

Shanti Hastkala

Empowering Women as Peaceful Agents of Social Change

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www.shantihastkala.org

JAI GURUDEV

Exciting New Project for SHK



Stitching class – Hariya. At right, Nita and Geeta.



SHK was born out of Gurudev Swami Nityanand's vision to empower the rural folks in the villages surrounding

the ashram in Magod, Gujarat, India. Starting in 2004 with one village and a few artisans SHK expanded rapidly. Today the SHK project encompasses about twelve villages and more than 125 artisans, 90% of whom are women.

NEW PROJECT – STITCHING CLASSES IN THE VILLAGES

SHK is again moving a step forward with a new project. Ravish Madan, a trustee of SHK has come up with the idea of asking SHK workers to start workshops in their respective villages, training their neighbors and other interested persons. Thus more villagers can be involved with

the project, and SHK can continue expanding. The SHK women will become the head for the village, teaching stitching classes and assigning work for the new trainees.

This way SHK will have many branches, reaching villages near and far, thus enabling more people to benefit from the project.

SHK has had a stitching class in the ashram for some time now. Nita has been with SHK for four years. She plays an important role at the ashram overseeing the stitching and embroidery classes. Nita also gives work to the villagers and teaches them sewing skills. She is now playing a major role in the latest project, going into the villages and helping set up the new classes.

The first village to be involved in the new project is Hariya. A stitching class has commenced there and is run by Geeta. She has been working with SHK for three years and this is her village. SHK has

donated two sewing machines on which the villagers take turns using and master them. Ten villagers are learning under Geeta's guidance. She has created a morning and evening session. The response has been very positive.

The next center to be set up with new classes is in the village of Chikhla, a thirty-minute drive from the ashram. The center will be run by a husband and wife team, Hiren and Hetal. Hetal has been working with SHK for about eighteen months. She looks after the production and dispatching of goods at the ashram. She is a great asset to SHK working consistently with an intelligent, thoughtful and sincere approach in her work. Hetal, with the assistance of Nita, will train villagers in stitching and embroidery. Hiren will teach people painting and computer skills and will also monitor the people coming for stitching classes.



Pictured above are SHK workers working at the centre based in Magod ashram



Neeta and Geeta and new class at Hariya

SUPPORT REQUIRED

SHK wants to set up eight to ten centers in the nearby villages. We require two or three machines in each center. Each machine and a stool will cost Rs.7,500 (approximately \$150 US/AUD). The electric motors cost Rs.1200 (approximately \$25 US/AUD). Apart from the machines, we also require cloth, threads and materials for running the centers.

THE GOOD NEWS is that we have already started getting donations for a number of sewing machines. SHK feels very supported and is appreciative of the response so far.

If you wish to be part of this exciting expansion of SHK, donations are most welcome. Please contact Chideshwari: miniluthra@yahoo.com.



Pictured above is Hetal showing villagers SHK products and also taking enrolments for the class.