

**LOOKING AT THE WORLD, THROUGH THE EYES OF A WOMAN**

**CONTEXT & CONCERNS:**

Women constitute 50% percent of the world's population. Women's Empowerment and gender equality is closely linked to the reduction of poverty and achievement of global targets in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

It is a known fact that women can change not only their own economic status but that of the communities and societies in which they live. Yet more often than not, women's economic contributions are undervalued, under-utilised and unrecognized

Businesses though, now increasingly understand that their non-financial performance is interlinked to financial performance of its communities, especially women. It is in this context businesses have begun to consider the importance of women empowerment.

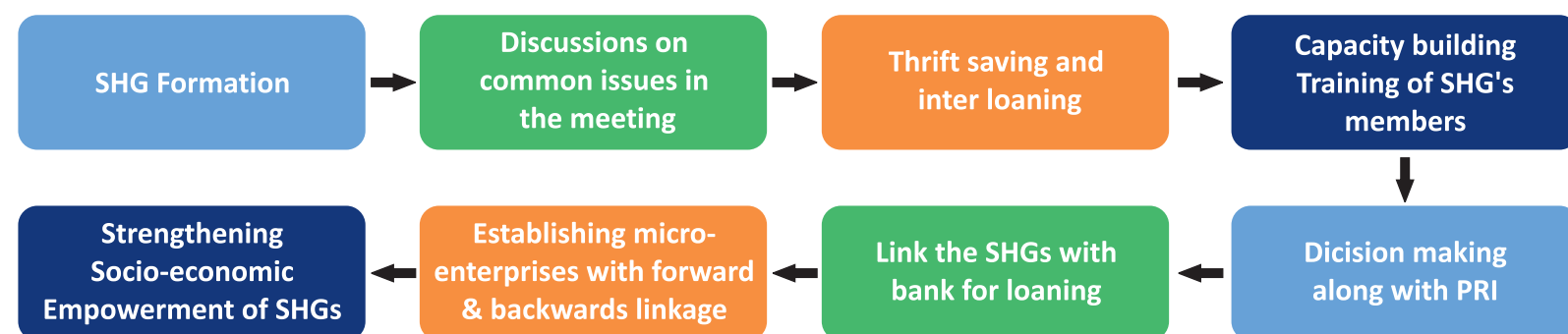
At HZL we ensure that Women Empowerment is not just a philanthropic initiative, but an integral part of our organizational culture which results in good economics and accountability.

**CONTENT & ACTIVITY :**

Across Rajasthan, wherein HZL operates there is major socio-economic disparity between men and women. Hindustan Zinc Ltd is doing its bit through its CSR initiatives by helping the community transform gender relations by creating ways for women to come together in their individual and collective struggles. "Economic empowerment gives way to social empowerment," this belief has led Hindustan Zinc to implement its Self Help Group program with full vigor. These groups are mainly involved in thrift and credit. Hindustan Zinc is also doing skill development trainings to set up small enterprises.

SHGs are collectively promoted as village institutions and empowerment happens due to the shared decision making and the strength that comes from collective bargaining. All our development work is carried out through these SHGs. The SHGs are then trained in different vocations and linked with the banks to start up micro enterprises either as a group or individually. These enterprises while giving women economic security and independence also helps increase their sense of self worth.

The process to empower women through SHGs can be understood well in the flow chart given below



Each SHG comprises of at least 15 to 20 women with socio-economic support being provided by HZL. Backward and forward linkages are facilitated by the CSR team to make the initiatives economically viable. The entire process is being monitored and supervised by three tier village structure -SHG's committee, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) and HZL CSR team. Till date we have helped develop 491 SHGs having 9,403 members and amongst these 67 SHGs are engaged in Income generating activities.



The project is assessed on following basis:

Project	Measurement Indicators
Women Empowerment	Increase in Income-level
	Pre & Post Socio-economic Status
	Capacity Development
	Social Awareness
	Homogeneity within the group
	SHGs linked with IGA
	Utilization of increased income - productive use Vs consumptive use

**FUTURE PLANS:**

HZL is committed towards enabling overall socio-economic and socio-cultural empowerment of women. HZL's CSR objective in this sector is to help establish SHG federation. This concept of federations is seen as a promising initiative that could potentially contribute to sustainability of SHGs and to women empowerment in a broader sense. This is also an opportunity to help establish local gender sensitive leadership.

Investing in women helps speed up the development of local economies and creates more equitable societies - Mr. Akhilesh Joshi - CEO HZL.

Economic development efforts to combat poverty can only succeed if women are part of the solution. Doing so yields a double dividend: When women are economically empowered, they raise healthier, better educated families. Their countries are more economically prosperous because of it, too.

**Some of our major women empowerment programme '**

- **Our Girls Our Pride'**
- **Aganwadi Programme**
- **Increase enrolment of Girl Children in formal educational institutions**
- **Facilitation of Toilets at household level**
- **Training on Personal Hygiene for women and adolescent girls**

