

Digitally Empowering Women



19 years old Uma Parwari is a resident of Soso village at Navagad Panchayat, Getalsud cluster, Angada block of Ranchi district in Jharkhand.

Uma with her parents and two brothers was living in abject poverty and was leading a very vulnerable life. Her father was a farmer and their income was seasonal. All the other four members of the family were dependent on their father's

earning, which was not regular. The condition was so pathetic that they were not able to have sufficient food for the family. The poor family condition and the absence of money compelled Uma to leave her studies after matriculation. Uma sacrificed her studies for the education of her brothers, however, in the corner of her heart, she wants to study and achieve something significant.

In the year 2012, during the month of July, a ray of hope came in her life in the form of Self Help Group (SHG). The motivation and the success stories of external Community Resource Persons (e-CRPs) from Andhra-Pradesh, made Uma hopeful. This led her to become the member of **Jan Kalyan Mahila Swayam Sahayata Samuh**, running under the convergence of JSLPS.



For exploring livelihood opportunities; Uma took the first loan of Rs.10,000 from her SHG in order to buy a sewing-machine and commenced tailoring business. This started a small but regular income flow. With financial security, the confidence of Uma increases. When the prior need of having proper food for her and family achieved, Uma moved towards accomplishing her next objective of

continuing education. She took Rs.20, 000, as second loan amount from the SHG and utilized it for taking admission in College. Afterwards, again, she took Rs. 10,000 for fulfilling the other educational needs.

SHG along with strengthening her economic and financial condition also provided her various capacity building training through JSLPS. She got SHG training of Model 1, 2 and 3 and also got Book-Keeper training for maintaining the SHG books of records. Started as a Book-keeper, **Uma adds another feather to her hat, when she was selected for Master Book-keeper (MBK), in the year 2014.** She got 7 days training for MBK at Saptrishi Seva Sadan, Ranchi. This training was unique for her, as for the very first time in her life; she was introduced to technology based training. Uma was trained to upload data via real time system on the Management Information System (MIS), **“Swalekha”** of JSLPS. For the purpose, she was given a tablet. Uma had never seen a tablet before; she was very excited to use it. Owning a tablet and operating it was like a dream for her.

Presently, Uma has 10 SHGs, whose data; she is uploading on “Swalekha”. Besides this, she is also showing informational and educational videos which are based on the importance of SHGs, goatry and agricultural practices to the women of her community. Remembering the old days, **Uma said. “Once this tablet, which was like a wonder to me, is now my strength. Now, I am the “Tablet wali didi” of my village.”**

Talking about the impact of tablet and technology on Uma and the society some of the SHG didis shared their experiences.

Rina Devi of Maa Swayam Sahayata Mahila Samuh told – “Uma is inspiration for us and for the young girls of our village. She operates tablet very easily and also motivates us to use it.”

Another woman **Laxmi Devi of Maa Bhawan Mahila Swayam Sahayata Samuh said – “in case of any assistance regarding livelihood and other important information, we go to Uma, she through various videos, give us the required information”.**

Uma’s SHG has been now connected to Soso Mahila Aajeevika Gram Sangthan, which is expanding various other opportunities.

Uma is earning a monthly income of Rs. 2,000 as MBK, continuing her tailoring business and also doing goatry. She is living her dreams of perusing higher education and is studying in Kamla Nehru Inter College at Angara. She is the Second year student of B.A honors.

Talking about her future plans, Uma wants to complete her education and also wants to learn computer. She is now in a very happy state of mind; in her words, “SHG is like my mother. I have never imagined this life for me, I am feeling very nice.” Everyone at her village is startled and happy to see Uma’s journey as a tablet didi.