

In a village where jobs are few and risks are many, Kavita chose to plant possibility and watch it bloom.

As part of the Mera Gaon Mera Pride (MGMP) program, Samhita-CGF partnered with the Himmothan Society to support women-led entrepreneurship in rural Uttarakhand. One key initiative under this was the Women Entrepreneurship Development Program (WEDP), developed in collaboration with the Indian School of Business. The program aimed to equip women with the tools, training, and confidence to turn small ideas into viable, local enterprises.

Nestled high in the Garhwal Himalayas, Pauri Garhwal is a quiet and peaceful district in Uttarakhand known for its sweeping mountain views, ancient temples, and forests thick with oak and pine. Life here moves at its own pace, shaped by the rhythm of the hills. But beneath the postcard beauty lies a tougher truth: with steep terrain and scattered settlements, access to stable livelihoods remains limited especially for women balancing household duties and seasonal income.

This is where Kavita Nautiyal's story begins — a young mother and floriculturist whose grit mirrors the resilience of the hills she calls home. With three failed small businesses, a growing family, and limited income from a small plot of land, she was in search of a breakthrough.

She had tried her hand at making papads and growing vegetables, but nothing seemed to stick. ***"Teen baar haath jala chuki thi,"*** Kavita recalls. ***"Papad banaye, sabzi bechi par koi munafa nahi hua. Kaam ruk gaya."***



It was floriculture that finally caught her attention — a field with untapped potential in her region. Yet, the journey was anything but easy. With no formal training or exposure, her first year was riddled with setbacks. From choosing the wrong seeds to struggling with the varied needs of each plant, she faced one challenge after another.

Her turning point came when she discovered the Mera Gaon Mera Pride program, supported by Samhita-CGF and implemented by the Himmothan Society. Though hesitant at first, Kavita joined the Women Entrepreneurship Development Program (WEDP), developed with the Indian School of Business. For the first time, she was introduced to the language of business — cash flows, customer targeting, digital tools, all tailored for rural women like her. With new skills and a renewed mindset, Kavita began to think like an entrepreneur. She invested in a greenhouse, sourced better-quality inputs, and used YouTube and Instagram not just to learn, but to market. She started tracking her income, planning her expenses, and paying off the Rs 2.5 lakh debt that once overwhelmed her.

"Pehle sirf kaam karti thi. Ab samajh mein aaya ki kaam ko kaise badhaya jaata hai," she says.

Her nursery, Vidya Nursery Pushp Vatika, began to take root. With guidance from the Himmothan Society, Kavita tapped into new networks connecting with buyers, transporters, attending local fairs, and building a loyal customer base. Her knowledge stood out. Customers began seeking her out not just for plants, but for advice.

When a local school placed an order for one lakh plants, Kavita saw an opportunity to grow not just her business, but her impact. She hired five other women from her village, all of them mothers like herself, to help fulfil the order. Today, the group works in shifts, balancing nursery work with household duties, creating a shared model of rural entrepreneurship.

"Mere jaise aur bhi mahilaayein hain jo sirf moka chahti hain. Agar main kar sakti hoon, toh woh bhi kar sakti hain," she says with conviction.



In good months, Kavita earns up to Rs 60,000. But more than the income, it's the confidence and stability she's built for herself, and for others that stands tall. Her goal now? To expand into new districts like Tehri and Chamoli, and make floriculture a viable livelihood option for more women in the hills.

As she puts it, ***"Aatmanirbhar banane ka jab jasba hota hai, toh koi bhi raah mushkil nahin".***

