

**A CASE STUDY :**

# Empowering rural women as a successful entrepreneur – through Krishi Vigyan Kendra

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**KEY WORDS :**

Empowering rural women, Selling assets, Farming

## BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Exposure of women to income earning activities strengthens her economic role, increases her ability to contribute income to family and gives experience and self-confidence in the public sphere, increased income controlled by women helps them to obtain a voice and vote in:

- Household decisions such as domestic well-being. For instance, women tend to use income clout for more equitable decisions about their childrens diet, education and health.
- Economic decisions such as acquiring, allocating, and selling assets.
- Fertility decisions: economically empowered women tend to have fewer children
- Land use and conservation decisions wherein rural women tend to favor sustainable environmental practices since they are usually the ones that collect the families' natural resources such as water and fuel wood.

Krishi Vigyan Kendras, were started in the country with an objective to transfer the

latest technologies and to improve the socio-economic status of the farming community. The KVK at Bagalkot was established under University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad in the year 2005. The district falls in the Northern dry zone of Karnataka having six blocks namely Badami, Bagalkot, Hunagund, Mudhol, Jamakhandi and Bilagi. One of the important mandates of KVK is to conduct on campus, off campus and vocational training to farmers, farm women and rural youths for generating self employment. This paper deals with the success stories of KVK Bagalkot in fulfilling this mandate with special reference to women.

## RESOURCES AND METHODS

On campus and vocational trainings were organized by KVK Bagalkot since its inception in 2005. A list of training programmes conducted on income generation activities were as under. Trained women were consulted to know whether they had adopted the technologies. Some of the most successful adopters who have taken up the enterprise

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and are earning substantial income were interviewed in depth and their success stories have been documented.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Results of the training conducted on various income generating activities by KVK Bagalkot between 2006 and 2010, based on per cent adoption by beneficiaries in different activities. Some successful activities of women who have been economically empowered by adopting income generating activities are elaborated.

Both the On and Off campus trainings were conducted which comprised lectures and demonstrations (Table 1). Based on the response from the trainees, trainings on ready food mixes, maize products and mango products were conducted more than once. Most respondents are in touch with the KVK, so it was possible to identify the adopters. Most of the adopters prepare the products for home consumption. Here it could be said that “money saves is money earned”. However few of them have adopted it on a commercial scale. The knowledge gained during the training regarding the packaging, marketing and costing aspects have helped the participants to take up the activity on a commercial scale. However none of the women have maintained financial records or calculated the cost of the labour.

### Embroidery :

#### Background :

Embroidery on sarees and dress material has ancient history. Earlier, the skill of hand embroidery was encouraged only by royal families, but now the scenario has changed. Embroidery on sarees, table covers, curtains, pillow covers, show pieces have become very common. Now, even the middle and lower middle class can afford to buy materials with embroidery. In recent times, embroidery is gaining a lot of importance and it

has got commercial value. The raw materials needed for developing a product with embroidery may not be very expensive but the essential requirement is the skill. Embroidery can be hand made or machine made. There are several varieties of embroidery stitches. The quality of the product depends on experience and skill. With the increasing demand for embroidered dresses and sarees there is a deficit of skilled people. Although women have an idea of the basic stitches, they need to be trained in colour combinations and in neatness and fine finish. They also need to be taught about recognizing the fashion and market trends. With this in view the training on embroidery were organized.

#### Interventions :

Vocational training on embroidery was imparted for 31 members at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bagalkot for 6 days. More than 25 stitches of embroidery including kamal work, ribbon work, zardosi, Karnataka kasuti, lazy daisy stitch, French knots, chamki work, kundun work, lavang work, kanta work, stem stitch, chain stitch, mirror work, patch work etc. were taught.

#### Impact :

Smt. Savita Mugali who has studied upto PUC, is physically disabled. She wanted to be self employed as she was not comfortable going out for a job because of her disability. She already knew basic stitches but was not confident. After having undergone the training for one week at KVK Bagalkot, she decided to go for commercial scale. She takes orders for embroidery on sarees, bag making and tracing of designs. As of today she charges Rs.300/- per saree for embroidery, embroidery bags Rs. 150/- tracing of designs on the saree Rs. 50/- Every month she embrioders 4-5 Sarees, 3-4 bags, 6-7 Sarees designing. Thus, she earns Rs. 1,700=00

**Table 1 : Trainings conducted and their adoption**

Sr. No.	Intervention	No. of beneficiaries	No. of adopter	Per cent adoption
1.	Ready food mixes	53	25	47
2.	Maize products	97	10	10
3.	Household products	40	04	13
4.	Milk and milk products	30	20	67
5.	Mango products	55	40	73
6.	Tomato preservation	20	10	50
7.	Bag making	26	20	76
8.	Embroidery	31	12	39
9.	Fashion designing	28	10	36

to 2,000 per month.

This has made her to be economically independent, stable, determined and confident women in the society.

### **Ready food mixes :**

#### *Background:*

In the fast paced world, time has become an important and precious resource. Times have changed and women are now going out to work making it imperative to depend on easy to cook and ready to eat foods. Food habits are region specific and difficult to change. The ready to eat foods presently available in the market may not be acceptable to all people. So, food catering to local tastes find a better market than those prepared by national and multinational companies, the increasing demand for such food provides ample opportunities for local home makers and other unemployed women to take up food product preparation as an enterprise.

#### *Intervention:*

Value change management in agriculture provides added income to the agril. families. In this connection a two days training on ready food mixes was organised for rural women. Fifty four women availed the benefits of this programme. The items in which they were trained are making of Badam milk powder, Puliogere mix, Jamoon mix, Sambar powder, Pavabaji Masala, Bisibele bhat powder, Vangi bath powder, Jam making and tomato products preparation. While lectures were given regarding the importance of hygiene, quality maintenance, packaging, costing and marketing, the products were actually prepared by the participants under the supervision of qualified trainers.

#### *Impact :*

Smt. Lata Yadahalli aged 34 years belongs to Benakatti village of Bagalkot Taluk. She has studied up-to SSLC and is a very enthusiastic participant of most trainings organized for women by the KVK. After undergoing this training, she started preparing all these products initially for home consumption. She received appreciation for her preparations from her family members and friend. Her family and friends encouraged her to take this up on commercial scale. She was initially not sure how her products would be received in the market. She contacted some provision stores of Bagalkot

city who offered to keep them for sale on trial basis. Based on the consumer response for these products, the shop owners started asking Smt. Lata Yadahalli to supply her products. Here products have now entered many more stores in larger quantities. Now she earns around Rs. 5000 /- per month by selling these ready food mixes to prominent shops Food Basket, Z-dac, Kasat Bazar etc, in Bagalkot city. With the income she earned from this enterprise she has been able to purchase equipments like electric oven and sealing machine.

### **Bag making :**

#### *Background:*

Bags are an important accessory for a women and also make a fashion statement. The humble shopping bags have now been replaced by fancy bags which are stylish and are useful, another important reason why bag making is important is that cloth and jute bags are reusable and are ecofriendly. In order to save the environment from plastic bag litter, women are encouraged to carry their own shopping bags. In this pursuit a six days training programme on bag making was organized at KVK Bagalkot.

#### *Intervention:*

Women were trained in making different types of bags like school bags, Money purse, air bags, shopping bags and other fancy bags. Fashion designing aspects covered stitching of different types of frocks, dresses, chudidars, nighties etc. during the training each trainee brought her own material and stitched the bags and garments.

#### *Impact:*

Smt. Vijayalaxmi Veerapur is the wife of Ramesh Veerapur a ACC cement agent. His business was a smooth run for sometime but gradually the business was under a loss due to heavy competition in the market. Vijalaxmi thought that it was time to contribute to the family income. She is a regular participant of most of trainings conducted at KVK. She was mostly using her knowledge and skill for the benefit of the family. But during these hard times she along with another trainee Smt. Rajeswari Goudar decided to adopt this enterprise on commercial scale. Accordingly they opened up a proper shop on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

They are now making different types of bags and

taking orders for stitching chudidars, and dresses for children through this enterprise their earning could be about Rs.3000-4000/ per month. These women were earlier not ready to come out of the house and they were not aware of the marketing and accounting. Now they are confident in accounting, record keeping and marketing. Currently the business is running successfully. They feel highly indebted to the KVK for having given them the skill and motivation.

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