Madhu Khoiwal: LIC Agent at 54 year

Education is a fundamental right in India, however, it still remains the privilege for a few. This is the story of a 56-year-old woman, Madhu Khoiwal, a resident of Ghosunda village in Chittorgarh, Rajasthan. Madhu understood the value of education and was a diligent student who was fond of reading. However, her interest was short-lived as like other girls in her village, she also dropped out of school after completing primary school. After she completed class 5, she stopped going to school because the senior school was too far from her home and there were no dependable transport available. She was married off soon after and her tenuous link with education broke off forever - or at least that's what she thought.

Madhu’s husband works in the police and her two children are studying in college. Her son is studying engineering while her daughter is pursuing a graduate course in education.

“I am very proud of my children,” Madhu says.

Madhu was happy basking in the reflected glory of her children until the mentors of the Second Chance Education (SCE) knocked on her door.

“I could not believe that I would get another chance to complete my education,” she says. “I was a little hesitant as I didn’t want to study with younger people at my age but when I heard about the distance studying programme, I enrolled immediately.”

LAST EDITION RECAP...
Women Mobilized - 814
Placements - 56 women
Vocationally trained- 53 women
Enrolled in secondary education - 80 women
After her enrolment in the NIOS programme in 2019, she did not enjoy the full support of her family, who thought it was a waste of time. However, Madhu was adamant and continued to attend study sessions organised by the teachers of Manjari, UN Women’s implementing partner in the region. She attended classes at the hub centre for three days a week and for the rest of the days she studied at home.

Seeing her enthusiasm, her children also began helping her with the coursework. She cleared her class 10 examination successfully in 2021 and subsequently her class 12 exam through Rajasthan State Open School. She followed this up by appearing for an exam to qualify as an agent at India’s largest insurance company – the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India.

“I am now a certified LIC agent. I work in my village and nearby villages,” she says with a happy smile. “The SCE programme gave me a new lease of life.”

Women solopreneur

SCE’s solopreneur Chanda, a native of Chapati village in Kishanganj district, recently inaugurated her own Beauty Parlor in her village after completing the free beautician course from RSETI centre. She enrolled in the 30 day course after being counselled by the field officers of implementing partner PRADAN.

During the course, I learnt make-up techniques, hair cutting, coloring, highlights, hair spa, threading, facial, Hair straightening, waxing, and product knowledge. Additionally, we were also given lesson on ‘How to deal with customers and how to behave with them’.

Chanda opened her parlor four days after completing her course on September 20, so far the business is slow but she hopes things will gradually pick pace.

Chanda says, "I aspired to learn the beautician work but was directionless plus I knew I could not afford the course fee".
Under the SCE programme, implementing partner PRADAN in Bihar mobilized 30 girls from Kishanganj and Bhadurganj region. These girls have enrolled in several employment oriented free residential training through Jeevika. Under the Deendayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana, these girls will be given training in General Duty Assistant and Customer Relationship Management course, according to their interest and qualification at Patna.

Implementing partner PRADAN felicitated by JEEVika

Kishanganj team of PRADAN received felicitation for their onground work in Bihar.

Employed girls received momentum and award by JEEVika.
FLYING HIGH
Eight girls from inaugural batch (1st batch) of World Skill Center (WSC), Bhubaneswar, Odisha joined job in UAE.

Coming from smaller town didn’t stopped them from dreaming big. Government of Odisha gave them opportunity of sharpening their acquired skills at WSC. All girls completed their one year Advance Skill Training Program offered by WSC after graduating out from ITI or Diploma Colleges. The girls boarded their very first international flight to Abu Dhabi from Mumbai International Airport on 28h December 2022, with a mixed feeling of joy, hopes and aspirations.

Second Chance Education Programme in India
In 2018, UN Women initiated the development of the Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning (SCE) programme that would provide marginalized women who have lost out on an education with pathways to employment through a tailored learn-to-earn approach. The ongoing programme is aimed at empowerment of women who, owing to poverty and gender-based discrimination, have been denied access to opportunities at an early age.

SCE is being implemented in 12 districts across 4 states of India – Bihar, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan, covering 200 villages.

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For enquiries about the SCE program, reach out to suhela.khan@unwomen.org (Country Programme Manager - UN Women), mirah.zamin@unwomen.org (Communication Assistant SCE- UN Women India)