

Attainment of Self Help Groups (SHG) Outcomes in terms of Training & Development

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Abstract

Self Help Groups (SHG) are based at villages with a motive 'helping each other' and producing variety of goods for the consumers which are highly affordable and eco-friendly. Generally, these SHG's are females who are really working hard for making their and people lives better. Their products though best but not receiving required response and attention as desired. As of January 2023, there are 6400 SHGs in Meerut district with approximate 65000 members. Through convenience sampling, at an initial stage some SHG's have been identified and provided with the training for enhancing their product and also the Emarketing tactics for their products through various social media platforms. Even with the help of training, branding & marketing this project is also aimed to identify and create opportunities for existing entrepreneurs to leverage SHGs as a skilled community to create market driven products.

Keywords: SHG, Social Media, E-Marketing, Brand Building.

1. Introduction

Women in Indian villages remain illiterate, low skilled and are burdened by household chores and economic pursuits for survival. Social and gender barrier to women's mobility and participation limit their empowerment to a great extent. Thus, women livelihood and empowerment activities should provide livelihood opportunities for women to earn by working from home, along with taking care of their children and family members. Self-Help Group (SHG) are informal association of 10-20 women from similar economic backgrounds. SHGs are designed towards diversifying income sources, reducing fluctuation in income, and assuring sustainable income at the household level through poverty reduction, women's empowerment and improving outcomes in health, nutrition, and education. This proposal is intended to implement consolidated approach of trainings, business development, production and E-market support for SHGs ensuring respect, dignity and women empowerment. SHGs are based on the fundamental principles of "helping each other" and "unity is strength, hence we will explore and implement innovative paradigms to promote SHGs using technologic; social and cultural tool in concert within and across peer groups, including Government machinery and other constituents of their communities. SHGs will be potentiated as "Change Agents" as part of the process of establishing as well as refining the goals and metrics of advancing interventions for SHGs and enhancing life long acquisition of attributes to promote economic independence, dignity and respect. Interventions will be sustained for each SHG to achieve a hugely ambitious goal to improve their living conditions and decreasing poverty. We will also cohesively align and bring together resources and funding opportunities in skill development, training and capacity building that are sustainable and contribute to household income with the ultimate impact in employment generation and preventing emigration from villages for economic activities. Real time data capture and data analytics will be done to evaluate impact of implementation. Post-successful implementation, the model will be expanded to other SHGs in future as well.

2. Major Research Work Reviewed

Highly latest studies are not available regarding SHG's but many studies had been conducted related to the 'Self Help Groups' in many districts of various states of India, which indicated the need and requirement for the aligned training and development in this domain so as make them more empowered, sustained and developed. The factors like age, education, family type and distance from the market had a significant impact on the performance of women SHG (Joshi 2019). The SHGs required a flexible organization and proper incentives to sustain their performance with changes in the economic and social environment (Schreiner 1997). Srinivasan (2008) emphasized on maintaining internal integrity while discussing the sustainability of SHGs. The role of the federation was also argued while providing sustainability to SHGs through financial and organizational support (Chakrabarti 2004; Christen and Ivatury 2007; Moyle et al. 2006; Nair 2005; NCAER 2008; Reddy 2008; Shylendra 2018; Srinivasan 2008). The study of EDA Rural Systems and APMAS (2006) mentioned that the sustainability and quality of SHGs were affected by default on bank loans. It was suggested that, for sustainability of the SHGs, the focus on social intermediation needs to be combined with gender awareness, education, health, sanitation and social problems (Ramakrishna et al. 2013). Raja Reddy and Reddy (2012) argued the need for sustained training and support for capacity building and sustainability of the SHGs. The study of APMAS (2017) pointed that building strong social capital, particularly, the SHG book writers, is instrumental for effective functioning and long-term sustainability of the SHGs. Mahapatra and Dutta (2016) found that the average loan balance per borrower, size of an MFI, cost per borrower and yield on gross loan portfolio affect the operational sustainability of Indian micro-finance programme. It was argued that small loan sizes, quick repayment cycles and repeated loans of MFIs constrict the borrowers to opt for low-risk ventures, with women borrowers facing additional barriers as their gendered role forces them to be less risky and follow traditionally accepted business modes, rather than making big headway (Dutta and Banerjee 2018). Fragmentation in terms of social identities, or more specifically religious-linguistic fractionalization, was associated with a greater probability of group exit (Kolstad et al. 2016).

3. Identification of Gaps and Need of the Study

After studying the literature, it was observed the proper training, upskilling, E-marketing support, Branding etc is required at female SHG's end in the villages. Major categories where such trainings are required as follows:

- Cardboard boxes for packaging as per standards for sports goods; labelling, branding and marketing
- Supply of environment friendly bags for packing jewellery.
- Improvement in quality of product in terms of designing, packaging, labelling, branding and marketing.
- Setting up equipment for cloth and paper making; items for packaging and stationery to be used by all SHGs and Government offices.
- Healthy local food options, traditional "organic" snacks, sweets, savouries; packaging, labelling, branding and marketing.
- Setting up equipment for cloth making, making reusable sanitary pads, designing cloth bags for packaging purposes.
- Upskilling in mushroom production, introduction of medicinal mushrooms and Markets.
- Production of organic honey, healthy bees, packaging in glass bottles, labelling, branding and marketing.
- Flowers for local, domestic and international markets; production of organic Perfumes.
- Production of high-quality cleaning items as per regulatory norms, labelling, branding and marketing.

Eventually out of all categories this project is specially for the eatery/food items produced by the SHG's and provide them appropriate training and emarketing support to their products.

4. Objectives of the Proposed

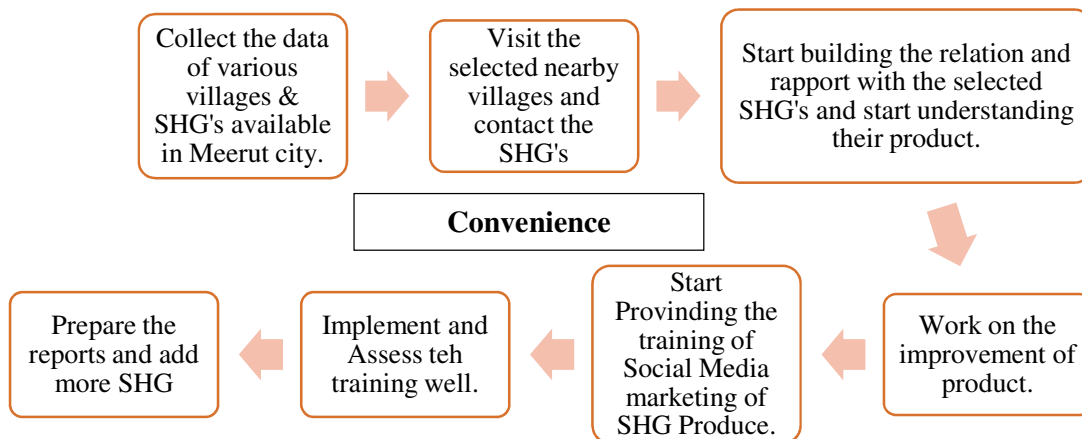
The following objectives have been developed based on the current requirement of the SHG’s:

1. To identify the SHG producing eatery/food items in selected village of Meerut.
2. To provide them (SHG) an appropriate training for creating awareness of their products through social media channels.
3. To strengthen the e-marketing support to the products of SHG.

5. Proposed Methodology for the Research Work

SHG’s to be selected initially with the convenience sampling in nearby villages of Meerut. The data of villages will be obtained with the help of local administration of Meerut. They will be contacted personally and entrusted for mobilizing such kind of training and support for increasing the overall marketing and business for their products. Assessment of the same will be done on weekly basis after the implementation. Social Media & E – marketing agencies and platforms to be associated with the SHG’s. Students can also be involved in the same project depending upon their discretion. The proposed methodology will be as follows:

Figure 1: Methodology for SHG Training & Brand Building



6. Data Analysis, Results & Findings

Self help groups (SHG) are involved in producing natural and quality oriented products like pickles, jams, jute bags, handbags, sanitary napkins, mushrooms, flowers, pottery items etc in villages nowadays but they are lacking in proper marketing, distribution and logistics facilities. This project is an attempt to facilitate the social media and E-marketing support to such products. Our model encompasses SHG participation and empowerment nested within Government Programs and policies include the following:

6.1 Community Engagement: The SHGs and the communities will be engaged in dialogues to understand community culture; thereby making community participation meaningful with generation of ideas, dialogue, decision making and sharing of responsibility. This will in turn foster trust, build capacities and empower SHGs to gain greater hold over their lives; acquire valued resources, basic rights and achieve important poverty reduction metrics.

6.2 Breaking the silos: We will facilitate utilization of Government social welfare schemes and funds available through National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM). Linkages with NABARD (National bank for agricultural and rural development) for microcredit and microfinance other Government funding options

like Bharathiya Mahila Bank Business Loan, Mahila Vikas Nidhi, Mudra Yojana Scheme for a small shop/home-based business etc and schemes funded by Government of Uttar Pradesh like Mission Shakti, Udyog Bandhu and Mahila Udyog Bandhu etc. Local authorities and working systems such as Gram Panchayats, Anganwadis, influencers, Mahila panchayats, Primary Health Centres (PHCs), Ayushman Bharat etc will be mobilized to support and identify areas of integration.

6.3 Resource Mobilization: We will connect the dots to adopt workable strategies for longevity and sustainability of SHGs in the long run. We will leverage external funding through Corporate Sponsors for villages, corporate social responsibility (CSR), non-government organization (NGO), non-profit organizations (NPO) and welfare foundations to join hands to help strengthen the interventions.

6.4 Synergizing: We will identify and create opportunities for existing entrepreneurs to leverage SHGs as a skilled community to create market driven products with payment per work basis or stable buy back strategy embedded in fair trade principles and payment through bank accounts.

6.5 Access to markets: We will support in target segment analysis to identify new markets, export buyers/bulk orders (institutional/corporate), retail channels, e-commerce and provide then launch on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal, e-saras platform (<https://www.esaras.in/>), Indiamart etc. GST registrations will be facilitated at Block level/Village Level. E-solutions will be provided for sales management, procurement management, financial management and production management.

6.6 Advocacy, Communication, Digital and Social Mobilization: We will do branding of Gram Panchayat, Village Entry Gate, Government offices. Communication material including brochures, flyers, leaflets, catalogues will be created and disseminated through website, social media channels and promotional videos. Newsletter for SHGs called “Samridh Tejaswanis” will be created in Hindi and English to capture success stories and will be circulated by e-mail and WhatsApp.

6.7 Capacity Development: Additional NGOs and NPOs will be engaged to support in promoting leadership qualities and income-generating activities by enhancing technical knowledge, skill training and honing marketing techniques, establishing successful habits, personality development, presentation skills, ability to sell & negotiate and public speaking. Capacity building will enable upskilling in assets creation, execution principles and unlocking meaningful expression of SHG's work.

7. Conclusion

Human & social capital, community assets, leadership and resources will be built through participatory planning and embedded ownership in planning, implementation and monitoring that fosters environment of sustainable innovative enterprise. Our models will unleash the capabilities of SHGs to generate meaningful livelihoods and enable them to come out of poverty and establish models to scale up across Uttar Pradesh. Recognizing and celebrating exemplary SHGs as Change Agents at block, district, state level and national level will boost morale for taking initiatives and fostering relationships based on trust and common interests. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be collected in consultation with inline Government Department to measure impact of interventions. Brand building of SHG produce by enhancing the visibility in the marketplace and also expediting the business revenue through the implementation of social media and e marketing training & support. Furthermore, the products of the SHG have to be patented. The success stories to be published in terms of articles in newspapers/magazines/books.

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