutions and their own SHGs, with over 4,320 women entrepreneurs accessing loans amounting to a total of Rs.8,45,93,400.
 - In Jalna District of Maharashtra, SSP partnered with the Maharashtra State Rural Livelihood Mission-UMED to create two Block Resource Centres for supporting women entrepreneurs in developing business plans and linking them to government schemes and financial institutions.
 - Facilitated the creation of a Community Resource Centre in Osmanabad District to support rural women entrepreneurs to access credit and finance from financial institutions like banks and DIC.
 - A total of 2,578 grassroots women began small-scale businesses as a result of SSP's EDP training.
 - SSP's team conducted data collection on production from 3,494 farmers to gain insights into their productivity levels and market trends. This data analysis aimed to identify patterns in production volumes and understand the selling structures adopted by farmers.
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- Provided capacity and skill building for 9,382 FPO and producer group members across Maharashtra and Kerala to strengthen and improve their functioning.
 - As part of the Alliance for Sustainable Inclusive Development (ASIDO), 30 women entrepreneurs purchased small dal mills, and began collectively producing, processing and marketing their products in Lohara, Omerga and Osmanabad Blocks.
 - SSP facilitated further development of 6 value chains through provision of essential machinery to the seven FPOs in Osmanabad District to enhance productivity and efficiency. These included Khowa-making (milk product) machines, Spice grinding machines, turmeric powder machine, stitching machine, and weighing scale, packaging machines, packaging trays, gradation machine
 - In Osmanabad District of Maharashtra, SSP facilitated the development and growth of the Milk Value Chain by supporting women entrepreneurs to establish 18 milk collection units managed by a total of 193 grassroots women. These centres are carrying out transactions amounting to around Rs. 40 lakh monthly.
 - The women-led Sarayi Sakhi Produce Company in Bhoom block collectively rented out land and created a demonstration plot in Girwali Village, with the objective of promoting best practices in millet cultivation and demonstrating its benefits to other farmers in the region.
 - An outlet to sell farmer produced products like organic pulses, grains, papad and oil associated with the Swayam Sakhi Shetmal Producer FPO was started in Latur city in July, 2023. The outlet is currently serving over 1600 customers.

Core Programmes: Activities and Outreach

Partnership Launch of Women-led Keravriksha FPO with District Industries Centre, Wayanad

In a proud moment for Keravriksha FPO in Wayanad, Kerala, the women-led farmer producer organisation took a big step in partnering with the District Industries Centre (DIC), Wayanad to promote value-added products to a larger market during the Onam Festival. The FPO's products, which are popular locally, have been selected by DIC as a partner and supplier



to promote the 'Brand Wayanad' initiative, being organised by the District Administration. On 16th August 2023, selected products such as red chilli powder, turmeric powder, sambar powder, coffee powder, dried mango, honey, coconut oil, honey gooseberry, and vaduku were handed over to DIC officials by Directors of the FPO.

Impact Assessment Study of the Entrepreneurship Development Program

An external evaluation of the Avendus Capital supported project on "Repositioning Rural Women as advanced entrepreneurs and business leaders in Latur and Dharashiv districts" was conducted in the focus geographies that the program was implemented.

The evaluation was designed to: Identify and measure the impact of the Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) on the women entrepreneurs; Assess the impact on their income, wealth/asset creation, decision-making & business management skills; Assess the efficacy of the various elements of the EDP in facilitating and growing entrepreneurship among the women. Total of 549 women beneficiaries were involved in the interviews for the impact study conducted between December 2023 to January 2024.

Tangible Impacts: Increase in incomes across the board, as well as the ability to earn a regular stream of income. A strong sense of financial independence and autonomy by receiving payment in their own bank accounts. Growing knowledge on the way business is conducted and implementing it in day-to-day activities. Tangible growth in productivity and yields in their chosen areas of business.

Intangible Impacts: Ability to be independent - not reliant on their family/spouse in aspects of finance and decision-making. Self-reliance – see themselves as independent economic entities, and not reliant solely on the family. A sense of confidence and courage to explore into the world of business, start new ventures and grow.

Longer-term Impacts: Respect from elders because they see the benefits and trust from the family members on their decisions and judgement. Uplifting other women in the community to seek the freedom and opportunities afforded to them.

Core Programmes: Activities and Outreach

Women's Initiative to Learn and Lead (WILL)

The WILL initiative focuses on women's agency and leadership, enabling them to participate in governance, address critical issues at home and in the community, and empower other women.

In the last year, SSP has been working to strengthen grassroots women's leadership through capacity building and the functioning of Village Action Groups (VAGs) to engage local governance systems through participation in Gram Sabha meetings, organising local dialogues and government scheme convergence across its project areas.



Highlights:

- Organised training on Leadership Development and Women's Rights, attended by a total of 21,187 grassroots women from four districts in Maharashtra.
- Leaders created community awareness and built grassroots women's capacities to advocate for land rights, resulting in 3,175 grassroots women receiving land titles in their name.
- Organised WILL Network meetings and trainings, attended by 2162 VAG group members from four districts in Maharashtra, to further build their capacities and facilitate learnings and reflections between various groups.
- Organised 31 dialogues at the block and district level across Maharashtra, Kerala and Bihar, to demonstrate the work of grassroots women in various thematic areas and explore opportunities for accessing government schemes and financial linkages.
- Village Action Groups (VAGs) and grassroots women leaders supported 4,422 women farmers in accessing government schemes related to agriculture, health, and agri-allied business amounting to a total of Rs. 17,941,230.
- SSP facilitated the participation of 994 grassroots women leaders in various government programs to deliberate on better planning and utilisation of available resources.
- Women leaders partnered with UNICEF, MAVA and CORO India to organise Gender Sensitivity Trainings with students, teachers and School Management Committees of upper primary and secondary schools in 20 schools of Osmanabad District.

Micro-Plans Developed by VAG Leaders

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) meetings were organised by SSP's leaders aimed to engage VAG members and grassroots women in 13 villages in Dharashiv district for identifying and prioritising the needs of their respective villages. Through interactive discussions and collaborative activities, participants shared valuable insights into community challenges and opportunities. Subsequently, the block leaders convened a meeting focused on micro-plan preparation, building upon the data collected during the PRA sessions. During this meeting, strategies were devised to address the identified needs effectively, ensuring alignment with the community's aspirations and available resources.

Core Programmes: Activities and Outreach

Clean Energy

For more than a decade, SSP has collaborated with donor organisations and private sector partners to improve access to clean energy products among rural consumers, by integrating women entrepreneurs with the clean energy technology supply chain.

In the last year, SSP focused on training clean energy entrepreneurs on technologies like biogas units, subjee coolers, and solar energy products like lamps and cookers in Maharashtra and Bihar. SSP also organised dialogues with local government officials and other partners to demonstrate grassroots women's work in the clean energy sector and conducted mobilisation and awareness raising activities in communities.

Highlights:

- SSP trained 500 grassroots women in the operation, sale and marketing of biogas units, subjee coolers and solar products.
- SSP's leaders conducted awareness raising and mobilisation activities in 2,327 villages across Maharashtra and Bihar, reaching out to 10,541 farmers on clean energy products.
- Women leaders promoted agri-allied clean-energy alternatives, as a result of which 4,298 biogas plants and 20 subjee coolers were installed in 77 villages across Maharashtra and Bihar.
- In the last year, micro-entrepreneurs earned a cumulative income of Rs. 59,60,000 from the sale of clean-energy products.
- SSP organised a dialogue with the District Collector of Osmanabad to orient them on grassroots women's work in promoting clean energy solutions. As a result, the Subjee Cooler has been connected to the District Industries Centre (DIC) scheme, giving farmers a subsidy of 35% on the purchase of the product.



Improved Cookstove Distribution in partnership with ReNew Power

In 2023, 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). SSP women leaders led on-ground efforts to document wood-burning stove use in 44 households of Bihar. Based on the results of this survey, between August 20 – September 5, 2023, 2000 vulnerable households in these villages were provided with Improved Cookstoves at a subsidised rate and training on the use and benefits of the stove. The women who led these efforts also received a commission from the sale of each cookstove.

Core Programmes: Activities and Outreach

Water Conservation

SSP is working to improve household water security and promote sustainable water management initiatives at the farm and village-level in the drought-prone Marathwada region of Maharashtra.

In the last year, SSP conducted awareness raising activities, trained women farmers in sustainable water use and management, linked farmers to government schemes linked to irrigation and water management, and organised local dialogues with government officials for facilitating greater scheme linkages. SSP also provided financial and technical support in the creation of water harvesting structures and built the capacities of grassroots women leaders to advocate for better water management practices at the Gram Panchayat level.

Highlights:

- The outcomes of the initiative of water conservation through community participation were significant, with each village successfully constructing a water conservation structure and thereby conserving a substantial amount of water.
- Conducted water conservation workshops in 150 villages, where more than 6,000 women and men came together to plan water projects and demand 14,000 water structures through the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).
- A total of 80 farm ponds constructed. Continuous Contour Trench: This method was used in almost 23 Villages. The total size of the trenches constructed was 271 cubic meters, conserving approximately 271,000 litres of water. The Nala Desilting method was used in three villages. The total size of the structures created was 51 cubic meters, conserving approximately 51,000 litres of water. Compartment banding method was used in five villages. The total size of the structures created was 132 cubic meters, conserving approximately 132,000 litres of water. The Loose Boulder Structure method was used in Sarati
- village, where a structure of 15 cubic meters was constructed, conserving approximately 15,000 litres of water. The cumulative impact of these efforts is substantial, contributing to the sustainability of these communities and the preservation of their natural resources.
- SSP created eight demonstration villages in Osmanabad District which implemented best practices in watershed management.
- 150 Sakhis participated in Gram Panchayat proceedings, advocating and lobbying for water conservation initiatives to be implemented in their village, generating demand for water harvesting work under the MGNREGS, and collaborating with the Agriculture Department, with the support of the Sarpanch and Gramsevak.
- Sakhis supported 16 farmers from Osmanabad district in applying for the Chief Minister Sustainable Agriculture Irrigation Scheme through the Department of Agriculture, which received pre-sanctions from the government for construction of farm ponds.



Government Scheme Convergence

SSP collaborated with the Department of Soil and Water Conservation for implementation of the Galmukt Dharan Galyukt Shivar Yojana of the Government of Maharashtra in Osmanabad district. As a result, out of the 14 village pond desilting applications submitted, 5 applications received technical and administrative sanctions from the government. Through this initiative, communities will conserve 4.2 crore litres of water and 200 acres of land will be brought into cultivation.

Core Programmes: Activities and Outreach

Health and Nutrition

SSP's work on health and nutrition focuses on increasing the resilience of communities threatened by drought in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra.

In the last year, SSP focused on creating awareness amongst rural women on issues surrounding family health, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene, particularly amongst adolescent girls and pregnant women. SSP also trained Community Resource Persons (Arogya Sakhis) and government frontline workers like Anganwadi staff and ASHA workers and partnered with them to improve on-ground implementation.

Highlights:

- Leaders conducted Training of Trainers sessions on the themes on Nutrition Participatory Learning & Action (N-PLA) approach with 2,199 Anganwadi Workers from Maharashtra.
- Organised a Master Trainer Training with 25 facilitators and resource persons from Maharashtra and Gujarat, focused on the LANN+ PLA (Linking Agriculture and Natural Resource Management towards Nutrition Security plus WASH and Participatory Learning and Action) methodology, developed by Welthungerhilfe
- Organised training with 107 grassroots leaders from Maharashtra and Gujarat on topics such as malnutrition, child growth monitoring, and community engagement strategies, and the Nutrition Sensitive Integrated Farming Systems (NSIFS) model.
- SSP developed a strong network and relationship with the district and block level Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Department through participation in various joint programs, meetings and workshops. SSP also partnered with the ICDS department to organise orientation sessions on Health and Nutrition in Washim District, attended by a total of 17 ICDS supervisors.
- SSP collaborated with the local government for organising village level health, nutrition and sanitation workshops, as well as block-level dialogues and an awareness rally on World Environment Day held on June 5, 2023.
- In August 2023, Food Festivals were also organised in 30 villages of Sonkhed PHC in Nanded District of Maharashtra, focusing on maintaining a healthy diet



and nutrition for women and children in the postnatal period, and how to recognise abnormality in infants. These sessions were attended by a total of 483 lactating mothers.

- Organised sensitisation and awareness raising sessions on concepts of nutrition, and its links to health and agriculture in 67 villages, reaching farmers, across Maharashtra and Gujarat.
- Twenty-five Arogya Sakhis from SSP in Nanded district were facilitated by their local Gram Panchayats, receiving the 'Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Puraskar'.

Empowering Families, Nourishing Generations

Swayam Shikshan Prayog was part of the "World Breastfeeding Week: Empowering Families, Nourishing Generations" campaign, with the support of GIZ and Welthungerhilfe. SSP has organised 58 Nutrition meetings in 51 villages. 908 women participated including 131 Anganwadi Workers in Washim. To drive the core messages across rural communities, various activities were conducted throughout the week, such as awareness rallies, focus group discussions, puppet shows and live online seminars, in which 14,915 community members and 578 Anganwadi workers participated.

Governance & Stewardship

SSP's structure is headed by the Governing Board comprising eight members (four women and four men) and the Management Committee who meet at least once in every four months. The Board members are changed or reappointed in every three years. The Management Committee with fourteen experienced members including the Directors, Associate Directors, Sector Experts and representatives of grassroots women leaders.

The Board supervises the committees at the organization such as the Management Committee, Procurement Committee, Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Committee, that serve as dynamic drivers for setting policies, making decisions, developing programmes, and bringing them to fruition. It also offers recommendations to these teams, who benefit from the expertise and diverse experiences of Board Members in achieving optimal performance.

The Board oversees the execution, monitoring, and reporting of SSP's operations while incorporating the

various policies in place including Code of Ethics and Conduct; Financial Systems; Human Resource and Safeguarding; Child Protection; Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Framework and Procedures, Environmental, Social and Governance; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policies.

The Board frequently reviews the organization's objectives, strategic plans, and performance indicators and ensures the availability of financial and human resources required to implement various plans. SSP has a total of 152 employees: 40 permanent staff (24 women, 16 men), 107 contractual staff (86 women, 21 men), and 6 consultants (3 women, 3 men).

Board Members of 2023-24

Adolph Furtado, Chairperson; Jiji Sebastian, Secretary; Nadarajan VC, Treasurer; Prasanna Abhay Hulikavi, Trustee; N Vinod Chandra Menon, Trustee; Nisheeth Kumar, Trustee; Urvashi Devidayal, Trustee; Priya Patil, Trustee.

New Initiatives

In the last year, SSP established relationships with new partners to improve organisational functioning and scale up its work into new geographies.

The three-year project, "One Acre Farming to Scale Women led Climate Positive Food Systems" supported by the Oak Foundation, focuses on increasing the credibility of SSP's climate-positive food systems model beyond Maharashtra through partner-led pilots in two districts: Wayanad in Kerala and Bidar in 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.

The three-year project "Swalamban" (Empowering Livelihoods in Latur District), supported by Axis Bank Foundation aims to support 22,000 vulnerable households from the small and marginal farming community (farmers & agricultural labourers) in 150 villages across three blocks of Latur district in Maharashtra. The primary goal of the initiative 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. A key aspect of this project is the introduction of innovative concepts like the Multiple Poverty Index and advanced technologies such as the Management Information System dashboard for effective project monitoring and evaluation.

The three-year project on "Strengthening Small Farmer Collectives for Women Empowerment" supported by SBI Foundation envisages to strengthen the livelihoods of four thousand small and marginal women farmers in the districts of Dharashiv and Latur through comprehensive development of Four Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) owned by them. The project aims to achieve this objective by meaningfully intervening in all key aspects of their agricultural value chains, such as infrastructure development, building forward and backward linkages, delivery of inputs and services to members, hand holding and capability building. Capitalising on the potential of the local production market-consumption economy, investing on the main regional produce, and professional management of FPCs are key themes of the project.

The two-year project on "Nutrition Behaviour Change Among Cotton Growers of Wardha in Maharashtra and Kutch in Gujarat" supported by Welthungerhilfe/GIZ

New Initiatives

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.

The Citibank N.A. supported 17-month project on “Building resilient communities by generating livelihood

opportunities for Women”, 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.



Voices of Women



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, vermicompost beds, 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.

A Mercurial Leader Embracing New Technologies

Poonam Sinha is a leader and entrepreneur from Bhasingapur village in the Parwalpur Block of Nalanda District, Bihar. In 2023, Poonam was one of the women leaders who was selected to receive the 'Subjee-Cooler' and demonstrate its use in the community. The 'Subjee-Cooler' is an innovative device that can be used to store agricultural produce and keep

it fresh by using water for cooling purposes. Since Poonam received the 'Subjee-Cooler', she expanded to selling fruits and vegetables in her grocery store as well.

With the support of her son, she stocks up on 4-5 different vegetables every alternate day from the wholesale market and sells them at retail rates in her own shop. As a result of this endeavour, she is earning an additional income of Rs.1500 per day from selling fruits and vegetables. She continues to mentor new Sakhi's and guide them in expanding their own clean-energy businesses.



Voices of Women

Jyoti Sonkamble is Leading Women to Financial Independence through Goat Rearing in Maharashtra

Jyoti Sonkamble, a grassroots woman leader and entrepreneur, is supporting other women from her community in becoming financially independent in Dashpel village, located in Loha Block of Nanded District, Maharashtra.

Working with SSP as an ArogyaSakhi since 2021, Jyoti tai realised that most of the women in her community were struggling economically, as agriculture became an increasingly uncertain livelihood source. With daily survival being a priority, women were unable to focus on their own health and well-being. Looking for a solution, Jyoti tai approached SSP to link select women with financial loans and begin goat rearing on a small-scale. As a result, eight women were provided with seed money of Rs. 8,000 from SSP. The selected woman came from marginal and landless farming

households, owning between 0-2 acres of land each. The women also invested some money of their own and purchased one goat initially. They were provided with training on goat rearing, basic veterinary support and entrepreneurship development training to ensure that they could sustain and expand their business. Over the past 2 years, all eight women have increased their herd of goats to around six goats per household, and earn an income of approximately Rs.12,000 per animal as a result of the quality of their animals.



Major Events

Advancing Women's Leadership in Climate Action program organised by USAID

Two of SSP's leaders, Rajashri Doranhali and Jyotsana Mane from Solapur and Latur Districts of Maharashtra respectively, were invited to participate in the South Asia Regional Conference as part of USAID's Advancing Women's Leadership in Climate Action program on May 11th, 2023 in New Delhi, India. The South Asia Regional Conference aimed to initiate discussions on the importance of gender mainstreaming in the South Asia energy sector, and promote women leaders from the energy sector. It Brought together senior Government officials, business leaders, academia, private sector and experts from India, the U.S., and South Asia to discuss the challenges of gender mainstreaming in the energy sector and role of gender diversity in advancing climate resilient energy systems.



Major Events



State-Level Workshop on women in water conservation

SSP organised a state-level dialogue on March 25, 2023 in Pune, Maharashtra, between government officials at the state and district level, along with 50 rural women who are leading village transformation efforts at the local-level. The event was attended by senior government officials like Mr. Nandkumar, Secretary MGNREGA & Soil Water Conservation; Mr. Nilesh Gughe, Master Trainer at Yashada; Dr. Sagar Dhara, United Nation Environment Program (UNEP) expert; Mr. Shekhar Gaikwad Sugar commissioner and Ex. agriculture & GSDA Commissioner; and Mr. Tambale, Director ATMA.

National-level Workshop on Linkages in Agriculture Value Chain

SSP organised a National-level Workshop on the theme of 'Linkages in Agricultural Value Chains' on the occasion of International Women's Day, March 8, 2024, in Dharashiv, Maharashtra. The event, attended by 140 participants from diverse organisations, focused on exploring partnership opportunities for sustainability in the agricultural value chain. Ms. Delphine Brissonneau, Senior Representative of the European Union Office in India, attended the event and emphasised the importance of women's empowerment in agriculture. The workshop focused on presenting the status of the four agricultural value chains positioned under the ISUDWOG Action, explore the possibility of meaningful exchanges, collaborations and partnerships for the value chains with diverse stakeholders, discuss the potential forward and backward linkages for sustainability, and seek to understand the sectoral best-practices that may be integrated into their functioning. The workshop also focused on constituting a forum of stakeholders that would bring together government officials, officials from

local authorities, private partners, technology suppliers, entrepreneurs and women leaders that would function as a platform for further mutual engagements.



Major Events

National Level Workshop on Value Chain Strategies

SSP organised a National Level Workshop on Value Chain Strategies on 21st of June, 2023 at Pune with the support of the European Union.

The panel discussions brought out the many possibilities and partnerships for the sustainability of the value chains and was enriched with the participation from many eminent personalities such as Mr. Kailas Mote from the Maharashtra State Horticulture & Medicinal Plant Board, Pune, Mr. Dashrath Tambhale, Director of Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA), Mr. Anjani Kumar Srivastava, General Manager at SIDBI Pune RO, Mr. Yogendra Shelkey, SBI Pune, Mr. Rakesh Ganguli, UN Women India, Mr. Parthasarathy Thiruvankadam, CEO, Skill Green Global, Ms. Ratna Mathur, Ms. Chaitali Kamble, Development Professional, Dr. Anil Kavtekar, Head Dairy Development at Schreiber Foods Pune, Mr. Amit Asnikar, Founder, Grammunati.net, Mr. Mukund Deogaonkar, Co-Founder, Afferent Wearable Tech.



Women in Renewable Energy: A Dialogue on Policy, Technology, Skilling and Finance

SSP's grassroots women leaders Ms. Vandana Khandekar and Ms. Laxmi More from Solapur and Osmanabad Districts, Maharashtra respectively, were invited to speak at the event titled "Women in Renewable Energy: A Dialogue on Policy, Technology, Skilling and Finance", organised by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India on the occasion of World Environment Day on June 5, 2023.

Ms. Vandana Khandekar was one of the panellists at the session on "The LiFE of Women: Lessons from the Ground and the Future of the LiFE Movement". During the event, she said "Under the Women-led Climate Resilient Farming model, we grow locally demanded agri products in each village, led by women. Social and cultural barriers needed to be overcome to get a productive village in over 10 villages now, with 500+ women. For Biogas, the advantages include cost effectiveness, lowered health effects and costs as well as cleaner energy. We are happy to be able to work with women to scale DRE technologies effectively".

International Peer Learning Exchange by Huairou Commission

Swayam Shikshan Prayog participated in the South Asian Peer Learning Exchange, organised by the Huairou Commission and facilitated by Best Practices Foundation in Bangalore, India from June 26-28, 2023. This Peer Learning Exchange was organised with the objective of sharing reflections, learnings and experiences between members of the Huairou Network in South Asia (Nepal, India and Bangladesh),

and discussing how participants can apply best practices to their own local contexts.

Devkanya Jagdale, shared SSP's own experience of entrepreneurship and value chain development in Marathwada, Maharashtra, as well as the WILL (Women's Initiative to Learn and Lead) Program that SSP is implementing to build a cadre of empowered grassroots women leaders at the local level.



Major Events

State-level CSOs Learning and Advocacy Event

Swayam Shikshan Prayog organised a two-day advocacy workshop in Osmanabad, Maharashtra, on September 8-9, 2023, bringing together 15 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from all over Maharashtra. It was a vibrant platform for discussing the challenges faced by marginalised women farmers and sharing knowledge regarding their rights and provisions for them. The workshop was helpful in learning and reflecting on women's rights and empowerment. At the end of the event, each CSO created a three-month action plan, showing their commitment to turning ideas into real change. This collective effort is a significant step towards our mission of raising awareness of women's rights and ensuring economic fairness for rural women in Maharashtra.



District Advocacy Workshop in Wayanad

Swayam Shikshan Prayog conducted a district-level dialogue workshop on September 16, 2023 at Venniyode in Kalpetta Block of Wayanad District, Kerala on the topic of "Women-Led Climate Adaptive Farming Practices in Wayanad". The objective of this workshop was to learn about existing and new government programmes around farming, how to access them, and strengthen climate resilient farming practices at the local level. The event was attended by officials from the District Industries Centre - Wayanad, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) - Ambalavayal, Agricultural Infrastructure Fund(AIF), Krishi Bhavan - Kottathara and elected representatives from Kottathara Gram Panchayat. Over 200 women leaders and farmers also participated in the event.



Major Events

Exposure Visit and Learning Exchange between SSP and PRADAN

Swayam Shikshan Prayog, with support from Hindustan Unilever Foundation, participated in a learning exchange visit to view the excellent work that PRADAN has been doing on watershed management in Purulia, West Bengal Since 2017. In the three-day visit, both SSP and PRADAN teams engaged closely to understand PRADAN's model on water security to promote agriculture and how they implemented their USHARMUKTI program in over 54 blocks of West Bengal, through collaboration with the government and MGNREGS program, engaging the community with a vision of a long-term development plan. Through this exchange, SSP was able to learn from PRADAN's approach through which they have successfully brought acres of barren land into cultivation and helped small farmers create their own water security assets leading to reduction in migration in the region and promoted sustainable income for the families.



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."



Major Events

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 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.



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 Gopalan, worming compost fertiliser production etc.

Major Events

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

On November 14, 2023, Swayam Shikshan Prayog participated in a public event organised by F3E in France 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.



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.



Major Events

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."

Training on WCRF for Rural Agricultural Work Experience (RAWE) Students

SSP conducted a two-day training session with 21 RAWE students from the College of Agriculture, Ambalavayal, Wayanad on 5-6th March, 2024. The training offered a mix of theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience through field activities guided by grassroots women farmers. Emphasis was placed on promoting the uptake of climate-resilient farming practices led by women. The students actively participated in interactive sessions, delving into the core elements of the SSP's WCRF model to deepen their understanding of climate-smart, sustainable farming.



Major Events

SHEPrenuer Mela at the US Embassy, Delhi

SSP's leaders participated in the SHEPrenuer Mela, organised by USAID, on 20th Feb 2024 at the US Embassy in Delhi. As a partner of the USAID supported South Asia Regional Energy Partnership (SAREP) program, SSP's stall displayed clean energy products like biogas, subjee cooler and solar lights, that women entrepreneurs were promoting in their communities. During this event, SSP's team had the opportunity to interact with the USAID team, embassy staff as well as the US Ambassador, Mr. Eric Garcetti, explaining our work on climate-smart agriculture, women's entrepreneurship, value chain development, and promoting grassroots women's leadership.



International trilateral cooperation study visits

As part of the European Union support project, "ISUDWOG - Inclusive and Sustainable Development for Women and Girls", the Indian delegation Mr. Upmanyu Patil and Mr. Kiran Mane along with the rural women entrepreneurs Ms. Sumitra Shirai and Ms. Vaishali Ghuge, travelled to Italy from 6th to 10th February, 2024. The study visit was hosted by the Italian Coordination of the European Women's Lobby LEF Italia. The study visits included visits to farms and meetings with public and private, profit and non-profit organisations. LEF Italia representatives have selected these organisations based on good practices developed locally by individual enterprises and social enterprises, business support organisations, local authorities and agri-food supply chains in the field of sustainable and inclusive agriculture and public-private-civil society. During the study visits, the SSP delegation was accompanied by Maria Ludovica Botterelli, General Secretary of LEF Italia, and Francesca De Paula, Expert of LEF Italia.

From March 10th to 14th, 2024, representatives from the Women's NGO Forum of Kyrgyzstan visited women entrepreneurs involved in the ISDWOG project in Dharashiv district, witnessing their active participation in business, agriculture, and social initiatives. The visit aimed to foster programmatic relations with the Women's NGO Forum of Kyrgyzstan, facilitating knowledge exchange and collaboration.



Major Events

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

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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. The event also featured an impressive exhibition of products like coconut oil, honey, honey amla, arrow root powder, turmeric powder, chilli powder, coffee powder, cleaning solutions such as bath and wash soap, floor cleaner, hand wash, etc by the Keravriksha Coconut Producer Company, an FPO spearheaded by 530+ women farmers in Wayanad, Kerala.

"This event provided valuable insights from government officials regarding various schemes and programs. These initiatives aim to strengthen agriculture and employment opportunities for marginalized and backward communities, bringing them to the forefront of society," says Sangeetha, a tribal woman from Vastikkunnu in Wayanad District.



Awards & Honours

Archana Mane was awarded the CII Foundation's Woman Exemplar 2023 Award in the Micro Enterprise Category

Archana Mane, an entrepreneur and farmer from Ansurda village of Osmanabad District, Maharashtra was awarded CII Foundation's Woman Exemplar 2023 Award in the Micro-Enterprise Category on 24th May, 2023. Archana was felicitated by Smt. Smriti Irani, Minister of Women & Child Development and Minority Affairs, Government of India. Archana, along with other finalists for the Woman Exemplar Program, 2023, will engage in a year-long leadership development training organised by CII, to help improve the impact of her work. Archana's dedication, resilience and enthusiasm towards bringing about social change continues to inspire us and other rural women across Marathwada. She has demonstrated SSP's belief that women empowerment leads to local action and community development.

"CII Woman Exemplar Awards highlight the need to do much more to inspire women at the grassroots level to bring about social change. Between the Government and Industry, let us resolve to build a society that is empathetic to the needs of the women." Smt Smriti Irani, Minister of Women & Child Development and Minority Affairs, Government of India.



Grassroots Woman Leader Anjali Masalkar honoured by Lokmat Sakhi Manch

On International Women's Day, Lokmat Sakhi Manch honoured Anjali Masalkar, a grassroots woman leader from SSP, as one of the Lokmat Women Achievers of Latur-2024, recognizing her remarkable journey in agricultural leadership. An award ceremony was held in Latur on March 8, 2024 to celebrate the launch of a coffee table book on the 'Achievements of Inspiring Women in Latur' published by Lokmat Sakhi Manch.

This Coffee Table Book will inspire future endeavours of

diligent women and record their efforts, facilitating the growth of accomplished women leaders.

Anjali has been associated with SSP for a decade, igniting leadership and momentum in her work. Anjali established 248 self-help groups in Ausa taluka, promoting organic farming through the women-led climate-resilient farming (WCRF) model, benefitting nearly 800 families. She provided organic agricultural training to 3,000 women and facilitated vocational training for pursuing related businesses. Many women are now confidently engaged in organic farming and agriculture, with Anjali's continued support.



Media Reports

SSP's Work Featured on Sahyadri Doordarshan

SSP's work was featured in an episode of Raitcha Darbar on the Sahyadri Doordarshan Channel on April 17, 2023. The episode showcases SSP's efforts in promoting sustainable, climate-smart agriculture using water conservation techniques and including rural women leaders in water governance at the local level through improved watershed management techniques. This work is being carried out as part of SSP's Marathwada District Transformation Model, supported by HUF in Osmanabad District of Maharashtra.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/live/1lejB5lXKF0?feature=share>

Making agriculture viable for small and marginal farmers

An article published by IDR looks at how organisations such as SSP and Pradan are demonstrating that small holder farming can be made viable through simple and consistent innovation.

Link: <https://idronline.org/article/agriculture/making-agriculture-viable-for-small-and-marginal-farmers>

IDR Podcast – 'On the Contrary'

Naseem Shaikh, Associate Director Of Programs at SSP, was interviewed as part of the IDR Podcast - 'On the Contrary'. This episode, titled 'What will the future of farming in India look like?', uncovers India's farming landscape to envision a more sustainable future for agriculture and farmers in the country.

Listen to the full podcast here: <https://idronline.org/podcasts/on-the-contrary-podcast-social-impact/what-will-the-future-of-farming-in-india-look-like/>

Channelling women's leadership and entrepreneurship by SSP in partnership with Ashoka

SSP has been working on empowering rural women in the drought-prone regions of Marathwada, Maharashtra for over 25 years. SSP's focus has been on building supportive ecosystems within which women build their leadership capacities and become financially independent through the development of rural agricultural value chains. Check out the video below, which shows how rural women are transforming from homemakers and agricultural labourers into business women that run their own dairy and vegetable enterprises, as well as leading Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) that benefit the farming community.

Link: <https://youtu.be/VjuKddn21AM>

Gender Justice

Addressing Climate Change in India through Women-Led Climate Resilient Farming, with Naseem Shaikh and Priya Rakhunde: In this podcast 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) 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-justiceaddressing-climate-change-in-india-through-wo?>

Media Reports

Why Grassroots Organisations Are Essential for Sustainability

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) was featured in an article published on Earth.org. “This India-based initiative was started to promote sustainable agriculture and empower women to view challenges as opportunities. It aims to help support and sustain women in impoverished communities by providing the farming and entrepreneurial knowledge needed to survive. SSP also trains women in farming methods that promote climate resilience, clean water, and good health while maintaining environmental sustainability, such as conservation and protection of natural resources. This is vital, as about one in three people globally cannot access safe drinking water.”

Link to article: <https://earth.org/why-grassroots-organisations-are-essential-for-sustainability/>

How India’s Women Adapt to a Hotter World

SSP’s Women-led Climate Resilient Farming Model was featured in an article on the online media Page FairPlanet. “Women farmers are hit hardest by rising temperatures, so we train them to develop an alternative farming model. We encourage them to grow seasonal food crops instead of water-intensive cash crops. We simultaneously inform them to stay cool during a heatwave, advising them with simple solutions to avoid daytime work and suggesting visits to the farms during the early morning or sunset hours,” Godavari Dange from Swayam Shikshan Prayog told FairPlanet.

Link to article: <https://www.fairplanet.org/story/how-indias-women-adapt-to-a-hotter-world>

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>

Publications

Women-led organic agriculture practice:

Developing community climate resilience and changing gender norms: A paper written by Ratna Mathur, with inputs from Naseem Shaikh and Upmanyu Patil from SSP, examines local solutions to the climate crisis that have been developed with women farmers in the Marathwada Region of Maharashtra, India. It has been published in the IACD (International Association for Community Development) Practice Insights - Issue 2023, which focuses on the theme Community Development & Climate Crises.

You can access the full article here: <https://swyamshikshanprayog.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/IACD-Practive-Insights-Publication-July-2023.pdf>

Interwoven Futures: How Civil Society Organizations can Accelerate India's

Journey Towards Climate Resilience: SSP's Clean Energy Program has been featured in a compendium, compiled by the ClimateRise Alliance and DASRA. The compendium presents insightful case studies that demonstrate how CSOs are driving impactful interventions at the grassroots level, mitigating the effects of climate change, and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Link: <https://www.dasra.org/resource/interwoven-futures-how-civil-society-organizations-can-accelerate-indias-journey-towards-climate-resilience>

SSP's WCRF Model Recognised by NIDM: On the occasion of International Women's Day, Swayam Shikshan Prayog was recognised by the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), Govt of India, for its trailblazing work in development and promotion of the Women-led Climate Resilient Farming (WCRF) Model, a mechanism that is reducing disaster risk and empowering women in climate risk vulnerable areas of India. Naseem Shaikh, from SSP, attended the event on 8th March, 2023 in New Delhi, which was based on the theme 'Women's Leadership in Disaster Risk Reduction'. SSP's WCRF model of agriculture, implemented by women farmers in Maharashtra, Kerala and Bihar, was included in IUIDRR-NIDM's 'Compendium of Best Practices on Agenda 3: Role of Women in Disaster Risk Management', which was launched during the event. This comprehensive resource showcases empowering initiatives and strategies for promoting gender-inclusive disaster resilience.

Link to the publication: https://swyamshikshanprayog.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/NIDM_Compndium-of-Best-Practices-04.03.2024-4.33-pm-1.pdf

Registrations

- **Trust Registration**
No. F 20262, Mumbai
Dated 13.07.1998
- **CSR Registration**
CSR00002783
- **FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act)**
083780808
Valid until 31 December 2026
- **80G (Section 80G of the Income Tax Act)**
AABTS9106NF19989
- **12A (Section 12 of the Income Tax Act)**
AABTS9106NE19981
- **PAN (Permanent Account Number)**
AABTS9106N
- **NGO-Darpan UID (Unique Identity)**
MH/2016/0095964



Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SSP has a comprehensive approach to empowering rural communities, particularly women, and promoting sustainable development. It is in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. Here's a breakdown of how SSP's work aligns with specific SDGs:

SDG 1: No Poverty SP's Work:

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 decision-making 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.



Financial Report

Rao & Ashok

Chartered Accountants
Registration No: 119932 W.

ASHOK R. MELMANE.
KETAN MEGHANI
ARVIND GUPTA

THE 166th 3042/43 FAX, 247-4510
UNIT III, 1ST FLOOR,
HIRDI LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ESTATE
4th, MUGHULI LANE, MAHIM,
MUMBAI - 400016.

SWAYAM SHIKSHAN PRAYOG - SSP CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNT Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st March 2024

To	Receipts	Amount	By	Payments	Amount	Amount
	Opening Balance on 1.4.2023					
	Investments:					
	HDFC Trust Fund	10,114,846.28		Improvement of the Socio-Economic Conditions of Women from Poor Households in India - Miseroer	10,632,845.13	
	Fixed Deposit with Bank of Baroda	33,677,204.00		South Asia Regional Energy Partnership_SAREP_RTI	13,203,190.00	
	Fixed Deposit With ICICI Bank	16,322,280.35		Wealth Hunger Hlife Community Resilience Programs - Huairo Commission, USA	6,616,972.36	
	FC Receipt Account Bank of Baroda No. 1745	16,427,791.58		HUAIROU - Fair 4 All	14,528,678.21	
	FCRA Utility Accounts : Kotak Bank 9512709173	1,800,008.91		Women's Enterpreneurship & Leadership programs - MARRIMAC	1,347,051.33	
	FCRA Utility Accounts : Kotak Bank 9512676062	95,437.74		Ashoka Innovators for The Public	124,000.00	
	FCRA Utility Accounts : Kotak Bank 9513791832	1,335,759.55		Astoner	1,238,500.00	
	ICICI Account: 042401003177	7,758,918.83		Access to Celan Energy and Entrepreneurships - Miseroer	60,385.27	
	ICICI Account: 754501000131	1,312.00		ISUDWOG_European Union	28,718,399.17	
	ICICI Account: 003901244988	1,724,517.00		Oak Foundation	1,615,655.00	
	FC Receipt A/c SBI- 40019167111	17,424,701.44		US Consulate	554,717.16	
	BOB A/c No. 30110100005920	1,256,324.80		Shaikh Jaffer Foundation	1,423,222.00	
	BOB A/c No. 03800100025589	1,771.05		Womanity Foundation	6,342.00	
	BOB A/c No. 04030100001970	6,403,254.95		CITIBANK N.A	89,487,328.00	
	HDFC A/c No. 00861450000267	3,037,158.01		F3F Expenses	51,389.70	
	HDFC A/c No. 5010005630760	644,476.98		Population Council	882,594.00	
	KOTAK - A/C No. 9513798855	314,995.00		Give Foundation	603,047.78	
	KOTAK - A/C No. 951360268	6,844,314.39		ADM Agro Ind Latur Vizag Pvt Ltd	2,722,302.23	
	KOTAK - A/C No. 9512673511	421,545.15		Hindustan Unilever Foundation	32,984,474.00	
	ICICI A/C No. 645001004200	2,967,580.00		KamalUdwadia Foundation	3,902,876.00	
	ICICI A/C No. 754501000106	50,473.00		HCL foundation	4,275,259.00	
	ICICI A/C No. 003901244855	93,661.00	128,718,332.01	International Rice Research Institute	540,000.00	
	* Grants Received during the year			Avendus Capital Pvt Ltd	13,260,553.72	
	Miseroer - Improvement of the Socio-Economic Conditions of Women from Poor Households in India	9,394,247.00		Axis Bank Foundation	2,449,972.00	
	Oak Foundation	4,487,500.00		HSBC Software Development (India) Pvt Ltd	10,466,054.00	
	Wealth Hunger Hlife (WHH)	7,891,954.00		Nasscom Foundation	3,065,062.00	
	MISEREOR - Energy awareness and enterpreneurships	1,724,561.00		Kosher India Climate India Pvt Ltd	360,410.00	
	South Asia Regional Energy Partnership_SAREP_RTI	15,634,552.00		Small industries Development Bank of India	371,469.00	
	HUAIROU - Exchanges/ Resilience programs	1,907,543.45		Sterling Investment Private Limited	5,351,166.75	
	CITIBANK N.A	89,700,000.00		SVEP Jalna	10,485,369.00	
	Astonar	1,562,129.00		Testo India Pvt Ltd	1,014,846.00	
	F3F Grant	133,021.00		UNICEF	4,812,717.00	268,578,923.26
	Shaikh Janeef Foundation- Hongkong	869,383.85		Covid Support Expenses		
	Give Foundation	655,335.00		Climate Fund Manager	21,249.00	
	US Department of State	1,406,681.00		Huairo Commission COVID Support Expenses	10,611.00	31,860.00
	HUAIROU - Fairdall	12,181,938.00		Vehicle Expenses	110,018.00	
	ISUDWOG_European Union	12,011,832.00		Less: Income	36,192.00	73,826.00
	ADM Agro Ind Latur Vizag Pvt Ltd	1,665,000.00		Purchase of Fixed Assets		
	HCL Foundation	1,902,224.00		Laptop & Computer with Printer	648,604.00	
	Hindustan Unilever Foundation	32,713,500.00		Projector	37,990.00	
	KamalUdwadia Foundation	3,500,500.00		Furniture & Fixture	70,000.00	
	International Rice Research Institute	1,239,000.00		Camera	70,000.00	826,594.00
	National institute of disaster management	20,000.00		TDS Receivables:		
	SBI Foundation	7,060,000.00		TDS on Interest	714,585.00	
	Startup Village Entrepreneurship Programme	15,000,000.00		GST Receivable from SAREP_RTI	507,424.00	1,222,009.00
	Avendus Capital Pvt Ltd	13,150,000.00		Trade Payables		
	Avendus PE Investment Advise Pvt Ltd	50,000.00		Buen Manejo Del Compo India Pvt Ltd	56,196.00	
	Pvt Ltd	65,000.00		Re Emerging World Consultant Pvt Ltd	1,227,587.00	
	Axis Bank Foundation	3,000,000.00		Rukart Technologies Pvt Ltd	101,629.00	
	Give Foundation	190,211.00		Thakur Vaidyanath, Aiyar & Co	40,000.00	1,425,412.00
	HSBC Software Development (India) Pvt Ltd	10,466,000.00				
	Individual Donation	15,100.00				
	Kosher Climate India Pvt Ltd	634,773.00				
	Nasscom Foundation	3,065,062.00				
	Small Industries Development Bank of India	571,700.00				
	Sterkubg Investment Corporation Pvt Ltd	1,500,000.00				
	UNICEF	5,356,980.00				
	Less: Grant returned	671,476.00	260,054,251.30			
	Carried Forward Rs.		388,772,583.31	Carried Forward Rs.		272,158,624.26

Financial Report

Rao & AshokChartered Accountants
Registration No: 119932 W.ASHOK R. MELMANE,
KETAN MEGHANI
ARVIND GUPTAUNIT 111, 1ST FLOOR,
HIREN LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,
RRR, MOGHULI LANE, MAHIM,
MUMBAI - 40016.SWAYAM SHIKSHAN PRAYOG - SSP
CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNT

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st March 2024

Receipts		Amount	Payments		Amount	Amount
To	Brought forward		388,772,583.31	By	Brought forward	272,158,624.26
					<u>Closing Balance as on 31.03.2024</u>	
					HDFC Trust Fund	10,114,846.28
					Fixed Deposit with Bank of Baroda	15,053,165.00
					Fixed Deposit With ICICI Bank	17,118,544.93
	Interest Income:				FC Receipt Account Bank of Baroda No. 1745	31,823,839.11
	Interest On Fixed Deposits	4,183,612.00			FCRA Utility Accounts : Kotak Bank	652,174.28
	Interest On Saving Accounts	2,590,263.00			9512709173	
	Interest On TDS	15,020.00	6,788,895.00		FCRA Utility Accounts : Kotak Bank	4,351.90
					9512676062	
					FCRA Utility Accounts : Kotak Bank	206,718.55
					9513791832	
	Other Income				ICICI Account: 042401003177	2,207,381.08
	Training Income	2,095,665.00			ICICI Account: 754501000131	838,068.00
	Less- Training Expenses	110,000.00	1,985,665.00		ICICI Account: 003901244988	751,252.00
					FC Receipt A/c SBI- 40019167111	18,843,927.29
	TDS Receivable Received		231,150.00		BOB A/c No. 30110100005920	1,291,222.80
					BOB A/c No. 03800100025589	1,820.05
	EFP Income		1,475.00		BOB A/c No. 04030100001970	5,778,542.95
					HDFC A/c No. 00861450000267	3,129,495.01
					HDFC A/c No. 5010005630760	669,486.98
	"Project Advance				KOTAK - A/C No. 9513798855	326,189.00
	CORO India	2,099.00			KOTAK - A/C No. 951360268	3,010,397.19
	Men Against Violence Abuse	877.00	2,976.00		KOTAK - A/C No. 9512673511	1,989,105.65
					ICICI A/C No. 645001004200	36,538.00
	Trade Payables				ICICI A/C No. 754501000106	4,290,819.00
	Bueh Manejo Del Compo India Pvt Ltd	56,196.00			ICICI A/C No. 003901244855	371,570.00
	Re Emerging World Consultant Pvt Ltd	456,158.00			AU Bank A/c No. 2301235351989684	614,815.00
	Rukart Technologies Pvt Ltd	101,629.00	613,983.00		Axis Bank A/c No. 924010004955371	502,589.00
					SBI A/c No. 42798078646	7,060,100.00
	GST Receivable Received from SAREP_RTI		448,856.00			126,686,959.05
	TOTAL RUPEES		398,845,583.31		TOTAL RUPEES	398,845,583.31

MUMBAI : 9th July 2024

For Rao & Ashok,
Chartered Accountants.Partner,
C.A. ASHOK R. MELMANE
MEMBERSHIP NO : 30624

SWAYAM SHIKSHAN PRAYOG

TRUSTEE



Partners

Axis Bank Foundation | Astanor | Avendus | ADM Cares | Citibank N.A. |
DASRA | European Union | GIZ & Welthungerhilfe | Give |
Hindustan Unilever Foundation | HSBC | Huairou Commission |
KamalUdwadia Foundation | Misereor |
Metta Social | Nasscom Foundation | Oak Foundation |
Samhita | Shapoorji Pallonji Group | SIDBI | SBI Foundation |
SJNEFFL | UNICEF | USAID-SAREP |
Maharashtra State Rural Livelihoods Mission-UMED.



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