

SEWA Bharat building solidarity and spreading an all-India movement

History and Inception

SEWA's experience in Gujarat encouraged workers in other states as well. Thus, SEWA organizations were set up for informal women workers in other states. Currently SEWA is active in eight states of India. Together these sister SEWA's form SEWA Bharat, a Federation, with the mandate to highlight the issues of women working in the informal sector, and to strengthen the capacity of the different organizations that serve them. SEWA Bharat is India's largest membership - based organization for women working in the informal sector.

Mission

SEWA Bharat is a Federation of membership-based organizations of women workers. It is committed to strengthening the movement of women in the informal economy by highlighting their at issues the national level and building its member organizations' capacity to empower them.

A brief report for the year 2005

The major activities undertaken by SEWA Bharat in the year 2005 are as follows:

1. Collaboration with the Indian School of Micro finance for Women (ISMW), Ahmedabad: SEWA Bharat entered an agreement with ISMW for conducting need -based training for members and leaders of savings groups. A workshop for assessing training needs was conducted in Delhi, in which all the SEWAs participated. It was also agreed to conduct trainings for workers and leaders from various SEWAs throughout the country saving groups leaders from SEWA Delhi and Madhya Pradesh and around 100 leaders from Munger have participated in such trainings held so far.
2. A workshop to develop a strategy and work plan for various SEWAs was conducted in the month of February.
3. The micro finance team of SEWA Bharat stayed in regular contact with the corresponding teams of all the other SEWAs and they together worked on developing, understanding and implementing the MIS system for micro finance.
4. SEWA Mela as in previous years, a SEWA Mela was organized this year in the Aga Khan Hall of Delhi on the 21st, 22nd and 23rd of November. Products from all the various SEWAs were exhibited there. A total of Rs. 1,55,068 worth of our products were sold, giving members income, as well as exposure to urban markets.
5. Insurance: SEWA Bharat and Vimo SEWA work together to ensure risk coverage for members. The numbers of women insured in 2005 are given below.



Table 6.1
Insurance Membership in SEWA Bharat

Region / State	No. of insured
Delhi	283
Bikaner	530
Bhagalpur	266
Munger	368
Lucknow	100
Indore	1,386
Chhatarpur	650
Total	3,583

6. Other activities

In the year 2005 SEWA Bharat conducted a pilot project with ILO with an emphasis on employment issues, micro finance, social security and capacity building for the women from the unorganized sector. Based on the implementation of this project SEWA Bharat in collaboration with ILO, is planning to introduce a four year-long program.

This year SEWA Bharat has developed a system for keeping accounts efficiently. Under this system the person involved with a particular program or project is responsible for it's reporting every month with the help and guidance of our accounts department. This helps in keeping track of the performance and the expenditure of a program or a project.

SEWA Bharat has been engaged in supporting and developing new SEWAs. SEWA Delhi, SEWA Bikaner and SEWA Murshidabad are three such new organizations. The management and evaluation of various programs in these three SEWAs is done from the Delhi office of SEWA Bharat. Micro finance is one of the major activities. This year's results are shown in the table below.

Table 6.2
Microfinance activity in SEWA Bharat

Microfinance	Delhi	Bikaner	Murshidabad
Number of groups	33	49	35
Number of members	362	600	380
Savings (Rs.)	10,33,480	5,57,073	73,780
Loan disbursed (Rs.)	7,95,500	5,43,450	38,300

SEWA Bharat has taken up the responsibility of developing SEWA Munger and SEWA Bhagalpur into strong unions. Various programs of the two SEWAs are assisting in this process.

Table 6.3
Union membership in SEWA Bharat

Membership	Delhi	Bikaner	Bhagalpur	Munger
Union	1,261	850	1,700	1,634

