



Women.
Livelihood.
Power.

*Sru***na**

"No country can ever truly flourish if it stifles the potential of its women and deprives itself of the contributions of half of its citizens."

.....

Michelle Obama



Empowering Girls, Yet Suppressing Women.

A dichotomy exists in India.

Despite huge efforts to educate and empower girls, along with an increase in young working women, more and more married women are being held back in life – suppressed, unable to pursue fulfilling opportunities, and saddled by the burden of trying to juggle home, children and work.

Bound by domestic chores and regressive social norms, they are largely kept at home – often requiring the permission of family patriarchs to step out of the house. In addition, a culture exists which also sees a woman subordinate herself to the needs of the family.

Who is most severely affected? Women from low income groups, who lack the relevant skills, education and voice to carve out their own identity.

These women are being denied opportunities to work, learn and grow in life – their human potential stifled, along with the potential growth of local communities, enterprises and economies.

For women hold immense power – to create positive change in their families and communities, to contribute financially and to forge their own path in life.

That power is unlocked by her ability to pursue opportunities outside the home, earn her own income and stand on her own two feet. By being denied that power, she is held back in life, and everybody loses out as a result!

A woman is shown working at a sewing machine in a factory or workshop. The background is slightly blurred, showing other sewing machines and the industrial environment. The woman is focused on her work.

25%

of India's workforce is female

3/4

Indian women are not working outside home

Women in India spend upto

352 min / day

on unpaid domestic work, 577% more than men (52 minutes)

The Coronavirus Pandemic has pushed women back decades. Women faced the brunt of work during the lockdown whilst another pandemic emerged - escalating domestic violence.

The Transformative Power of Work.

Why is it so important for women to have the opportunity to work?

Work gives individuals a sense of purpose and self-worth. It helps improve individual and family finances, and it helps us connect socially.

When a woman works, something inside of her changes – a confidence and sense of worth begin to seed. And when she brings money into the household, the way she is treated within the family also changes – she is respected, supported, seen.

These changes unleash an unstoppable power in women which see them generate positive change for their children, families and their communities.

- **Women's Economic Empowerment = Women's Rights & Gender Equality**
- **Economically Empowered Women are More Likely to be Socially Empowered**
- **When More Women Work, Economies Grow**
- **Working Women Invest in Educating the Next Generation**



What is Holding Women Back?

1 Time Poverty

Indian women do the most unpaid domestic work of any country globally, except Kazakhstan. Tasks such as cooking, cleaning, fetching water and firewood are highly gendered, preventing women from pursuing further education, skills or employment opportunities.

2 Permission Culture

79.9% of women have to first ask for permission from a male family member, to seek medical care. 58% of women need permission to visit the local kirana (grocery) store and 51% of women are beaten up for leaving home without prior permission.

3 Social Standing

The default position is for Indian women not to work unless there is no other way for a family to make ends meet.

4 Stereotypes

The belief that a woman's place is in the home is reinforced by stereotypes in Bollywood, mass media and even school curricula.

5 Self-Perception & Deeply Internalized Gender Beliefs

Across all strata of Indian society, women themselves believe that they are capable of performing only certain types of jobs and that marriage must take precedence over anything else.

6 General Education

The nature of women's education tends to be generalist, rather than technical, so many women lack specific vocational skills or adequate digital literacy.

7 Other Factors

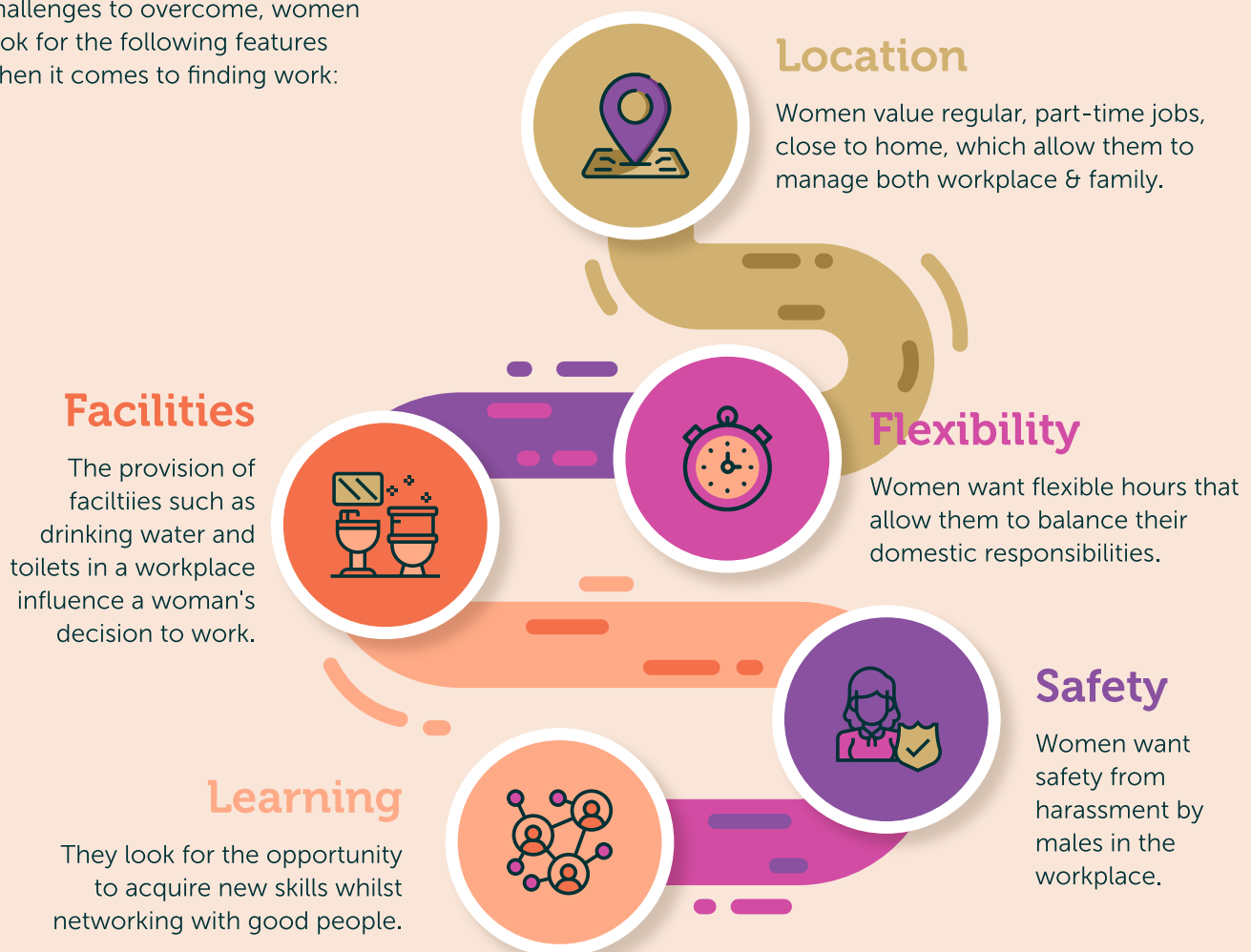
Lack of female-friendly public and private toilet facilities and public transport, fears of violence and harassment, and poor enforcement of sexual harassment laws also hinder women going to work.

And so we see Indian women with moderate levels of education (10 to 12 years of schooling) withdrawing from pursuing economic opportunities in life.



Key Factors That Impact Employment Seeking

With so many restrictions and challenges to overcome, women look for the following features when it comes to finding work:

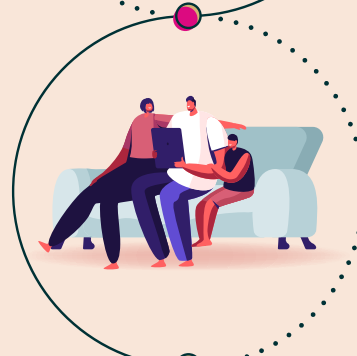


Purpose for Earning a Livelihood?

A livelihood means different things to different people. And for Srujna's 'power women', their driving force for working and earning is a mix of the following:



Better education for their children



Financial security for oneself & family



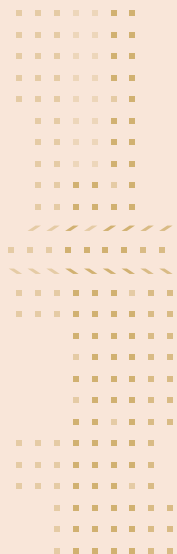
Increase in self-worth, respect, dignity or confidence



Socializing (getting out of the house)



Saving for the future



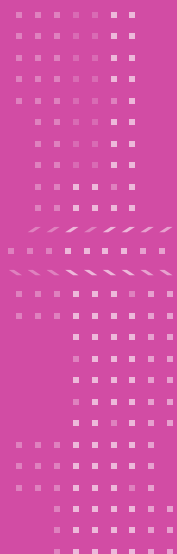
ENTER SRUJNA

For the thousands of stifled women in low income communities across the country, Srujna is the key to unlocking their power!

Srujna touches their lives, by transforming the many groups that work with grassroots women – helping create powerful, enterprising women that produce and sell hand-made products.

Together, they provide livelihood opportunities to these low income women - empowering them to become role models and changemakers in their families and communities.

To date, Srujna has impacted **6500** women through **44** groups!





Vision

Women in India prosper through meaningful work that allows them to balance their domestic responsibilities, with opportunities for social and economic empowerment

Mission

Srujna builds the capabilities of grassroots organisations and the women they work with. By investing in organisation building, injecting business acumen, upgrading quality and production infrastructure and providing market linkages, we generate livelihoods, create women entrepreneurs and build enterprises.



Transforming Groups Into Enterprises

Across India, thousands of grassroots organisations are mobilising women from low income families – forming Self Help Groups and encouraging them to make products for income generation. Many of these groups however are fledgling. They lack the business savvy, expertise and skills to foster success - ultimately impacting the earning potential of women.

SRUJNA harnesses the potential of these groups by building their capacity - taking them on a journey to becoming 'high performing' enterprises that provide profitable livelihoods to women.

Srujna provides two crucial types of investments:



1 'Make' Program

Srujna invests in the necessary infrastructure and training to help women produce high quality products that can sell in the market. They foster leadership, business acumen, financial literacy and soft skills to draw out the enterprising savvy in each and every woman!

2 'Market' Program

Srujna finds new markets for women to sell their products – connecting them to consumers, increasing the demand for handmade goods and bolstering earning capacity in the process.

Make.

Srujna works with women's groups who make handmade utility products, including:



Textiles

Tote bags, canvas packaging bags, slings, masks and potlis



Jewellery

Imitation, and fabric jewellery



Food

Indian snacks, papad and sweets



Hand-Crafts

Bamboo speakers, bamboo trays, terracota diyas and ceramic fridge magnets

By upskilling/reskilling women, strengthening infrastructure and injecting business acumen, Srujna revitalises these groups into vibrant livelihood hubs and enterprises in low income communities.

Over a 3-4 year period Srujna forms production groups and takes them on a journey from being an 'informal group,' to being a fully-fledged 'professional production unit' and 'profitable enterprise.'

Level 1

Build the Foundation for Production

Level 2

Develop a Production Group

Level 3

Create a Production Unit

Level 4

Generate Enterprise Strategy

From 'Surviving' to 'Thriving'

In an effort to survive in 'maximum city,' Abukarni Mohammed kickstarted a social enterprise that grew from 8 lacs in 1997 to 80lacs today – taking 35 women from his slum community in Vakola, along with him on his journey to success!

Originally from Madurai in Tamil Nadu, Abukarni Ji moved to Mumbai with his 3 brothers - all tailors - who decided to work together and build a business to keep a roof over their heads. As demand for their cushion covers, purses and dresses grew, the brothers decided to train 3 local women to help them. And 'Ghar Udyog' was born.

Started in 1996, the SHG social enterprise initially did a turnover of around 8-10lacs annually - but it wasn't until they met Srujna in 2010, that business took off.

"Srujna helped us build a profitable social enterprise – teaching us book keeping and accounts, along with how to make new, fashionable product styles, such as cloth jewellery." He said.



Can we shift this sentence to the bottom of the other column and start this column with 'Women like Masurda Khan who came to Aburkani Ji at just 16 after the death of her father and the responsibility for looking after the family fell on her shoulders. Today, at 24 years of age and with an income of Rs. 20,000 per month, she has educated her younger brothers and even secured her own house!

With a vision for the enterprise to support 50 women, Aburkani Ji is passionate about helping women work. "I taught them to sew, and they taught me hindi in return – you can't survive in Bombay without it!" he laughs.

Market.

With the women enterprises producing high quality products, Srujna then helps these groups find markets to sell their products in – connecting them to buyers, generating bulk orders and identifying new marketing channels.

By building strong market linkages and generating platforms to enhance sales, Srujna helps provide a continuous stream of orders and revenue to groups, which ultimately bolsters incomes for women.

We do this by:



Raising Awareness of Handmade Products to Large Buyers



Participating in Exhibitions



Facilitating Large Orders ie Retail / e-commerce



Creating a Catalogue to Promote Products

Jewellery, By

Nuzhat Innovations

'Nuzhat Innovations' is the brainchild of Nuzhat Hamdare – a 37yo woman who overcame cerebral palsy, epilepsy and the stigma that goes with that, to start her own jewellery enterprise!

Working hand in hand with her mother Meena, Nuzhat kickstarted her brand in 2001, making bespoke costume jewellery which Meena sold at small Kitty Parties among friends.

However all that changed in 2011 when they met Srujna, who opened up a world of opportunities to sell and market their products. And 'Nuzhat Innovations' took off.

"Srujna helped us connect with the MNC market who host company exhibitions - in fact one time we had 4 exhibitions in one day which was a challenge, but we did it – bringing home over Rs 15,000 as a result." Meena said.



"They also helped train us to market our products – how to use the computer, social media and email." She said. "Also how to take beautiful photographs of the products which they are helping develop into a catalogue to showcase our goods." She said.

And business has been booming – helping Nuzhat earn up to Rs. 9,000 per month.

How does she spend her hard earned money? This Srujna 'power woman' self-financed a 40 day pilgrimage to Haj for her and her mother!

Now that's what we call women's livelihood power!

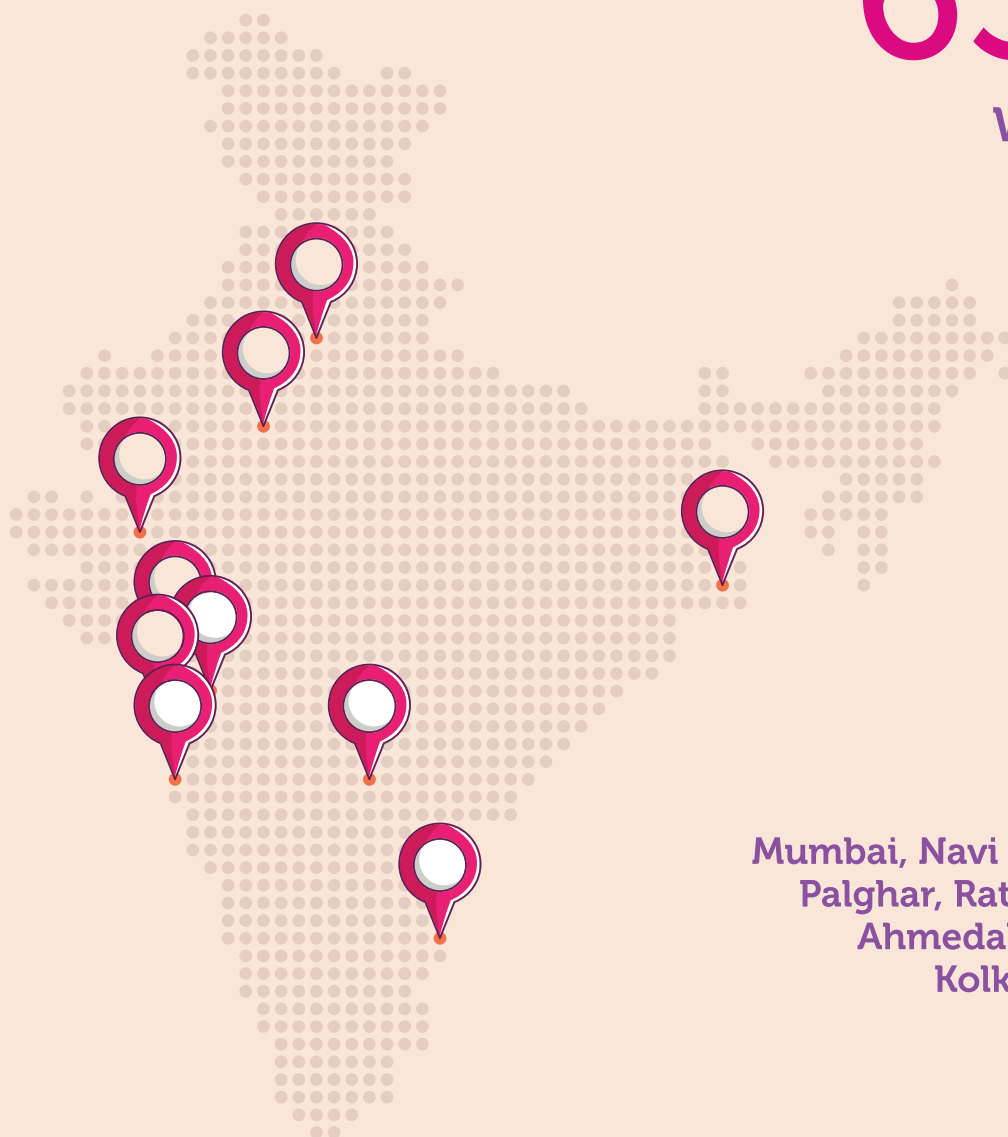


44

Grassroot
Organisations

6500

Women



Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Thane,
Palghar, Ratnagiri, Chennai,
Ahmedabad, Hyderabad,
Kolkata, Jaipur, NCR

Srujna Makes an Impact



6500

women
earning a
livelihood



70%

of the women are
earning a sustainable
income to support
the education needs
their children

90%

of the women
are earning a
steady income



44

Women's
Groups have
expanded their
their revenues
up to 20 times



Group turnover
is enhanced by
an average of

300-500%

and even up to
2000%



Group size
expands by

10 to even
100 times

Group leadership
team is built & key
leadership in place



Groups can
independently
generate orders
and business





80%

of Srujna
women can
travel on
their own

65%

are confident
of handling
challenges



60%

of the women
believe that
gender based
violence is
not-acceptable



25%

of women are able to voice their opinions when any decision is to be taken



50%

the women were able to reduce time devoted to care responsibilities



25-35%

of the women are actively championing Srujna and enrolling more women into the program

From Housewife to Serial Entrepreneur



Kiran Badhe went from being a mother and housewife, to a serial entrepreneur in the span of just 15 years – training over 8000 women to earn a livelihood along the way!

Kiran's journey began stitching frocks for her two daughters. When women admired her work, she decided to teach them how to do it for themselves – kickstarting 'Kiran's Creative Classes' to teach tailoring as a livelihood to women.

As her students began to produce more and more garments and bags, Kiran ventured into marketing to sell the goods. But it was difficult as many products lacked the finishing required to meet the needs of consumers. That's when she met Srujna.

"Srujna helped us professionalise – enhancing the quality of our products and giving us the skills to sell them to brands like Natures Basket and Be Friend – going digital, learning public speaking and speaking english." she said.

As the number of women grew, she formalised by forming Samruddhi Mahila Seva Sanstha - a women's SHG enterprise that makes and sells tailored products like bags and pouches.

Srujna also gave her the confidence to dream big. From 1 SHG with 15 women in 2005 to 175 SHGs with 1750 women in 2020, Kiran has grown an empire! Today her tribe of women have diversified - making jewellery, rakhis and a variety of other goods. She has even taken her goods international – selling at the Mauritius Trade Fair.

Where once she was reliant on her husband, today her husband works for her! She has also financed the education of her daughters, both engineers, and today they work at Infosys – the next generation of power women!



Srujna 'Power Woman of the Year' Awards

In 2015, Kiran was the recipient of the first ever Srujna Power Woman of the Year Award.

Every year, the 6500 women from Srujna wait with baited breath to see who will be crowned as the Srujna 'Power Women of the Year!'

In a glittering ceremony, 5 Power Women are awarded for the impact they have created – on their own life, the life of their families and their communities.

Donors, celebrity supporters, volunteers and Srujna's Power Women, all come together to celebrate and applaud the significance of these powerful, enterprising women.

The Srujna Advantage

Srujna is different. And we pride ourselves in the unique things that set us apart from the pack of other organisations working with women:

1 Program addresses a very key gap in the sector

We address the gap between skill training being provided to women, and the ability to transform it into a livelihood and microenterprise.

2 Model for sustainable impact

Our program invests in building the crucial pillars of sustainability of a microenterprise - its leadership, production infrastructure, product quality, business acumen and marketing.

3 Great places to work

Our program model transforms each production centre into 'great places to work' for women, with a positive and supportive work culture.

4 Scalable and replicable program model

We have adapted to the new norms of work during the pandemic, that can be scaled and implemented across geographies.

5 Market linkages

We generate numerous exhibition opportunities and orders from large and diverse clientele for handmade goods – Corporate houses, designers, retail chains, e-commerce websites and small businesses.

6 Implementation expertise

We have strong experience and implementation expertise, having worked in diverse and challenging communities.

7 Evidence based approach

Our robust monitoring and evaluation systems capture data on key variables of the socio-economic transformation of the women.

8 Financial systems

We provide real time information on cash flows, income and expenses of the women's groups undergoing the Srujna programs.



Vision 2025

We are on a mission to:

Transform

1000

**new women led community
based organisations, across
the country, into viable
enterprises**

Empower over

5000

women!

Let's Back Our Women

In 2015, world leaders put gender equality and the empowerment of girls/women squarely at the top of international and development agendas. This is not only important in its own right, but is an essential ingredient for eradicating poverty.

Every sector of the economy benefits when women are empowered, and every sector must play a part if there is to be any chance of a sustainable future.

The pandemic has pushed women back decades, erasing some of the gains made over the last decade. The need to empower our women is even greater now.

We at Srujna are doing our part.

What are you doing to support women in India?



You can Buy Products from Us:



Host an exhibition of handmade products



Select from our range of handmade products for gifting and packaging

Awards

Inspire (Parivartan) Award

by Brit World Wide

Potential for largest Social Impact

by Rotary Club of
Seattle & University of Washington

Alumni Achievement Award

for Social Impact
by NMIMS & KPMG

51 Most Impactful Social Innovators

(Global Listing)

Accreditations & Certifications

- FCRA
- 80G TAX EXEMPTION
- GUIDESTAR TRANSPARENCY KEY
- NITI AYOOG
- BSE SAMMAAN
- ACUMEN ACCELERATOR PROGRAM



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