**Brief Note on SEWA Rural**

**(Oct. 2017)**

***Background:*** SEWA Rural is a voluntary development organization involved in health & development activities in rural tribal area of South Gujarat at Jhagadia since 1980. The activities were initiated by a group of young professionals having education & experience in India & abroad and inspired by the ideals & ideas of Swami Vivekananda & Gandhiji.

***Goals and Strategey:*** SEWA Rural endeavors to reach out & assist the poorest of poor through various health & development programmes based upon the community needs & available manpower. The focus of all the services and programmes has been vulnerable members of the family – i.e. women, children & elderly and underserved sections of society – i.e. the rural, poor and tribal people of Bharuch and Narmada districts including adjoining districts of Baroda and Surat.

In all the activities and programmes, an attempt is made to incorporate as well as balance the three basic principles: Social Service, Scientific Approach and Spiritual Outlook. While involved in such activities it also seeks to ensure that the values are preserved and self development, in broader sense, of those involved in the work is achieved simultaneously. This would also establish a model to demonstrate younger generation and professionals to get motivated in work for the poor and disadvantage section of society.

***Beginning:*** As the most of the founding members were medical professionals, beginning was made with a small 30 bed hospital in Jhagadia. Over the years, likeminded professionals committed and dedicated to serve the society joined the initial group, started owning the spirit of organization. Hence over the past three and half decades, the scope and range of various services, activities and programmes to serve and empower the “Last Man” started growing, diversifying and expanding as under:

***Programmes:***

1. **The 200 beds Kasturba Hospital** provides round the clock OPD, Indoor and Emergency services in the fields of OBGY, Paediatrics, Ophthalmology and General Medicine and planned Surgery. Its services are utilized by the patients coming from more than 3000 villages including adjacent districts and neighboring states. It is fully equipped with facilities like Laboratory & Blood Storage, X ray & Sonography, Operation Theatres, Labor Room, Intensive Care Unit and Neonatal ICU. About 150 eye and gynec camps are organized in the field every year. Around 1.5 LAC patients are managed in OPD while 20,000 new patients are admitted every year. About 6000 deliveries and 7500 total operations including about 4500 Cataract surgeries are performed every year. Daily bed occupancy has reached to 160. As much as 84% per cent of the indoor patients and 55% per cent of the OPD patients are offered free treatment every year
2. **Eye Care Programme**: This programme largely covers Bharuch and Narmada districts. About 100 diagnostic eye camps are organized during the year benefitting 47000 patients both in camps and at hospital OPD every year. In addition, super specialty services related to ratina, glaucoma, squint, oculoplasty are also made available to the rural, poor and tribal community. About 5500 eye surgeries including cataracts are performed every year, out of which almost 90% are treated free of cost.

Under community based eye care programme, 9 lacs population of Jhagadia and surrounding talukas was covered for providing eye care services at the door steps. About 900 blind people have been trained, rehabilitated and benefited with various schemes and services over two decades. In addition, about 100 blind children have been enrolled under integrated Braille education either at special schools for blind or in their own village schools.

1. **Under its community based delivery of health services at the doorsteps,** SEWA-Rural successfully managed total health care responsibility of one **Primary Health Centre (PHC)** covering 40,000 pop. for 15 years under a unique NGO-GO Partnership and achieved most of the targets under Health for All by 2000 AD. Then **"Family Centered Safe Motherhood and New Born Care Project"** covering entire Jhagadia taluka (pop. 175,000) was managed for almost a decade in partnership with district and block level government health department. There has been 90% reduction in maternal deaths and 50% reduction in Neonatal Mortality Rate while Institutional delivery rate has increased from 22 to 86%.

A comprehensive **mHealth innovation (ImTeCHO which has been ISO Certified)**for empowering ASHAs has been introduced by SEWA Rural for couple of years in active partnership with the health department of Govt. of Gujarat. More than 600 village level front line health workers (ASHAs) are now utilising smart phones with a specially designed software in providing maternal and child care at door steps with better quality and timely management in the districts of Bharuch, Narmada & Valsad. A **systematic research study** is also being conducted simultaneously to evaluate its feasibility and effectiveness in real life settings. This project is largely supported by Jamsetji Tata Trust - Mumbai, ICMR - New Delhi, Mac Arthur Foundation – USA and WHO - Geneva. Now the state govt. has decided to roll out **ImTeCHO initiative through out the state in a phase manner starting this year.**

1. Leveraging upon such rich experience in delivering effective public health and medical services, **Women’s Health Training and Resource Centre** offers formal training, orientation and field placement opportunity to about 500 trainees every year for more than two decades. The trainees include different cadres of health workers from voluntary sector, government staff and students coming from various academic institutions of India and abroad.

Under the **Adolescent Health and Development** initiative, about 6500 adolescent boys and girls both school going and school dropouts of rural, poor and tribal community are systematically offered health education and awareness regarding aspects of reproductive health, physical and psyco social changes occurring at tender adolescence phase, personal hygiene, anaemia control and understanding about harmful effects of tobacco and alcohol. Additionally a special project on Menstrual Hygiene Management is underway.

1. **Under Vocational Training Centre**, about 150 rural, poor and tribal youths are provided one year free residential training every year in various trades for about three decades. Besides technical and skill training value education and character building towards becoming a responsible citizen have been critical and integrated components of this training and greatly emphasized.

100% job placement is guaranteed with active support of nearby industries, while a few have established their own self entrepreneurship units. About 2000 students have successfully completed training so far and are meaningfully contributing the family earning and upliftment.

***Achievements and Credentials:*** SEWA Rural is empaneled under National Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Hub as well as accredited by Guidestar and Department of Science and Industrial Research. Many books, documents and several research articles based on SEWA Rural experiences on delivering health, medical and educational services have been published in print media including national and international scientific and peer reviewed journals.

SEWA Rural has received many international, national and regional awards which includes Sasakawa Health Prize (1985) by WHO for outstanding & innovative community health work, Bajaj award (1985) for Best managed rural hospital by Bombay Management Association, Mac Arthur Award (USA) for Creative and Effective Institutions: (2007), Best FRU Award among NGO by state government for conducting maximum no. of deliveries (successively for last few years), Rotary India Award (2011) for outstanding maternal and child care, Gujarat Pratibha Award (2011) from Vishwa Gujarati Samaj for providing outstanding health services in rural, tribal area, SKOCH Digital Inclusion Award (2014), ICONIC IDC Insights Social Impact Award (2014) and Net APP Award (2015) for innovative ImTeCHO project based on mobile phone technology to improve maternal and child care at the door steps, Public Health Champion Award (2015) from WHO - India for its sustained and innovative health service delivery to underserved population and Darshak foundation Award (2015) for outstanding rural development and Social Welfare activities.. SEWA Rural has also been recognized as one of India’s Best 10 NGOs to work for in 2017 by Great Place to Work Institute - India. Recently SEWA Rural was awarded Swami Rama Humanitarian Award – 2017 by Himalayan Institute Hospital Trust, Dehradun in Nov. 2107.

***The Team:*** All these have been made possible by more than 250 full time staff including 25 doctors team and 100 para medics and other supporting and administrative staff, and about 500 village level front line health volunteers. Many of the staff members with more than two decades of services have now started owning the organization and have committed for lifelong attachment inspite having better monetary opportunities elsewhere.

***Resource Mobilisation:*** Over and above these prgrammes, there is always a need for additional capital assets like new construction, modern equipments, vehicles, computer updation, major renovations and furnishing. Thus, it is estimated that overall Rs. 15 **CRORES** will be spent for carrying out SEWA Rural’s different activities programmes and asset building for the coming one year. Out of these, we are assured of about Rs. **12 CRORES** through grants from govt. and funding agencies, committed donations from Philanthropic organizations & industrial houses, receipts under various government schemes for BPL families and indigenous income from the affording patients. We are also confident that like in past three and half decades, generous support from all such sources will be continued to meet the deficit of **3 Crores for the coming year**.

***Future plans:*** Future plans include establishment of satellite centers to reach out to more than 8 lac population of Bharuch and Narmada District for health and development, to increase infrastructure and human resource of hospital to meet increasing demands of patients, promoting menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls and women and to undertake hospital and community based implementation research for improving the health status in reaching out to rural and tribal communities and to advocate and upscale the successful mirco level innovations at a wider scale …

***Challenges:*** Challenges being faced by the organization are 1. Ensuring satisfactorily compliance to stricter Legal and Statutory Requirements, 2. To effectively document Lessons Learnt from decades of experience and its Dissemination at wider scale, 3. Measures to sustain the motivation and commitment level of staff for the cause of social service and 4. To promote renewable energy including solar and water harvesting technology and waste disposal mechanisms in rural area. 5. How to satisfactorily manage the ever increasing load of the hospital having constraints of space, trained manpower and resources…

More information on SEWA Rural is available in its website www.sewarural.org