

Bridging the gap through Hands-on Science & Technology Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Programme (STED)

Project, Bharuch, Gujarat, India (Case studies)

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Abstract. *About STED Project: Waking up to the routine course of the daily life, managing home, children and abusive alcoholic husband is the story of almost every woman in many villages in tribal areas of Bharuch, South Gujarat, India. The region is characterised by low agricultural productivity and very low economic activity. My organisation, Manthan is working in this area on Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Development (STED) project supported by National S&T Entrepreneurship Development Board of Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. During this project Manthan has empowered several women to setup their own micro enterprises through S&T intervention.*

Keywords. STED Project, Development, Manthan

1. Introduction

Manthan has been working on this project since four years. For STED Bharuch project Manthan formed the core-planning group to develop methodologies for implementation of this programme. The group comprised of EDP trainers, marketing experts and rural technologies' specialists, bankers, training material developers, communicators, social scientists, field workers and government functionaries. The planning for developing methodologies was done through interaction, consultations, seminars, and workshops. The activities were categorised into three segments:

- Survey and preparations for training (Pre training)
- Launching of Science & Technology Training Programme (Training)
- Launching the Micro enterprise & Follow up action (Post Training)

Outcome of the project:

Unit Established by women entrepreneurs in last 3 years by S&T Interventions

Sr. No	Year	Units by female	Employment Generated
1	2005 - 2006	31	209
2	2006 - 2007	36	231
3	2007 - 2008	24	190

Case Studies:

Case Study – 1

Need for Hands-on Science & Technology

Village: Koop, Bharuch District, Gujarat

Problem: During the survey we found that the village couples were provided fishing nets through a Govt. Scheme. But many times the nets were torn off over a period of time, so suddenly their economic activity was suffered.



Fig. 1. Women SHG members repairing fishing nets

When we had survey meeting with the women of Koop village, a woman namely Jamnaben stood up and told about this problem to us. Our motivator thought of organising a Hands-on Science & Technology training of repairing these torn off fishing nets under the leadership of Jamnaben. A small indigenous gadget normally used in coastal area was introduced to the beneficiaries of jungle area. The group of woman

were taught to make the gadget by themselves and were also taught to repair the fishing nets. A woman group formed a SHG and started saving some money. Today these women are economically independent. Now, they have better social status.

Case Study – 2 Concept of Technology

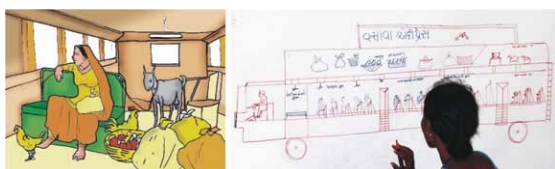


Fig. 2. Vasava Tribal SHG member designing concept of her own bus (Vasava Express)

Village: Nivalda, Narmada, Gujarat

In a workshop in Nivalda, a woman participant had observed:

“Technology to me means a cotton cloth, which I can put to different uses, to cover my baby, to make a cradle for my baby, to tie up seeds collected and even to tie up the fodder/fire wood which I bring back home”.

Another woman participant had said:

“Technology to me means a bus designed without seats in such a way that I could carry vegetable baskets, goats, hens, etc. for sale in the city markets where they fetch a better price. It is very inconvenient in a sari to climb and keep the produce on the bus roof. I do not mind not having seats as I can easily stand or sit on the floor of the bus”.

Case Study – 3 New perception of role of Women



Fig. 3. Young SHG members illustrating role of 'today's women using technology' during work shop

Some SHG members illustrated role of ‘Today’s Women’ in the development of the society. They were also aware of the existence of stereotyped attitudes towards women and importance of technology in their work.

Case Study – 4 Smarter Spouse of Rajasthan... but.....



Fig. 4. This case study is role played by STED members during the training workshops (Adopted from Gender & Technology Manual, Developed & Designed by Manthan, Project supported by Science & Society Division of DST, Govt. of India)

Importance of Involving Spouses during Hands-on Science & Technology Training Programmes

A women’s training programme for fabrication of solar photovoltaic lamps was underway in rural Rajasthan. On a visit expert were interacting with these women trying to know how this new skill gained was benefiting them both in terms of enhanced incomes as well as enhanced self image. One young woman frankly told the experts that though she has benefited in terms of enhanced income she experienced domestic violence at home when she rectified a fuse which had blown. Her husband frightened of electricity thought she had become a little too smart since she could now do things which he could not do. This was too much for his male ego. On being asked the wise among women gave two suggestions. The first was not to show how much you know in the home rather to behave in a docile and ignorant manner to keep gender equations intact the other was that the male folk also to be included in the programme so that they know and understand what the women are learning. The second suggestion that worked, was, though the programme was only for women, informally men were also involved.

