



Sewing The Seeds



Impact Progress Report

We sew the seeds of safe employment for women, so they can break the poverty cycle.

About Us

Sewing the Seeds (STS) is an Australian DGR registered charity with a mission to provide safe and sustainable textiles education and employment to women who face social and economic barriers to safe work in Pondicherry, India. To date, we have supported over 100+ women in the gig economy, and 7 women with full-time employment.

The women hand-make textile products for wholesale customers across the globe, in fashion, accessories, ethical merchandise and markets. It is through these orders we are able to provide safe employment for them. All our designs are co-designed with our customers in Australia and globally, and our products are made using up-cycled materials and traditional techniques specific to India, where possible.



We provide education in technical skills such as sewing, designing, hand stitching, screen printing and pattern making. We also provide education in non-technical skills such as leadership, communication, financial literacy and women and menstrual health education to increase self-confidence and prioritise self-care.

We have recently taken the leap to expand our operations and have our own sewing centre in Pondicherry. This change will allow us to achieve our vision of our sewing centre being independently women-led and run.

We want to be the safe space where women can authentically express themselves, build internal self confidence through their work and increase their sense of belonging through the community of women they get to work with. As we listen and learn from the women, we are committed to meaningfully support them holistically so they can be their best selves and break the poverty cycle for their generations to come.

Our Impact Approach

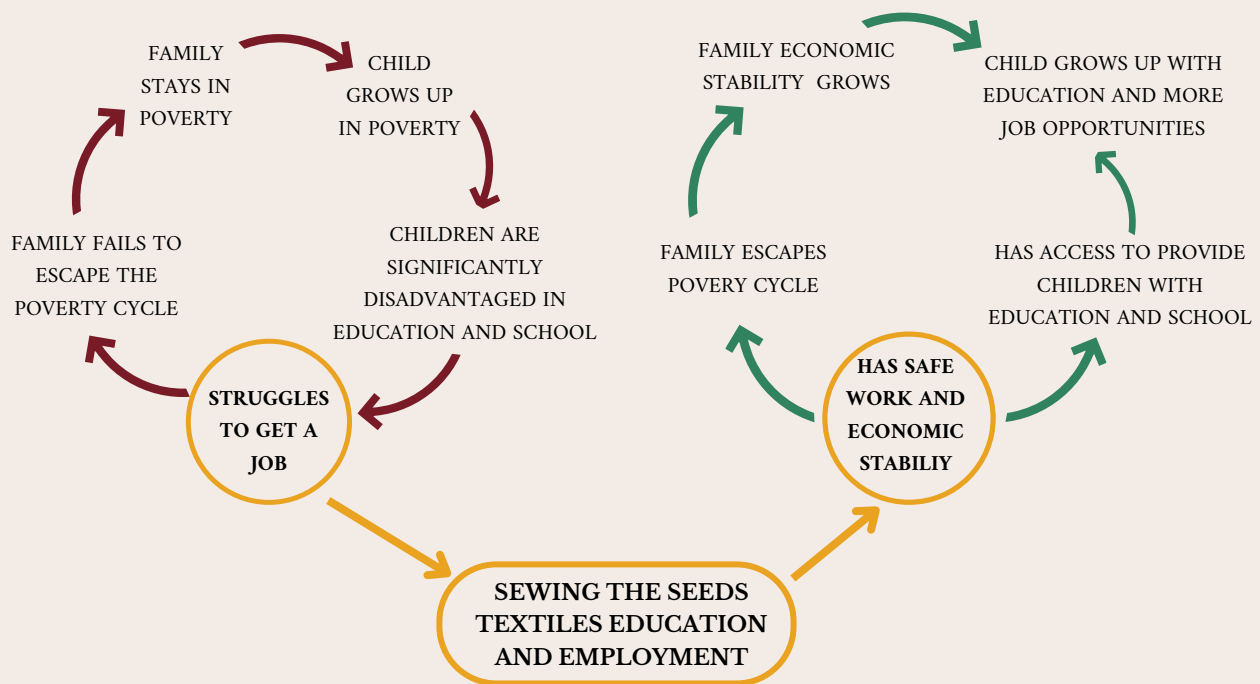
We approach our work through the public health lens and in more detail with a social determinants of health perspective*. This perspective considers the poverty cycle and the role we can play in supporting to break this cycle through employment.

Social Determinants of Health - We focus on how economic stability impacts an individual's health outcomes.

Poverty Cycle - We focus on how making safe work accessible and inclusive can reduce or break the poverty cycle.



Poverty Cycle



We are committed to contributing towards the following UN Sustainable Development Goals



*https://www.who.int/health-topics/social-determinants-of-health#tab=tab_1

Our Theory of Change

INPUTS

Fully equipped sewing centre for employment & training.

Sewing the Seeds centre management in Pondicherry.

Partnerships with internationally based social enterprises to facilitate B2C sales & B2B orders across markets in the USA, Australia, UK & Europe.

Relationships with local community stakeholders & NGOs for community development, disaster recovery, education & healthcare.

Sewing the Seeds team in Australia.

Online and market retail stores.

Community development leaders.

ACTIVITIES

EDUCATION

Textiles education and training for women and girls from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Education in business and financial management.

Education in women's health and well-being.

EMPLOYMENT

Full-time & part-time employment to create customised wholesale and retail textile products

Employment to incorporate design, hand-stitching, screen-printing & pattern making.

EMPOWERMENT

Creating a safe space for personal development and support to break generational poverty cycle.

OUTPUTS

No. of employment hours provided.

No. of training hours provided.

Changes in earning capacity and financial wellbeing.

Access to physical welfare and safety.

Decision-making capacity in households.

No. of women engaging in safe & sustainable employment.

No of children receiving an education.

No. of initiatives taken to support community development.

No. of bank accounts supported to open for the women.

No. of interest-free loans offered for children's education.

Medical, mental health & personal welfare provided.

OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM

Increased savings capacity and stability of income.

Increased access to skills, training & development.

Increased self-confidence & self-esteem.

Increased access to exercise decision-making and collective agency.

Increased support for social participation and inclusion.

MEDIUM & LONG-TERM

Reduced participation in unsafe work and the informal economy.

Increased economic stability, children going to school and breaking poverty cycle.

Increased women's agency & changes to patriarchal gender roles.

Strengthened social structures & social inclusion in society.

Our Impact Outcomes

Amongst India's working women, **82% are engaged in informal working sector**, including unpaid and irregular work*. Focusing on women's personal and employment security supports a future where these benefits are more likely to be passed on to the next generation. It promotes increased economic diversification and income equality across communities.



*http://164.52.210.154:8080/jspui/bitstream/123456789/1615/1/16158181Women-in-the-Indian-Informal-Economy-Brief_-_IWWAGE_compressed.pdf

**<https://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/PublicationsView.aspx?id=19887>

Our Indian Team



RITIKA SADANA

Manager



LATCHOUMY

AKKA

Tailor



SIVAGAMI

AKKA

Tailor



SIVAGAMI V.

AKKA

Tailor



SHANTHAKUMARI

AKKA

Tailor



MUTHULAKSHMI

AKKA

Tailor



AMBIGA

AKKA

Tailor



VALLI

AKKA

Tailor

Our Australia Team



GAYLE FACTOR

CEO &
Co-founder



SAKSHI THAKUR

CEO &
Co-founder



ROJA BABU

COO

How can you help?

While our end goal is to create safe and sustainable work through textile product orders and not be reliant on philanthropy or grants, we are not there yet. We need funding support to help us navigate this transition period of growth to bring sustainability in our business and impact model. Philanthropy funding will help:



- **Up-skilling and additional training for the women.** This costs on average up to \$10,000 a month.
- We currently support the majority of the women in opening up their first bank accounts when they with work at STS. We have witnessed the high need of **financial literacy and other health programs** for the women. This costs up to to \$3000 a month.
- To support **more women have access to safe employment through periods of lower orders.** This can cost up to \$12,000 a month.
- **Interest-free micro loans to the women in order to pay for their children's education** without the financial burden of paying high interest rates. This costs \$600 per child, per year.
- **Medical support on a monthly basis for all of our women and their children,** and any support for urgent medical emergencies. We are committed towards ensuring that the women have equitable access to the resources and support required to look after their health and well-being. Our total cost to provide this support to all the women can add up to \$2,500 per year.
- **Overheads to achieve all of the above is \$200,000 per year.**

Over the past 5 years STS has built key relationships and partnerships with international markets that has supported us to thrive during challenging periods like the pandemic. It is this strategy and model which represents our unique point of difference and has supported us in our growth. Our international market presence opens opportunities for increased customer segments, stronger economies, increased traction and exposure. We aim to support other social enterprises doing similar work to us in India to have access to international markets.

The long term goal of STS is to partner with other women-led social enterprises in developing communities to open up that international market, so together we can sew the seeds of safe and equitable employment for women, break the poverty cycle and leave no human behind.