

**Share and Care Foundation's Women Empowerment Committee (WE) has been striving to find simple and effective solutions to truly and completely empower rural women in India.**

## Rural Women Deserve Equality

Working with partner NGO in India **Share & Care** has trained over 6,000 marginalized women — like Manisha & Geeta, — who once lived below the poverty line

These and other marginalized women we serve are neglected by their family, often at the expense of their physical and emotional health. Husbands and other family members often resist the offer to help females in the family — due of course to customs and traditions that promote male dominance and patriarchal family structures.

These individuals have allowed us to share their stories in the hope that they'll not only inspire other women like them, but also appeal to the hearts of generous donors across the world who want to make a positive, lasting difference in others' lives.

### The Enhanced Livelihood Project

Female autonomy continues to be restricted throughout much of India, with cultural resistance particularly prevalent in remote rural communities. To combat inequity, Share & Care partners with local NGOs to provide empowerment and comprehensive livelihood training to rural women in need.

While there are many worthy humanitarian groups working to make a difference in the lives of rural Indian women, we **at Share & Care** pride ourselves in exercising a unique grassroots approach that focuses on long-term, sustainable solutions. Below are the strategies we use to help women overcome some of the most common cultural, social, and economic barriers to empowerment.

#### *Work locally, with a bottom-up approach.*

We partner with highly vetted NGOs working on the ground in rural India. The field workers in these organization are intimately familiar with the areas in which we operate. They know the ins and outs of the local economy, the geographical region, and the traditions and values of its residents. This knowledge enables them to identify individual women in need, and to devise realistic, tailored solutions that will help them become self-reliant.

#### *Empower women with relevant vocational skills.*

Each woman in our Enhanced Livelihood Project is provided with 12 weeks of vocational training in one of five skills:

- Sewing
- Embroidery
- Catering
- Computers
- Cosmetology

These are skills that the women can put to use immediately in their own communities, either independently or for employers.

**Meet 2 beautiful women living in rural villages of Gujarat, India — Manisha, & Geeta who met certain requirements that ultimately led to their inclusion here:**

1. Their family was living below the poverty line — *India's current BPL is Rs. 27,000, or, at the time of this writing, approximately US\$415 per year.*
2. They were marginalized and in need of help.
3. **Follow-up:** Upon completion of training, we help the women form self-help groups of 12-15 so they can stay in contact and support each other. After six months, we invite the women to participate in a brief refresher course on self-defense and gender equality, and to spend time with them to learn more about how we can help others going forward.



**Manisha Patel** used to work with her husband on a farm in the rural town of Dholka. However, after his unexpected death, she found herself deserted and unable to support her family. With help through the Enhanced Livelihood Project from **Share & Care** and our NGO partner, Project Life, she joined computer classes and eventually got a job as a computer operator at a multinational IT company, where she

was honored to win the Award for Best Employee — four years in a row.



**Geeta Rana** and her husband are both physically challenged, and they (along with their two children) were once gripped by poverty. Geeta, who has restricted mobility and cannot perform any work that requires standing, was provided with a sewing education, free transportation to and from her training, and a sewing machine of her own. She is now able to buy food for her family and provide an education for her children.

Purnima on YTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFIKtUXjGxE&t=3s>