



Leaf Dish Making: Better Livelihood Option

Saikrupa Self Help Group

President: Smt. Sadhnaben Rameshbhai Patel

No. of SHG Members: 18

Village: Dhodhadkuva, Taluka: Kaparada, District: Valsad, Gujarat

Dhodhadkuva—a village of Valsad district is predominantly inhabited by tribal communities. The village is characterized by hilly terrains and high rainfall with severe soil & water erosion. The declining agricultural productivity has forced tribal families to seek some alternate off-farm activities to earn more with limited available resources. KVK, Valsad observed the felt needs of tribal women. Mostly farm women were engrossed to work at their doorsteps during leisure time. KVK, Valsad, Rural Technology Institute and BAIF guided the women for SHG formation. These institutions also created awareness about the opening of bank account, register maintenance, SHG activities etc. and also organized some trainings and exposure visits. As the village is a part of forest area, leaves of Khakharatree (*Butea monosperma*) are easily available.

KVK imparted the need based and skill oriented trainings on collection, storage and selection of leaves for dish/cup preparation, operating of machines and packing & marketing of products. SHG members decided to opt the leaf cup/dish preparation activity, which they learned during the exposure visit. Within short-period, group of 20 members enrolled as "Saikrupa SHG". SHG started with member fee of Rs.20 and regular monthly deposit of Rs.50 per member. Twelve members of SHG started joint venture. The group has earned Rs.2,58,800 during the span of three years. The average annual income of SHG is Rs.86,266. This activity is undertaken during winter season for 3 to 4 hours a day, and for 4 to 5 days in a week, apart from their routine work (only four months). Inspired from this, two more SHGs have been formed. Trained group members are also acting as trainers for others SHGs in the village. Now, the economical and social status of the SHG women and their family has improved.

