Mahila Housing SEWA Trust (MHT)

Engage, Empower, Enable

Working since 1994 to mobilize women in poor communities and enable access to improve habitat services, housing, and land rights
Mahila Housing Sewa Trust (MHT)

An autonomous organization promoted by the Self Employed Women's Association in 1994.

The overall objective is to improve habitat conditions (housing and infrastructure) of poor women in the informal sector.

MHT views habitat as a productive asset and believes that all citizens, irrespective of their residential status, have a right to equal access to services, and to be treated with dignity.

My home is my workplace!
MHT’s Approach

Our Mission

To organize and empower women working in the informal economy and provide them technical services/capacity building to secure better habitat, environment, & basic services.

1. Establishing credibility in the community through Community Based Organizations (CBO) and investing in individuals/collectives through a particular initiative.

2. Directing public (and sometimes private) funds to facilitate democratic decentralization and ensure effective service delivery.

3. Expanding our footprint across sectors related to habitat including water, sanitation and energy.

Our process

Our reach

Delhi
Rajasthan
Gujarat
Madhya Pradesh

Bihar
Jharkhand
Odisha
Nepal
Bangladesh
MHT’s Work

MHT is a link between GOVERNMENT, SERVICE PROVIDERS, and COMMUNITIES for delivery of basic services.

MHT programs include:

- Water, Sanitation, and hygiene
- Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Resilience
- Affordable Housing and Land Rights
- Livelihoods and Skill Development
- Democratic Urban Governance
Developing Social Capital

Mobilizing and organizing communities (especially women), developing their social capital and empowering them to address the social, physical, and environmental issues they face, and take charge of their own improvement process, is central to MHT’s work.

MHT facilitates formation of Community Based Organizations (CBO) and Community Action Groups (CAG) at slum level. The CBOs coalesce under an umbrella body called Vikasini, a city level federation of slum dwellers.
Sustainable Energy, Prosperity and Climate Resilience
An important aspect of Habitat (housing)—more so for poor women for whom home is a work place. It improves earnings, living and working conditions.

Energy Access and Energy Efficiency are neglected in habitat/housing interventions.
Energy Access and Energy Efficiency are critical for improving productivity (addressing poverty and promoting prosperity).
Is often a neglected service in slums.
Affects women the most as they have to manage homes and families.
Energy Access (grid connectivity) is fraught with procedural hassles which makes slum communities helpless.
Poor awareness of Energy Efficiency. Absence of mechanisms to take up efficiency measures by community.
Improves quality of life, for example improves indoor air quality, reduces drudgery.
Improves self worth of the poor.
Is linked to climate resilience, for example in dealing with heat.
Has implication on Carbon emissions.
Energy and Prosperity

Energy is linked to livelihoods and productivity—a critical factor for addressing poverty and building prosperity.

- **Energy and livelihoods**: Access and Efficiency, translate into more time, conducive home environment, reduction of drudgery, connection with the outside world which have a direct bearing on productivity.

- **Energy and expenditure**: Energy costs form a significant part of their expenses—some factors being inefficient use, dependence on middlemen, lack of awareness and access to latest technologies.

- **Energy and Ventilation**: Poor ventilation means poor visibility and increased need for cooling which means lights and fans are used 24*7.

- **Energy and Health**: Dependence on inefficient biomass based cooking fuels are reason for indoor air pollution.

- **Energy and Climate Change**: Energy efficiency and energy access are critical for climate action and climate resilience.
Solutions

• Designed a multipronged approach.
• Formalized grid connections (minimize process time for new connections, organize and operate a proper bill recovery system).
• Eliminated unauthorized use of electricity, regularize connections and minimize techno-commercial losses.
• Involved slum dwellers in the supply and payment of dues through CBOs.
• Introduced and supported efficient use—Demonstration of efficient products in the slums.
• Trained women from the community as Energy Auditors and Energy Entrepreneurs.
• Enabled access to energy efficient technologies and products.
• Collaborated with Government’s Renewable energy sales outlets.
• Established micro credit systems for energy services.
• Addressed the issue of Heat—introducing roofing solutions.
• Developed strategies for upscaling the programme at all levels.
ENERGY Access

- Ensure availability of safe and legal electricity supply to slum residents with the help of city governments, energy companies and NGOs.
- MHT lobbied with power companies and city governments for relaxation of tenure documents required for issuing electricity connections.
- Convinced the power companies to organize camps in slums for getting grid connections.
- Supported women in paying electricity bills on time MHT facilitated loans for payment of one time connection costs by the slum dwellers.
- Introduction of solar home lighting systems, lanterns, solar panels to charge inverters.
Interventions linking technology and awareness with financing solutions

Creating Micro Energy Auditors to facilitate

✓ Household energy audits and providing appropriate and available solutions in market.
✓ Supporting women from the community to become energy entrepreneurs to sell energy efficient products.
✓ Set up demonstration units in the community for women to become early adopter of energy efficient products and awareness among the community members.
Evaluation of Technology by poor

- Aspirational
- User friendliness
- Affordability
- Access

Effectiveness
Access to legal electricity in poor and informal settlements is often hampered due to lack of inclusive, pro-poor service delivery models. Awareness about energy efficient products is also limited. The poor are thus often at the mercy of illegal service providers and inefficient energy sources thereby paying high energy costs.

**MHT approach**

- Enabling grid connections and promoting low carbon efficient lighting.
- Develop poor women as energy auditors and entrepreneurs.
- Promoting renewable energy and energy efficient systems.
- Tackling indoor air pollution and improving indoor environment.
- Offering tailored loans to households to procure green energy products.
• **Building Trust:** MHT’s interventions reinforced and enhanced trust of the community in the approach (public-private partnership) for service delivery.

• **Make it a Win-win situation!** For example, average losses of Torrent Power Ltd, Ahmedabad were to the tune of 27% which was reduced to 4%.

• **Quality and service:** The poor are willing to pay for quality services if they receive them at their door step without the need to run around and cumbersome processes.

• **Multipronged strategy:** Demonstrate new technologies in the slums, provide credit and enhance awareness.

• **Carry out the important function of validating new technologies for promoting them instead of just marketing them.** Participate in tests and trials for bettering the products.

• **Sustainability of interventions:** Train women from the slums to implement energy solutions.

• **Combine Access and Efficiency with off grid solutions.**
Achievements

• **Legalizing grid connections:** The slum residents were able to access regular (legal) electric connections at affordable rates.

• **Contributing to Productivity:** Unrestricted and regularized power supply has made their home—their work place—more productive.

• **Quality of life:** Usage of electrical appliances for improving livelihood opportunities, reducing drudgery, affordable entertainment and getting connected to the world through TV.

• **Peace of mind:** No hassles due to illegal connections and dependence on middlemen or worry of power cuts due to non-payment of bills.

• **Positive impact on the health status of slum residents:** Due to use of efficient cook stoves.

• **Children were able to study without fearing power cuts.**

• **Electricity bills served as documents of proof of residence.**

• **Energy access and efficiency served as a stepping stone for climate resilience work.**

• **Most significantly, the self worth of the slum residents increased manifold and paved a way towards integration of the slum residents into the social and economic fabric of the city.**
Future Plans

• Work with poor women in urban, peri-urban and rural areas.
• Reach out to more states and also work in the South Asia region.
• Combine grid and off grid solutions—venture into distributed systems like solar micro grids.
• Address the climate stresses like Heat through roofing and ventilation solutions.
• Train women from slums as Energy Auditors/Entrepreneurs and in Climate Resilience.
• Creating business models for providing access to energy efficient products.
• Pilot solar mini grids, train women and develop sustainable business models.
Collaborations or partnerships

- Work with technology providers in off-grid solutions and products.
- Work with private and public electricity providing companies in other cities on energy access issues.
- Work with nodal Agencies of the government that promote use of renewable products.
- Work with local manufacturers for roofing solutions in the area of heat solutions.
- Set up consortia for accessing climate funds.
- Set up mechanisms—women led social enterprises, credit cooperatives, CAGs, CBOs and youth groups.
Energy Audit forms

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<th>Date:</th>
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<th>Location:</th>
<th>Energy Audit Forms</th>
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### Table 1: Energy Audit Forms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column 1</th>
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### Table 2: Energy Audit Forms

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<th>Column 1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>3.</td>
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</table>
Optimising Energy consumption through Energy Audits
Cool Roof Technologies

- Modular Roof
- Thermacol Roof
- Airlite Ventilation
Cool Roof Technologies

Green Roof
Energy Efficient Cook stoves

Burner moulded by single pipe which saves 30% of Kerosene per liter.

Two burners can be used to cook simultaneously and saves 40% of wood.
MHT Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slum settlements served</th>
<th>Households reached</th>
<th>Individuals served</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>895</td>
<td>311,450</td>
<td>1,557,000</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBOs formed</th>
<th>Membership of CBOs</th>
<th>CBO members trained</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>746</td>
<td>121,250</td>
<td>13,000</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households accessing potable water</th>
<th>Toilets installed</th>
<th>Households accessing electricity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>181,000</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction workers trained</th>
<th>Construction workers certified</th>
<th>Worth of government contract received</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>3,159</td>
<td>$600,000</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households surveyed and listed</th>
<th>Formal houses</th>
<th>Property titles registered</th>
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<tr>
<td>305,900</td>
<td>14,221</td>
<td>5,467</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worth of the registered property titles</th>
<th>Women on title and/ or with tenure rights</th>
<th>Worth of public resources accessed for poor women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$6.4Mn</td>
<td>$5,467</td>
<td>$2.6Mn</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount saved by credit coop members</th>
<th>Individual loans</th>
<th>SMBT housing loans issued</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1.6Mn</td>
<td>4,452</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Over the last fifteen years MHT has made a significant impact, improving the lives of people in Gujarat and other states.

A concise listing of MHT's major impacts is as illustrated.
Thank You

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