



5.8 Micro Entrepreneurship Development Programme (MEDP)



Empowering Women: Crafting with Purpose

Name of the Project: Micro Entrepreneurship Development Programme on Pine Leaved Craft

Implementing Entity: Mandi Saksharta Evum Jan Vikas Samiti (MSJVS)

NABARD's Support: ₹0.1 million

Year of Sanction: 2023

Year of Completion: 2024

Location of the Project: Block-Churag, District-Mandi



Challenges Addressed

- ❖ In Himachal Pradesh, there are approximately 1,200 to 2,500 incidents of forest fires annually, affecting thousands of hectares of land and impacting vegetation and wildlife.
- ❖ Between April and June each year, several tonnes of pine needles/fallen leaves fall from pine forests per hectare contributing to devastating forest fires during the summer.



Strategies

- ❖ In response to this critical issue, the Mandi Literacy and Community Development Committee sought assistance from NABARD, which approved a training programme under the Micro Entrepreneurship Development Programme for 30 women from 15 Self-Help Groups. The 15-day training focussed on creating various products from pine needles. The women from these groups systematically collected pine needles and learned to make a range of products, such as baskets, pen stands, mobile covers, showpieces, and flower vases, in various designs. They also applied natural polish to enhance the beauty of these items.
- ❖ These products are being sold through various NABARD-approved rural marts and village shops, and the women are not only earning a livelihood but also conveying a message of environmental stewardship.
- ❖ After the training, Anita Devi, a member of the Aastha Self-Help Group from the village of Kuftu, Churag, opened a local shop where she sells products made from pine needles and earns between ₹2,000 to ₹3,000 per month. Similarly, most women are creating products and selling them through various



channels, becoming self-reliant. This initiative has not only reduced the risk of forest fires but also provided economic opportunities to marginalised community's dependent on forest resources.

Impact

- i. **Number of Trained Members:** 30
- ii. **Training Activity:** Learned to collect pine needles and create various products such as baskets, pen stands, mobile covers, showpieces, and flower vases.



- iii. **Credit Linkage:** No loan required for this activity.
- iv. **Marketing Ties:** Products are being sold through NABARD-approved rural marts, village shops, various fairs, local markets, and units established by members.
- v. **Number of Units Set Up:** 2
- vi. **Income Enhancement:** Women are earning between ₹2,000 and ₹3,000 per month through this initiative.

