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*Sahakarita Volume 5
July 2023*



“I am extremely happy that our work is available online now! I had never imagined this was possible. Knowing that our work is in demand, I want to enhance my skills and make sure more women get work.”

Heenaben,
Board member & Artisan,
Abodana Handicraft Cooperative

Welcome!

Hello,

Welcome to Sahakarita – SEWA Cooperative Federation’s bi-monthly digital publication. We work as a Women’s Enterprise Support System, promoting and supporting grassroots women’s enterprises. Through this newsletter we bring to you our work, stories of grassroots women’s collective enterprises, their needs, and their contribution to the economy.

The theme of the fifth volume of our newsletter is digital inclusion to achieve gender equality. Through this volume, we want to focus on the opportunities that digital innovation and technology have for women in the informal economy and their collective businesses.

We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we have enjoyed putting it together! If you would like to partner with us or support us, do get in touch. And if you find this volume valuable, please share it on social media.

“

Any such technology push must suit the advantages of women's agility, equitability, accountability, transparency and responsibility. These are the virtues of women...”

Osama Manzar,
Founder-Director
Digital Empowerment Foundation
Ashoka Senior Fellow



We had a conversation with Osama Manzar, Founder and Director of the Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) and Senior Ashoka Fellow. Since 2002, Manzar has made it his mission to teach Indians to use the Internet and create livelihoods by setting up the digital infrastructure roadmap for rural India, one based on community-led ownership and enterprise. He is a leader in eradicating information poverty from India and the Global South using digital tools.

[Read The Full Interview](#)



Understanding the Care Economy : *SEWA Cooperative Federation at the World Economic Forum 2023 Annual Meet*

“

During the COVID-19 pandemic, women faced a lot of stress because when men could get back to work, women couldn't until much later. Childcare centres were shut, and there was no support for their care work.”

Mirai Chatterjee,
Chairperson
SEWA Cooperative Federation

The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting convened in January 2023 discussed gender parity through empowering the global south. Currently, the gender parity gap stands at 132 years. During a panel on 'The \$11 Trillion Opportunity in the Care Economy,' Mirai Chatterjee, Chairperson of the SEWA Cooperative Federation, highlighted the falling female workforce participation rate as one of the biggest challenges plaguing India.

[Read The Full Article](#)



Bridging the Gap : *Harnessing the Power of Data*

Despite the increasing feminisation of agriculture, many women farmers remain unaware of the schemes meant for their benefit. This article explores how data can be harnessed to bridge the knowledge gap amongst women farmers

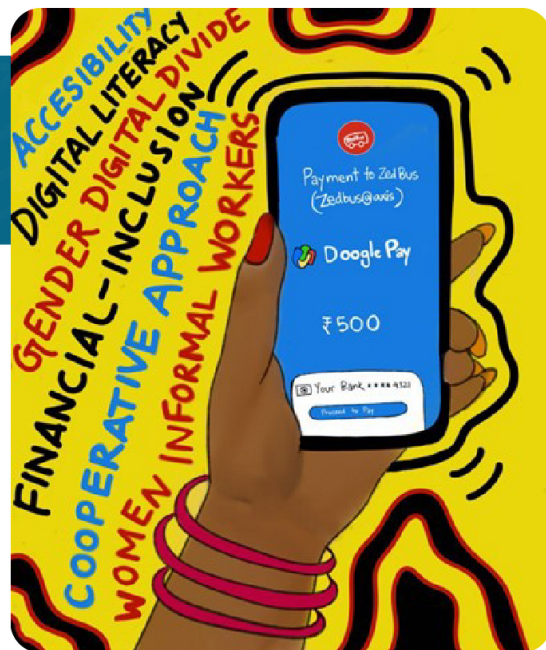
Eighty per cent women working in the agriculture sector in India, have a legal landholding and ownership of as little as 13.95 per cent. Several limitations govern their full participation in the sector. Since modern farming equipment is expensive, it becomes inaccessible, which, in turn, reduces the quality of output. Despite the increasing feminisation of agriculture, according to various agriculture census data points, many women farmers remain unaware of the schemes meant for their benefit.

[Read The Full Article](#)

Digital Financial Inclusion : *The Way Forward*

Understanding how women are at a triple disadvantage when it comes to accessing digital financial tools and how that can be mitigated through a cooperative model.

Digital financial services serve as crucial tools for enhancing financial inclusion, especially for women in the informal economy. By overcoming obstacles such as exorbitant costs, geographical limitations, lack of transparency, these innovative services can cater to the unique



“Mobile network in most of the villages in Tapi District is very weak. Only in Vyara town, it is good. But the majority of our farmers and aagewans live and work in the villages, which causes them a lot of trouble.”

Ravinaben
Manager,
Megha Tribal Women Farmers' Cooperative

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From the Archives



Since its inception, Video SEWA has been using video as a development communication tool to bring technology into the hands of grassroots communities. It has been instrumental in forging the SEWA ideology by capturing various facets of the movement and foregrounding its members' voices. Video SEWA's members are self-employed women workers - vendors, handcart pullers, bidi workers, garment workers, block printers, dye workers, agricultural labourers, homemakers, and childcare workers.

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Bulletin Board

- Mirai Chatterjee, Chairperson, SEWA Cooperative Federation was part of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2023 at Davos sharing her experience on collectives and the care economy. We received the first collective social innovation award with WIEGO Global on January 18, 2023.
- Priyanka Raja, Communications Manager, SEWA Cooperative Federation & Lata Gamit, Farmer & board member, Megha Tribal Women Farmers' Cooperative conducted a session on cooperatives at IIM Bangalore for the MGNF (Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship) fellows on January 18, 2023.
- Jaya Vaghela, Consultant, SEWA Cooperative Federation addressed women's cooperatives on the opportunities of the digital age at an International Women's Day celebration organised by the Gujarat State Cooperative Union on March 03, 2023.
- SEWA Cooperative Federation organised digital marketing training sessions for Megha Tribal Women Farmers' Cooperative, Homecare Cooperative, Saundarya Cleaning Cooperative, Abodana Handicraft Cooperative, and Trupti Nashta Cooperative on March 04, 2023.

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