



Laitabai Shevu Chavan

Lalitha's life prior to joining Sabala was nightmarish. She had seen only the tougher side of the life. Her husband left her when their child was only year old. She then had the sole responsibility of her child and her old parents. She has done very well to take care of her family.

Hailing from Bijapur district, Lalitha was born in 1972 in a poor family. She was one among the three children to her parents. She studied till class ten and then started working as a labour in fields to add to the earning of her parents as they could not afford to send her for further studies. She was married at the age of 22 to Sevu Chauhan. Her parents gave him 3 tolas (30 g) of gold as dowry. They had a baby boy in one year of her marriage. When everything seemed alright, Sevu started torturing Lalitha for more dowries and kept scolding her saying she had dark complexion and he hates. She kept refusing for it and finally one day he left her and disappeared from the village leaving behind all his responsibilities. Her child was only one year old then. Suddenly everything was upright for Lalitha. She had become completely hopeless for she then had the sole responsibility of her kid as well as her parents to whose house she went back to stay. Her earning was not sufficient to support the family.

Sabala's intervention

She was aided by Sabala when the organisation was surveying that part of the district for the women who needed support. Lalitha joined the embroidery section as she was a tribal woman who knew the craft from her

childhood. Soon she was trained into an expert worker. She is one of the finest craftswomen that Sabala has. She has represented Sabala in spreading awareness about health in her area. She has also represented Sabala in many exhibitions in Bangalore and Delhi. She is a bold lady who raises her voice against anything that she feels wrong. She takes some responsibilities in the village as a volunteer to help the villagers and is aiming to participate in Indian Politics.

Lalitha says, "My life has changed in many terms – economically, socially and politically. When I was working as a labour, I was paid only Rs.900 a month and now I am paid Rs.3000 per month. Now I live my life with greater confidence and hope."

She is member of a SHG where she does saving and takes loan whenever necessary to help her son in his education and also she takes leadership in the discussion of some issues of village that are discussed.

Observations

Despite her husband leaving her for dowry and her dark complexion which he realized after having baby sounds ridiculous but it is his irresponsibility that helped Lalitha to gain more knowledge and confidence to lead her life.

She is taking care of her parents like a male child to the parents which is very rare to see in the present Indian society.

She is helping the others in the village voluntarily which she is doing so that no other women should undergo the life she went through.