

Stories and Demands of HBW members  
of  
SEWA ACADEMY



Name : Rekhaben Mahawer  
Age: 32 years  
Place of Residence: Rakhiyal,  
Ahmedabad  
Type of Work: Incense stick roller  
(by hand)

Rekhaben has studied till class five. And, has been working for the past 14 yrs. She prepares 5,000 incense sticks per day and earns INR 70. She works from 12 noon to 6 in the evening. Without her wooden board she will not be able to prepare the incense sticks, so the wooden board is most important. The raw materials are supplied by the trader and the finished product is taken by the same trader. Her husband is a factory worker, and she has two children who have been enrolled into a school. After finishing all her household work she works as an incense stick roller.

“My demand as a home-based worker is increase in wages, as rolling incense stick requires a lot of hard work.”



Name : Jiviben Mangaldas Parmar

Age: 65 years

Place of Residence: Behrampura, Ahmedabad

Type of Work: Garland making

This work starts early in the morning, at 5 a.m., when Jiviben brings flowers from the unloading truck. She has been making garlands for the past 25 years. For making garland needle and thread is the most important tool for her without it will be difficult to make garland. This needle is used with thread; flowers one by one are pierced in a thread to give the desired shape to the garland. This work is generally available twenty days a month. During festive season, she procures raw material and delivers finished garlands multiple times in a day. She sometimes feels insecure, as the plastic flowers have started replacing her handmade fresh garlands.

“My demand as a home-based worker is that the health policy should be formed keeping workers like us in mind, as our eyes, back and hands get affected.”



Name : Ratanben Ashokbhai Vaghela

Age: 48 years

Place of Residence: Ganeshnagar, Amraiwadi,  
Ahmedabad

Type of Work: Piece rate worker (tie knot to  
mat)

Ratanben is illiterate. She has been working as a piece rate workers from the age 12. She has four children; three boys and one girl. Her husband was working in the cotton mill but now is unemployed. Her sons are daily wage labourers.

She is a piece rate employee who cut threads of mats. She cuts long mats of 10 to 15 kgs and makes them into small mats by cutting and then tying knots. Occupational health hazards include frequent back pain and straining of eyes.

“My demand as a home-based worker is to have health benefits for garment workers which look into the specific occupational health hazards faced by us.”



Name : Priyankaben Vinodkumar Maru

Age: 24 years

Place of Residence: Keshavnagar, Sabarmati, Ahmedabad

Type of Work: Tailoring work on Zuki machine, wholesale work from sub-contractor-stitching jeans, kurtas and other cotton garments

Priyankaben is a home based garment worker. She lives with her husband, two children and her in-laws. Her husband has studied law and works in the Gujarat High Court. While her father-in law works at a factory.

Priyankaben used to work in a garment factory and earned INR 40 per day. She learnt how to use Zuki Machine at the factory. Thereafter, she started working from home stitching jeans/ pants . Now, she earns INR 80 per day. She works for 4 hours daily.

The contractor is a lady named Minaben. She shares a good working relationship with her. They talk over phone once in a week. She often has to travel to the contractor for getting raw material and providing the finished product.

“The payment of the work is only done after the material goes forward from the sub contractor to the next part of the supply chain. My demand as a garment worker is timely payment when the finished product is handed over to the contractor.”



Name : Amarba Himmat Singh Vaghela  
Age: 55 years  
Place of Residence: Noblenagar,  
Ahmedabad  
Type of Work: Papad making

From the last 17 years, Amarba has been working as a papad maker. The work involves a lot of labor and patience. Amarba starts her work at 8'o clock in the morning, when she goes to a factory to collect the dough and starts rolling from 10 in the morning. She makes 5 kg papad on a daily basis. Due to sitting continuously in the same position, her back is slightly bent and she suffers from frequent pain.

“My demand as a papad maker is minimum wages and appropriate health benefits.”



My name is Nafisabanu Sarfarajkhan Pathan. I am 24 years old and stitching garments. I earning INR 1,500 per month. I have been a member of SEWA for the last five years. I have received Member Education training and also participated in the literacy class of SEWA Academy. There are four members in our family and our monthly family income is INR 6,500. We are living at Bareja village.

I was illiterate before joining the literacy class. When I got married, our financial situation was very poor and so I started stitching garments. As I was illiterate I could not use measuring tape in the stitching work. I used *billas* (hand measurement) for measurement. Therefore I could not charge as per the market rate. Now after studying in the literacy class I can use measuring tape in the stitching work. Because of it I can take perfect measurements and now I am charging more as per the market rate for the stitching work.

“My demand as a home-based worker is regular work and subsidy for purchase of work tools or machines.”