

Sanjha Prayas Ajeevika Karyakram Savda Ghevera Resettlement Colony

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Introduction

Savda Ghevera provides a marginal civic experience. Families that were resettled here were provided with a small plot of land of either twelve square meters or eighteen square meters size. Water arrives by tankers, which are irregular. The general health is compromised by the lack of any holistic sanitation strategy, and the site is so far from the city that commuting to work is both difficult and expensive. When the original residents from Yamuna Pusta, Nagla Machi, Khan Market and Airport arrived here in 2006, they found just barren land. It is difficult to imagine how these families managed to create a township in this far-flung place where nothing existed – no bus connectivity, no water supply, no drains and sewers, and most importantly, no livelihood opportunity (Figure 1). Home to around eight thousand families in

2008, it is likely to hold some twenty thousand families in the coming years, making it the biggest resettlement colony in Delhi. Faced with these conditions, residents were compelled to continue to commute to their old jobs in the city, at considerable cost. The insufficient economic opportunities affected the residents, particularly the womenfolk, who lost their jobs as domestic workers. Housing in Savda Ghevera is characterized by self-built poor quality housing ranging from *chattai* houses and one-storeyed *chadar* houses to consolidated simple two-level-and-roof-terrace lintel constructions built over time (Pictures 1 and 2).

Picture 1 and 2: Savda Ghevera in the year 2009



Figure 1: Challenges Faced in Order of Severity



Entry of CURE

Realizing the adverse conditions of people in Savda Ghevra, and prodded by the accompanying political and social hue and cry, the Government of Delhi associated the Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence (CURE) with Savda Ghevra in year 2008 under its 'Bhagidari' scheme to facilitate efficient delivery of basic services. This provided the opportunity for CURE to initiate its activities in Savda Ghevra.

Initially, CURE keenly observed the situation to assess the core problems of people and look for solutions. Livelihood emerged as a key priority in Savda Ghevra along with the need for a mode of transport for people to commute to the city. After working for a year with Bhagidari, CURE's initial breakthrough came when Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) agreed to start plying its bus fleet on the streets of Savda Ghevra. This was the first result of community work and persistent dialogue with the officials. By that time, CURE was beginning to be recognized for the efforts and work done with the Savda community. Aid came from the Jamshetji Tata Trust, a premier non-governmental organization (NGO) with the mandate of creating livelihood opportunities for people and promoting sustainable livelihoods among families for bringing about a significant reduction in their poverty levels.

Challenges faced by residents

Consultations with the community indicated that the major livelihood issue was the considerable distance of economic opportunities from the new site which affected all residents in every way. Men and women who continued to commute to their old jobs in the city bore a considerable cost on transportation. A survey showed that the family incomes fell by as much as 30%. People also lacked skills for seeking any new employment. Young children were forced out of school into work. There was an increase in dropouts from schools and the future employability among the young was being adversely affected. The situation was worsened due to the inadequate infrastructure in the settlements, i.e. water and power supply, transport and roads. All this was impairing the potential for micro-enterprise development. Apart from this, the lack of legal tenure and inability of the legal finance sector to recognize these people resulted in subsequent challenges, given the limited funds with CURE.

Initial interventions

With the objectives defined, CURE initiated its journey of setting up of micro-enterprises by igniting the minds of the community with the idea of livelihoods that could be managed by the people, especially women, from within their households in the time which they got after completing their daily chores. The concept was well received by a few people, who joined the efforts of CURE. Based on the skills, past experiences and willingness of people to start new enterprises, three micro-enterprises were set up

in the year 2009. One of the enterprises was bag making, the second was cookie making and third was door-to-door (D2D) waste collection. The first two were goods-based models and the third was a service-delivery enterprise. The D2D waste-collection enterprise was an instant success. The enterprise grew from a turnover of Rs. 2100 per month to Rs. 25000 per month in a span of two and a half years (**Picture 3**). On the other hand, the goods-based enterprises did not fare well, with reason. It was apparent that such enterprises required better market linkages, increased efficiency in production and better quality of products to be able to sustain. Over a year's time, CURE failed to sustain the goods-based enterprises. The cookie-making enterprise was discontinued. The bag-making enterprise suffered losses due to unacceptability of inferior quality products by the market and increased cost of material due to the distant location of markets.

Picture 3: D2D Waste Collector at Work



This failure underlined two lessons for CURE. One was the need to create better skills and craftsmanship in the groups. The other was to have good market linkups. CURE, therefore, set up a training cell for women, youth and children from Savda that enabled them to get training in their area of interest. This would allow them to be more stable once they entered into business. People were thus also provided with the choice to decide on their future endeavours.

Skill Training

A series of skill-training programmes were undertaken (**Table 1**). Certifications were provided by various professional institutions. Students who underwent skill training in marketing were clubbed as a group to link up enterprise groups to the market and bring important leads for the groups to get more orders. A placement cell was created to improve the absorption of the skilled labour in the market. Assessment of the market was done and all the possible activities and enterprises were explored.

Table 1: Details of Skill-training Programmes

Employment Training Detail	
Type of Training	Number of Candidates
Hospital Attendant Training Program	46
Mobile Repairing Trainees	8
Delhi Tourism	5
Screen Printing	14
Gym Instructor	9
Hair Dresser	7
Masons Training	72
Maruti Driving Training	16
Paper Plates making	7
Paper Bag making	24
Stitching and Cutting Training	10
Housekeeping	2
In-shop Demonstration	11
Information Technology Enabled Service	7
Electrician Training	4
Computer Training	5
Market Cell	6
Total	253

Strategy

Once the series of trainings and skill building of various groups was concluded, it was time for CURE to develop a strategy that would allow these groups to start their own enterprises. CURE once again looked out to people venturing into newer and unconventional models for livelihoods, e.g. D2D waste collection. In two years the D2D waste collection activity which was started with a capital of only Rs. 6000 had spread over five blocks, earning a decent Rs. 25000 per month. This demonstrated that service-delivery enterprises had a greater chance of succeeding in the long term.

While CURE was exploring various strategies to decide on the proper strategy to set up new enterprises, the concept of *interlinked livelihoods* emerged. This meant setting up of livelihoods which would complement the existing livelihoods of D2D waste collection and bag making. The idea behind this strategy (which worked successfully) was to interlink the limited resources existing in Savda so as to foster interdependence of the enterprises and at the same time create a safety net for these groups/enterprises. D2D waste collection was linked to a vermin-composting

unit that could process the organic waste into manure through the use of earthworms. Screen printing was initially set up as an independent enterprise but would now also support the printing and designing of paper and cloth bags for another enterprise, file/folders and envelope making enterprise with masala and detergent making groups, etc. What it did best was to reduce the dependence of the enterprises on the external market sources, which brought about a significant change in the working of the groups.

Picture 4: Photos of Different Enterprises Started by Sanjha Prayas Ajeevika Karyakram



Moving Ahead

Cure continued to move ahead with this concept of *interlinked livelihoods*, keeping in mind the need for skill training to ensure quality and market survey to assess and generate demand. The group on candle making was restarted after the group members went through a training programme on candle making conducted by professionals. *Diyas* and candles were prepared and sold during the Deepawali season after connecting the group with a few internet marketing sites such as azureonline, homestory, etc. A group was started to establish a paper-bag unit on demand from the market (by this time plastic bags had been banned in Delhi). A paper-plate unit was established after assessing the demand from the market. A sewing group was also formed to support the bag-making enterprise to cope with the increase in orders. Apart from these, CURE also set up a skilled masonry group certified by the Delhi State Industrial Development Corporation (DSIDC) after seeing the huge demand for construction.

Enterprises making beads, *shagun* envelopes, file folders and home-made masala were also formed. By the start of year 2011, CURE had set up enterprises as can be seen in **Table 2**.

Shudh Jal Ghar Samiti

The Shudh Jal Ghar Samiti, again a service-delivery model, was created to deliver safe drinking water to the residents of Savda Ghevra . This innovative entrepreneurial concept was started in the year 2011 by CURE. At present, it serves two hundred and fifty households on a daily basis in Savda, providing pure water from door-to-door on a 24/7 basis. It is run by the family of one Bhawari Devi (**Pictures 5 and 6**). The people who are using this service have recommended it to others and subscribers are increasing continuously.

Picture 5: Bhawari Devi of Shudh Jal Ghar Samiti



Picture 6: Bhawari Devi's son preparing a cart for delivery of water jars



Sanjha Prayas Ajeevika Karyakram

The idea of creating multiple enterprises that are linked to each other and are self-dependent in nature was taken forward with great zeal both by the team and the people associated with the various enterprises. While this model improved the livelihoods and marginally helped overcome the pre-existing challenges, it also came with its own set of accountabilities. As these enterprises were growing and beginning to carry out responsibilities on their own, it was very important to hold these enterprises together. This was all the more important since it was well known that CURE would not be present to assist these enterprises on any issues that may arise in future. There was a need for having a larger group, a society having the representation of all enterprises which could be responsible for management and efficient functioning of all the groups, decide on issues and help to sustain the livelihoods. Hence, in January 2013, a society was formed under the name of Sanjha Prayas Ajeevika Karyakram (SPAK) and

registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. Under monitoring by CURE, this group is now being strengthened to be well-versed in all aspects of the job, such as supervising marketing of goods, arranging training to the groups, etc. SPAK has registered itself with various online marketing agencies such as Justdial and Home store for a better output.

Sustainability

As a long-term planning and to sustain different cost-intensive activities within groups, CURE created a self-sustaining fund which was called the Livelihood Revolving Fund (LRF). LRF capital of Rs. 250000 was created out of the project funds by CURE. The responsibility of supervising the money rests on SPAK, and is to be used to fund enterprises, help set up other enterprises and for sustenance of the existing groups.

Financial Outlay

CURE has spent approximately Rs. 11500000 on livelihood activities over a period of five years. During this time, CURE has focused on mobilizing and facilitating groups and the people of Savda. For this purpose, CURE hired a team of six qualified professionals with different specialties to work permanently in the field, at a cost of about Rs. 3700000 over five years. Thus, the total annual cost incurred in setting up of enterprises, developing the products, paying the team of consultants, arranging training and workshops, etc. works out to approximately Rs. 3040000.

Impact

The average household income per month in SPAK has grown from a meager Rs. 2300 in the year 2006 to approximately Rs. 7000 as on date. Households have even started saving a small amount of Rs. 250 per month, a clear indicator of improved economic standing. These numbers may seem meager, but given the scale and enormity of challenges that residents of Savda face, these numbers demonstrate a successful collective effort by a community and an organization that can lead towards creating sustainable livelihood pathways. The challenges are unending and issues will always occur. The only factor that can lead to success is the will to get up and go, and succeed. The Savda enterprises demonstrate one such case of continuous struggle by people to achieve their goal and enthusiasm for making their lives better.

The Way Forward

CURE's involvement in the exercise has now come to an end. As a sustainability measure, CURE is planning to set up a managing and facilitating unit in the *basti*. The members of this unit would include a professional from CURE and representatives from the SPAK team. The

unit would be responsible for helping the SPAK team in forming strategies for further improvement as well as to tackle any issues or problems that may surface later.

The next step for CURE is to replicate and test the model in different settings such as the Bawana resettlement colony. At present, CURE has replicated the water kiosk project in Agra and is planning to implement a similar one in East Delhi. CURE has also replicated its D2D and composting projects in various other slums of Delhi and Agra.

Conclusion

There are many ways of helping a deprived community. The easiest of them is to simply provide the community with houses and infrastructure. However, past instances show that in many cases, these models have failed as the slum dwellers sell the new property and move back to the slums. This is because of the increased social costs at the newer site, which is often absent in the resettlement strategy. Therefore, without a holistic approach that deals with creating social infrastructure, livelihoods, etc. in tandem with creating the required infrastructure, the resettled people may get short-term benefits but long-term benefits are uncertain.

After having understood the exact nature of the problems being faced by Savda residents, CURE decided to use an approach which would result in the overall development of the community as well as make the residents self-reliant or inter-dependent on each other instead of being dependent on outsiders. In this way, the solution would be long-term and have a greater impact on their lives.

In an effort to make the groups capable of challenging the market competition, CURE has ensured that every group undergoes training programmes in skill enhancement, account maintenance, quality management and production management by varied professionals and key trainers available in the market. This capacity building has led to a wholesome development of the community and self-reliance among its residents. It has given them a new perspective on life and its possibilities. They now enjoy a better standard of living and have greater aspirations and more confidence.

Income Detail of Enterprise Groups

Figure 2: Income Details of Enterprise Groups

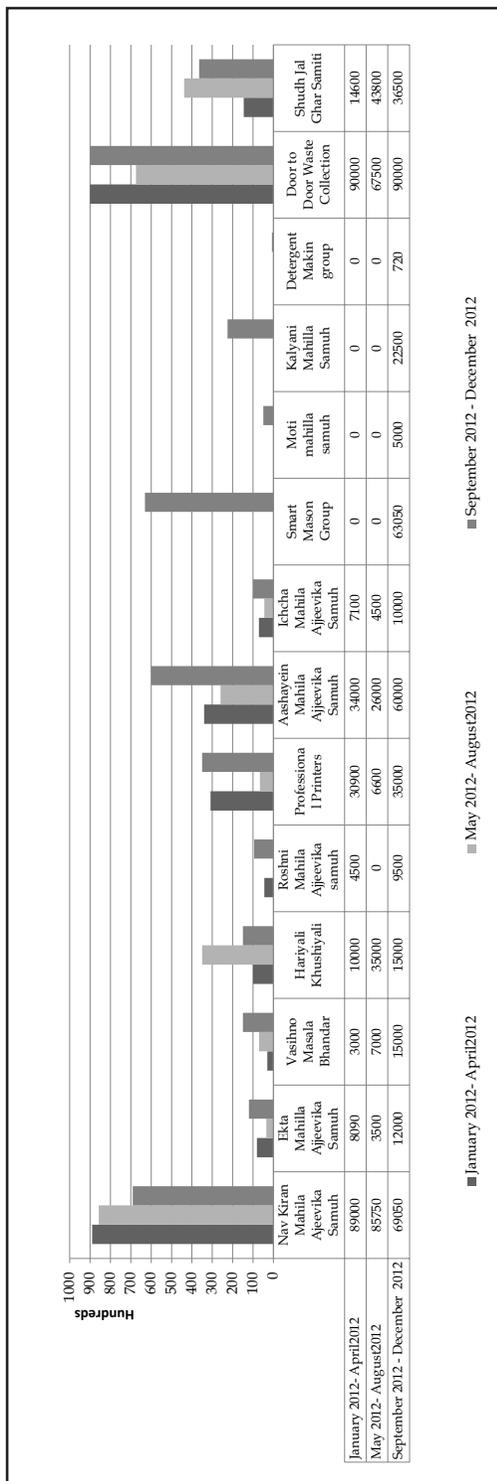


Table 2: Details of Enterprises

S. No.	Name of the group	Activity undertaken	Year in which the enterprise was established	Total number of members in the group	Name of the exporters/clients	Total vendors	Annual turnover (Rs, in thousand)
1	Nav Kiran Mahila Ajeevika Samuh	Stitching work of all types of bags and other accessories like pads, cushion covers and file folders	2008	32	Cobb Pvt. Ltd. Shivam Saree Shop Shyam Bakery Mahalaksmi Saree Shop Bombay Saree Shop Vinod Bag House Parveen Emporium Can Support Arora Bakery Garg Enterprises Ess Tee Creations	10	244
2	Ekta Mahila Ajeevika Samuh	All types and sizes of paper plates and bowls	2011	6	Sudhir Kumar, Begumpur Unify Disposable Shubham Enterprises, Seerapur Shiv Sortex Pvt. Ltd.	4	23
3	Vasihno Masala Bhandar	Grinding and packaging of all types of spices	2012	8	Savdaghra, Nangloi Apni Rasoi, Rohini Hum Sabki Rasoi Aggarwal Sweet Corner	4	25
4	Ghar Ghar Kura Sangreh Samuh	Household waste collection	2008	5	Savda Ghevra households	1200	360

5	Hariyali Khushi-yali	Vermi compost	2011	2	Swati Enterprises Mishni Universal Enterprises, Patparganj Shubham Enterprises, Seeraspur Jitoshha Shiv Gramodyog Sanstha Arushi Gramudyog Pvt. Ltd. Kissan Organics Provincial Associates, NOIDA	8	60
6	Roshni Mahila Ajjeevika Samuh	Candle making	2010	4		4	14
7	Professional Print-ers	Screen printing of cloth bags, wedding cards, paper bags, etc.	2008	5		3	73
8	Aashayein Mahila Ajjeevika Samuh	Preparation of normal and customized bags of simple and craft paper	2011	24		3	42
9	Ichcha Mahila Ajjeevika Samuh	Packaging of file folders	2012	6		1	22
10	Shudh Jal Ghar	Selling purified water	2011	1		146	263
11	Kalyani Mahilla Ajjeevika Samuh	Designing <i>shagun</i> enve- lopes, pasting of official envelopes	2012	6		2	1
12	Detergent Making Group	Manufacturing deter- gents	2013	4		2	63
13	Smart Mason Group	Constructing core house structures	2012	6		2	5
14	Motimahilla Aajee- vika Samuh	Bead work	2012	4		2	23

