The Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP) is a sub-scheme under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. SVEP aims to build an ecosystem that creates, nurtures and sustains rural entrepreneurs and thus brings the rural poor out of poverty.
The COVID-19 pandemic has almost put a grinding halt to the world’s economy. It has taken such a toll on the economy that the market is struggling to come to terms with the economic damage that the world has witnessed in decades. During this uncertain time, rural enterprises across India have also been impacted. But some of the entrepreneurs supported by EDII under SVEP have shown resilience and demonstrated that even in such tough and testing times, they can rise to the challenge and convert an adversary into an opportunity.

One such example is micro-entrepreneurs trained in stitching. They are the ones who are contributing immensely in the efforts to prevent COVID-19 spread by making face masks and supplying them to the local authorities, wholesalers and retailers. In this time of crisis, 39 CRP-EPs from 14 SVEP blocks worked in COVID-19 relief operations undertaken by the local administration. They supported the entrepreneurs in supply and distribution of masks, provided services in the free kitchen and food distribution to migrants and daily wagers. They also worked for the local authorities and contributed in spreading awareness and advisories related to COVID.

This edition focuses on activities carried out in the pre- and post-lockdown period and gives a glimpse of two outshining enterprises promoted under SVEP.

Mask Production Under SVEP

SHGs across the country have been facilitated to produce face masks to cater to the current need in their respective regions. Many SVEP enterprises also took up this activity as they also represent the community cadre. Around 483 enterprises (473 individual enterprises and 10 group enterprises) were promoted under SVEP.

About 7.8 lakh masks were produced by these enterprises. It has helped them to mitigate their losses during lockdown period by earning Rs 3-10 per mask. The masks produced were mainly supplied to the government hospitals, janpad panchayats, nagar panchayats, police departments, block and district administration, and local retailers.
Glimpses of SVEP in Media

Mask production by SVEP entrepreneurs covered by HariBhumi News, Kurud, Chhattisgarh

Tweet by NITI Aayog on mask production activity by SHGs of Jharkhand
POLISHING HIS WAY TO SUCCESS

As a true entrepreneur who identifies opportunities and converts them to his advantage, Pravinbhai also utilized the geographical location of his area and skill for his own benefit.

Being the eldest and the only earning member in a joint family comprising of 8 members, he knew the difficulty of sustaining the lives of so many people with his income from agriculture. In order to support his family, he decided to migrate to Surat in search of a job where he learned the art of diamond polishing. He joined a company and worked for five years. Seeing his skill and managerial qualities, he was promoted as the area manager in that company.

While being in job, his entrepreneurial consciousness kept constantly pulling him towards starting his own business. But due to financial crunch he was hesitant to do the same. Once during a festive season when he was back at his place, he got to interact with a CRP-EP during an SHG meeting which was conducted at his place. He got to know about the SVEP during that interaction.

It encouraged him to become an entrepreneur. Abiding by the criteria required to apply for SVEP support, a loan application for Rs. 1,00,000 was submitted to the BRC with the help of a CRP-EP. After scrutinization, BRC in consultation with DLM, BPM(SVEP) and Block Mentor approved a CEF of Rs.90,000.

With the loan received, he purchased machinery and started off with five machines and nine workers in Juna Malaknes village. It started so well that within few months he purchased five more new machines and employed around 24 more people. His entire staff work on hourly basis. He allows flexi-timing so that the youth of that area have an advantage to earn extra income from this venture.

He earns around Rs. 35,000 to 40,000 per month as a profit and is planning to set up another unit in a different location. His younger brothers are also involved in the business now. He is clear that he wants this business to flourish and to be taken up by his next generations.

“A diamond polishing unit in Khambha block

“SVEP has made my dream come true not only by providing the financial support but also by giving the exposure to business management skills which has polished me as an entrepreneur”

-Pravinbhai Chhothabhai Makvana, Shakti Jem’s & Diamond Polishing Center, Juna Malaknes, Khambha, Gujarat
The proverb, “alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”, proves true in the case of Jankalyan Swarojgar Samity, an SHG comprising homemakers from Manikchak village.

These enterprising homemakers were brought together to form an SHG under the Anandadhar Project. They started saving through panchasutra. As a result, they gained confidence and gradually started seeing difference in their lives. However, they felt that savings alone was not enough for their livelihood and that there had to be another source of income through enterprise creation. As one of their strengths was cooking, they decided to start their own canteen service. But the place was a concern. Soon, they came to know about a contract to run a canteen in Manikchak Block Hospital. Through their SHG leader Sabera Khatun, they approached the hospital authorities and got the contract. But as per the agreement, the cost of the first three months of food supply was to be borne by the SHG itself. Hence, due to lack of fund in the SHG, all the members decided to contribute Rs. 2,000 each for smooth functioning of the canteen. As they lacked experience and knowledge of handling a canteen or any other similar activities, they landed in debt. It demotivated many members of the SHG and they decided to stop the canteen. It was around this time that they came to know about SVEP being implemented in the block.

The hospital canteen in Manikchak block

After seeking the advice of a CRP-EP, a business plan was prepared and submitted to BRC. Janakalyan Swarojgar Samity was extended a financial support of Rs. 75,000/- as CEF after scrutiny by the BRC. Along with the CEF and EDP training received under the programme, they upgraded their skill of inventory management and record keeping which helped them in planning and running the canteen.

Regular monitoring by CRP-EP and entrepreneur hand book provided under the programme enabled them to control the wastage and other expenses so that they could earn more profit. It also empowered them to identify business opportunities. Now, they are planning to open another canteen in hospital premises for patients’ family members as there is no such facility inside the hospital or in nearby area.

The technical support received under the programme proved to be the game changer. Inventory management and record keeping were most useful concepts for us. Apart from that running this hospital canteen smoothly gives us all an ultimate satisfaction that we are playing our part in providing food to the ailing people.

-Jankalyan Swarojgar Samity, Group Enterprise, Hospital Canteen Services, Manikchak, West Bengal.
Field Highlights

Assam
Potential Entrepreneur Registration & Business Plan Appraisal is in process

Gujarat
BRC activities have been resumed in all the blocks. CRP-EPs selection process is in progress

Haryana
Activities related to mapping the effect of lockdown on SVEP enterprises are taken up by CRP-EPs in all the four blocks

Madhya Pradesh
Baseline Survey is being initiated in two new blocks - Sondwa & Thandla

Uttar Pradesh
BRC setup activities were undertaken in Mihinpurwa, Koraon, Dhanpatganj, Dhanapur, Sumerpur and Kadaura blocks

Maharashtra
CRP-EP selection and BRC formation is initiated in all the blocks namely Palghar, Kelapur, Kalamb and Shahapur

Chhattisgarh
CRP-EPs have started mapping affected enterprises during lockdown in all the blocks

Odisha
Field visit by CRP-EPs along with SRLM officials were conducted to look at the status of SVEP supported enterprises, post-lockdown

Jharkhand
New CRP-EPs have been selected in Kolibera and their SVEP orientation is in progress

West Bengal
PTS data collection and mobilization of CBOs conducted to analyse the post-lockdown situation in the field in all the blocks

Jammu & Kashmir
Revision in loan repayment schedule is being undertaken. This is being done to help entrepreneurs tide over losses due to lockdown
Reel from the Field

Mask Making Unit: Group Enterprise, Kurud, Chhattisgarh

BRC resumes its activities, Sahaspur, Uttarakhand

Distribution of “Essential Kit” to families by BRC, Lar, J&K

Training of data enumerators for baseline survey: Thandla & Sondwa Blocks, MP

Upcoming Activities

- Identification and revamping of SVEP enterprises affected during lockdown
- Compilation of PTS data and uploading on SVEP software
- Training of mentors on SVEP software
- DPR preparation in MP (4 blocks) & UP (3 blocks)
If you wish to contribute stories, photos, updates or anything related to SVEP, which you think can be covered in this monthly e-newsletter, please email details to us at svep.communication@ediindia.org. Also, your feedback on the content is welcome.