

# Women and Water

A Perspective in Management



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## What is SEWA

1. It is representative body of 220000 poor working women.
2. It elects its office bearers.



3. It strives of self employment and self-reliance of its members.

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## SEWA is not.....!

1. SEWA is not an NGO only.

2. SEWA is not a feminist group only.



3. SEWA is not an implementation agency only.

It is a representative and democratic body.

## SEWA's work in Water Sector

Selected List :

1. Integrated Watershed Development Project with Gujarat Land Development Corporation in Sabarkantha.
2. National Watershed Management project in Banaskantha.
3. Building Rain water Harvesting Structures in Banaskantha.
4. Augmenting local water resources in cluster of villages.
5. Water campaigns in 8 Districts.
6. Provision of water as basic service in slums in Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation area slums.
7. Financing "Water-loans" to urban and rural members.
8. Special focus groups Actions : salt worker, gum collectors, slum dwellers, women farmers etc.

## Reality of Water

From SEWA's Perspective :

- Water is a basic need.
- Access to water is a basic right.



- Money is only one way to value water.

## Reality of Women and Water

From SEWA's Perspective :

- Poor women are central to any decisions related to use, management, and ownership of water; and



- Water management must combine both, market and planned approach.

## Mainstream?

In other words, women's concerns can not only be mainstreamed, they must be made central.



# Ownership Organisation

## Lessons I

- Unless women water users own organisations come up to manage water resources, the water sector will remain unbalanced in favour of men and exploitative over use or over consumption.





# Institutional Review

## Some Lessons II

Simultaneously, the existing water institutions - Gujarat Land Development Corporation, Gujarat Water Supply and Sewerage Board, etc. - must refocus on poor women's water needs and build their capacity.



# Land Ownership

## Some Lessons III

Where men owned land, ownership of water by women has provided counter balancing economic and gender power.



# Biodiversity and Water

## Some Lessons VI

Key to bio diversity is through diverse range of water management initiatives: private, public, joint, others.



# Integrated Watershed

## Some Lessons VII

The focus should be on the watershed users, the poor women among them, to make it integrated. This means addressing credit, market, social, and other needs of the users.



## Equity Issues

### Some Lessons VIII

Equity not only between women and men but also between poor women and not so poor women is important. This means, recognising poor women as watershed users in individual capacity as well as in a group.



## Tools and Methods

### Some Lessons IX

The most important method or tool for mainstreaming is parting with financial and management powers. Without that no tool or method can mainstream poor women in natural resource management.



## Future Areas for Action

1. Taking over RWSS by women.
2. Taking over local irrigation schemes.



3. Financing community infrastructure.