



From Struggles to Stitching Her Fate: Gayatri's Journey of Resilience



In the small village of Rawatsar tehsil, Rajasthan, lived Gayatri Soni, a woman who had weathered life's many storms. Her problems had been greater than those most could dream of. There had been an accident; thus, due to the disability problem, she was not in a capacity to walk properly. Due to her condition, she had been trapped in an endless cycle of poverty. Her husband's meager income from the unorganised sector was barely sufficient for even the barest essentials: she struggled to provide for their children and often failed to meet even the family's basic needs.

Life was bleak, and the burden of poverty weighed heavily on Gayatri's shoulders. But as the saying goes, sometimes hope comes from the most unexpected places. Sushila, a local artisan who had been working with

Urmul Seemant Samiti, a grassroots organisation dedicated to empowering women, noticed Gayatri's talent in hand embroidery. Knowing the obstacles Gayatri faced, Sushila saw an opportunity to help and introduced her to a member of Urmul.

Recognising her potential, the organisation guided Gayatri, starting her on a journey that would transform her life. At first, Gayatri began with crochet work on woolen pashmina, slowly refining her skills. As her confidence grew, so did her abilities. Urmul provided her with training in natural dyeing, including the ancient art of creating vegetable dyes, unlocking a new world of creativity for her.

In time, Gayatri joined the Natural Dyeing Cluster, part of the IMEDF's SFURTI scheme under the guidance of Urmul as the implementing agency. This opened up new opportunities, she received further training in dye-making techniques, crochet work, and machine use, expanding her skills and creativity. Soon, her hands began crafting beautiful pashmina sweaters, dyed garments, cushion covers, gloves, socks, mufflers, caps, and even table mat sets.

With each stitch, Gayatri not only wove intricate designs into her creations but also stitched together the threads of a better future. Her family began to notice the change, what was once a household filled with despair has now become one of hope and possibility. The village also took note of Gayatri's transformation—from a woman struggling to make ends meet to someone who had gained recognition and respect for her craft.

With a steady source of income and newfound self-worth, Gayatri lifted her family out of poverty. She now stands as a beacon of resilience in her community, a testament to how opportunities, when coupled with determination, can change lives.