

STORIES OF CHANGE



Prabha Rajpoot
The real support system

Prabha Rajpoot, Managing Director of Sakshi Producers Pvt. Ltd., with a customer base of 500 farmers, earns INR 1 lakh per year. A resident of Maharajapura in Madhya Pradesh, Prabha always felt that she wanted to do more for both her family and her community. She started out as a worker at a local cow shed (gaushala) with the local women's groups. Women's groups from 18 nearby villages had come together to form a federation, which was handed the responsibility to run and operate the cowshed. Her work there was confined to cleaning and milking the cows. With a strong academic background and the confidence of having taken up work outside her home, Prabha felt that she wanted to do more. She motivated the women to utilise the cow shed to set up businesses related to cattle rearing. She underwent a three-day training programme where she learnt about various business opportunities linked to farming and cattle-rearing. From an array of business ideas, she decided to start a spice grinding and composting enterprise along with the women's group she was earlier working with in the shed. The women's group started running a spices and composting services business in full swing that employed 5 other women full-time. Talking about what inspired her, she says, "Jab hum ghar ka khaate hain toh achha lagta hai, toh humne socha auron ko bhi yehi khilayen" (when we eat home-grown products it feels nice, we thought others should have the same). She speaks of how her parents and mother-in-law have consistently supported her, even in the face of criticism from community members. She procures the raw material from farmers in Budera, Madhya Pradesh, at a cost of INR 15 per kg and sells them at INR 40 per kg post processing. Her market includes BHEL, Bijoli district, and some hotels in Orchha itself. Prabha operates a 4-acre plot of land where she mostly grows peanuts and wheat through the process of vermicomposting. Now registered as a Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) with 225 women shareholders as supporting members, currently, Prabha manages a company for procurement, processing, and value addition of organic compost, spices and animal balanced feed. The annual turnover of the FPO, from this business has reached 20,00,000 per annum. With 500 farmers currently a part of her customer base, the aim of Prabha's FPO is to recruit farmers and increase the production and processing of compost at a larger scale. Prabha has become an agent of change in her community, motivating people to take the leap and see the change.

"Seeing me set up an enterprise, other women in my village have been encouraged to be independent... It makes me happy when women come to me and say I am their role model." - Prabha Rajpoot

**FROM STARTING AS A LOCAL COW SHED (GAUSHALA) WORKER TO THE
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SAKSHI PRODUCERS PVT. LTD.**
