



**VANLAXMI TREE
GROWER'S
COOPERATIVE
GANESHPURA-
SEWA'S
ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION
PROGRAM**

WE WELCOME YOU



Ganeshpura

Women ecocentre



The Vanlaxmi Tree Grower's Cooperative is an effort initiated by SEWA.

The cooperative consists of rural women who have gone from being landless labourers to leasing ten acre farmland. Through environmental regeneration and SEWA's initiative they have turned barren wasteland into an eco-friendly destination for visitors of all ages.

VANLAXMI TREE GROWER COOPERATIVE



The scenario of rapid industrialization and absence of requisite inputs for marketing have left the small and marginal farmers land and asset less. These circumstances coupled with the increased cost of irrigation have caused the farmers to become casual labourers. However, it is the female agricultural workers who have been worst hit with no source of alternative labor. The women, who work here today in this ten acre land, are handful representative of such landless labourers.

Under SEWA's guidance the women have formed a cooperative and have obtained land from the government revenue department. This however presented a catch 22 situation as the cooperative act allowed for a cooperative to be registered as landowners only while the revenue land could be allotted only to a cooperative and a two and a half year struggle ensued. Finally as a settlement between the two the agricultural workers had to be registered as the Vanlaxmi Tree Grower's cooperative instead of an agricultural worker's cooperative. They subsequently obtained the land which took three exhaustive years (1986-89) of leveling to make it apt for cultivation.





Next ensued proper skill cultivation which the women procured with the help of SEWA and the local Research Station of "Gujarat Agriculture University for technical assistance." As an outcome, one can see scientific practices such as horticulture, agro-forestry, drip irrigation, vermicompost pits and so on practiced today in this farm.

The tractors the women used were loaned to them after the local farmers were done using them. This delay in production trickled right down to marketing which on the whole proved to be devastating. Finally, IPCL donated tilling tools and today the women are well acquainted with these tools, which have considerably aided them.

On another occasion by using their diplomatic skills the women managed to alleviate the charges of raising agricultural crops while being registered only to cultivate horticultural crops and also the issue of them making a Rs.100,000 profit.

One of the most important challenges faced by the women was that of social stigma. Their efforts were initially not taken seriously. However, by the time 90% germination level was reached they had earned people's respect and today they are considered a legal distributor of seeds by the Gujarat State Seed Corporation.

The land is now nearing the end of its thirty year lease period. Nevertheless, it continues to stand as a moment to all women hailing from similar social strata, as a testament to their hardships and struggle, leadership, self esteem, unity, and ultimately inevitable success.

- ◆ The farm consists of a diversified eco-system
- ◆ All the trees are cultivated here in as organic manner as is possible.
- ◆ Several rich species of fauna Can be identified here including peacocks, baboons, mynah, sparrows,



- ◆ The farmland runs ten acres in length and covers an area of four hectares... It also displays modern scientific instruments of irrigation that are an incredible achievement
- ◆ Besides, in order to encourage afforestation, the Neem tree has been planted over an area of 1 hectare.
- ◆ Both horticultural and interfield crops such as Papaya, Pomegranate, Custard apple, Sapota and Lime are cultivated here over a net area of 2.5 hectares.

DO VISIT...



Modhera temple : An architectural marvel, this temple to the sun god was built in 1026 AD and is today a site maintained by the Architectural Survey of India. It is 35 kms away from Mehsana.



Becharaji temple : An ancient temple to the Goddess Becharaji, flocked by thousands of pilgrims every year.

Step well : Located near the entrance to the Modhera temple, this three story step well was built in the tenth century as a step over point for caravans. Within the step well there is an ancient temple dedicated to the Goddess Moteswari.

Kudarti Mitra Pravasan Udpadan Kendra

Shree Vanlaxmi Mahila SEWA Vruksh Sahkari Mandali

Village : Ganeshpura, Block : Kadi

District : Mehsana

How to reach us ?

By air : Nearest Airport is Ahmedabad (62 km)

By Road : Ahmedabad (51 km), Mehsana (12 km)

Local Transport : Non Metered Auto rickshaws

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