



daily GOOD

Give a man a fish, he'll eat for a day. Give a woman microcredit and she, her husband, her children and her extended family will eat for a lifetime.
--Bono

From Untouchable to Businesswoman

Plenty of people visiting Times Square traveled a long way to reach New York, but it's safe to say that few covered anything like the distances Kakuben Lalabhai Parmar had. This is not just a matter of mileage, although it's certainly a hike from Madhutra, a rural village in India's western state of Gujarat, to 42nd Street. At a deeper cultural level, her journey embodies a half-century of global feminism and the evolutionary arc of modern India. In the cattle-herding community Ms. Parmar belongs to, women were traditionally bound not just to their region or village but to the home. Married at 14, the once "untouchable" mother of seven has become the family's chief breadwinner through microfinance opportunities. "Now that I have my own business, my husband shows me respect," she says. He even helps with her accounts.

Be The Change:

Learn more about the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), the organization that gave Ms. Parmar the opportunity to sell her handicrafts.