

SEWA Trade Committee Tribute to Nohra Padilla, on her winning the Goldman Environmental Prize, 2013

The Trade Committee leaders said, “This achievement of Nohra ben will surely make our struggle more strong and powerful. We salute the efforts of Nohraben and her organization and want to applaud this accomplishment of her.”

“The situation of the waste picker members of SEWA is also not so good, it’s only after a long ongoing struggle of SEWA and its efforts of supporting the Gitanjali Cooperative of Waste pickers that we are stable and independent now. Thus these waste pickers who have a large contribution in keeping our environment clean and tidy now are also managing the Cooperative of waste pickers and manufacturing Files, ball-pens, Notebooks etc from recycling paper. This actually is our step forward towards bigger achievement.....”

Dinaben, Leader of waste pickers and a very efficient member of the Gitanjali Cooperative includes her experience, “I pick waste and paper from past 5 years. I wake up early in the morning and start to pick up waste from 6 am. I pick plastic, paper, cartons and such other wastes from roads and roadsides. Then when I come back home I sort the collected waste and then sell this at the scrap shop. And whatever I get there, that is my earning. I know I contribute a lot to this city, but I also feel that there is no value of my work though. But after I have become member of SEWA I have understood the importance of my work and my identity as a worker. I come to Gitanjali Cooperative everyday and also work there to make files, ball-pens and other stationary items. These items are then sold and we earn from it too and this also is helping our cooperative to become independent and strong.

Ashaben agreed Dinaben’s comment and said, “I think our value has increased because of this cooperative and union. According to me our Collective bargaining has increased due to the intervention of SEWA union and Gitanjali Cooperative. We were able to establish our cooperative because of our union strength and this in-turn has introduced us to our new capabilities of preparing stationary items. I am very happy that items prepared by us reach thousands of people and our work gets a boosting.”

“The situation of informal sector workers across the world remains almost similar. We all have similar issues and problems, but such acclaims actually intensify our struggle and provide us strength as well as encouragement.

Once again we want to Congratulate Nohra ben on her achievement on behalf of all the member of informal sector of SEWA.....”