Mission Shakti was launched in 2001 with the specific objective of empowering the women of Odisha by organising them into Self Help Groups. Today it has taken the shape of a silent Revolution across the State covering all habitations - rural and urban. We have 4 lakh groups having 6 lakh members. Our SHGs are involved in activities as diverse as making LED lights to sanitary napkins, from running the BijuGaonGadi buses to supplying Take Home Ration under the ICDS scheme. They are involved in electricity meter reading and supplying provisions to our Ashram Schools.

What is truly unique and motivating is that almost all the SHGs started small – many of them saving handfuls of grains for their monthly contribution to the group. Today they access credit and other financial services from the formal financial system and have market linkages. They have sustained and scaled up their business portfolios over two decades and many SHGs have an investment profile and turnover in lakhs. Our Mission Shakti SHGs are true models of successful women entrepreneurship at the grassroots.

But more than the economic profile is the impact of Mission Shakti on the lives of ordinary women and the local communities to which they belong. It has created a cadre of leaders among women who stand tall in their communities and play decisive roles in the public arena.

I commend the Department of Women & Child Development and Mission Shakti for curating this book. I hope it will encourage and inspire our women and provide an insight into the unique journeys of the Mission Shakti Self Help Groups of Odisha.

Naveen Patnaik
Chief Minister, Odisha
Shri Prafulla Samal
Minister, Department of Women & Child Development and Mission Shakti

The emancipation of women is a cardinal goal for a prosperous society. At the core of the transformation agenda of a society, there is a need to address gender inequity, limited access to entitlement and structural oppression while creating a more conducive environment for the fostering of equal and full participation of our women in all aspects. Mission Shakti envisages a state that is gender sensitive and facilitates equal participation of women in nation building.

In addressing this challenge, Mission Shakti programme was launched by Honourable Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik on International Women’s day i.e. 8th March 2001. In 18 years, Mission Shakti has been able to organise 69 lakh women under 6 lakh Women Self Help Groups and champion the cause of women’s socio-economic empowerment and women’s rights. It has evolved from a programme to a silent movement that focusses on the financial inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable women, women’s socio-economic empowerment and gender equity. The reconfiguration and reorganisation of the Department of Women & Child Development and Mission Shakti in 2017, provides focused attention on issues of socio-economic empowerment and gender sensitive society.

Remarkable achievements of Mission Shakti such as gender mainstreaming of livelihood and entrepreneurship programmes, knowledge empowerment of Self Help Group members, leadership advancement for good governance, awareness creation on Government schemes and social entitlements, linkage of Self Help Groups with financial institutions, and multi-level marketing support, has been witnessed by the State through a vibrant women-centred movement resulting in participation of women in several income generating activities and services.

The above interventions are a concrete expression of our commitment to women’s empowerment in the State of Odisha. I extend my best wishes to women carrying forward the Mission Shakti movement. My warm regards to the women featured in the inspirational book and all others. I hope this book will continue to inspire many more women to extend support towards building a more prosperous Odisha.

Women & Child Development and Mission Shakti
It is well-known that empowerment of women significantly contributes to a society’s progress apart from furthering the critical rights of a more than half of our population. Promotion of Women’s Self-Help Groups under Mission Shakti was indeed the strategy of government for achieving women’s empowerment in Odisha.

As its first Mission Director back in 2001, we were a small team with big ideas. Through these years the small hesitant steps have paved the way for a movement across all districts of the state and different segments of society, touching lives of women socially, economically and politically. Women in Odisha are exploring new avenues as a result of their increased access to capacity building programmes, credit facilities, group enterprises as well as exposure to skill training opportunities. Today there are more than 6 lakh Self Help Groups with nearly 69 lakh women under the umbrella of Mission Shakti.

I am proud to present this book which is a tribute to the women of Odisha and their indomitable spirit. It is a salute to their role in empowering their own lives as much as in contributing to society so meaningfully. This book is a celebration of women self help groups across the state and an inspiration to people everywhere, determined to building inclusive, prosperous and just societies.
Smt. Sujata Karthikeyan, IAS
Commissioner-cum-Director, Mission Shakti

Mission Shakti is synonymous with the empowerment story of lakhs of women across the State of Odisha. Started in 2001 as an initiative to form Self Help Groups, it has grown organically and developed into one of the most successful women’s empowerment programmes. Today Mission Shakti has 69 lakh women organised into more than 6 lakh Self Help Groups.

It is much more than just a thrift and credit programme where women come together for the purpose of saving money and use it for internal lending and leveraging bank loans. This is not to say that the financial strength of Mission Shakti is not robust. Today, Self Help Groups which started by saving small amounts have loan exposure and savings in lakhs. However, the uniqueness of the Odisha Self Help Group story is its integration with other Government programmes enabling women to be at the forefront of decision making and change.

As Director Mission Shakti, it is an honour to present this book to a wider audience. I thank my team who helped put this book together. A special thanks to the lakhs of Mission Shakti women across the State. A humble attempt has been made to capture their stories through pictures – stories that talk of perseverance, faith, aspiration and leadership.
Introduction

SHAKTI, a powerful word that denotes the strength of the feminine—a reference to the primordial female energy that drives the universe. An energy so potent, that its impact is not limited to the feminine alone, but encompasses all that comes in its way. It transforms everything.

Mission Shakti, aptly named as the brainchild of Shri Naveen Patnaik, Chief Minister, Odisha. Launched on 8th March 2001, its objective was to strengthen the women’s empowerment process through formation of women’s self helps groups.

The transformative role that Mission Shakti has played in the last eighteen years is truly remarkable. Today, it has nearly 69 lakh women in its fold, organised into 6 lakh self help groups. Mission Shakti is no longer a programme; it is a movement with a powerful momentum that has grown beyond its stated vision, touching lives not only of the women it serves, but also of the families, communities and societies they live in. The inspiration for this book comes from the tales of ordinary women who have come together under Mission Shakti to carve a better life for themselves and the spaces they inhabit.
Barsharani Shakti Dal of village Barangsing under Guma block was one of the earliest Mission Shakti groups formed in 2002. It has taken up the Biju Gaon Gadi bus service in Gajapati. They have been striving to break gender stereotypes while addressing the problem of providing affordable public transport in inaccessible pockets.

THE MISSION STATEMENT

Help construct a society which is self-reliant, conscious of socio-economic issues, where there is a spirit of cooperation, where women are appropriately skilled to undertake their choice of activities without hindrances or dependence, where there is leadership development while maintaining gender equity & above all each having a respect for the values of others and each serving for the good of the greater society.
MISSION Shakti Bhawan inaugurated on 15th October, 2015 by Honourable Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik is a tribute to women’s empowerment in the State of Odisha. Built at a cost of Rs. 23 crores, it houses the Directorate of Mission Shakti. With modern lecture halls, training facilities, dormitories and related offices it is the hub of Self Help Group activities and programmes.

A 500 seater auditorium, open air amphitheatre and kiosks selling SHG products will soon be part of this complex.

The Bhawan truly represents the Women’s Self Help Group movement of Odisha - Mission Shakti.
The JOURNEY...

1. Nandini Mahanta, Maa Shitala SHG, Mayurbhanj
Maa Shitala SHG was formed in 2003. We started with a monthly contribution of Rs 20/-. I took my first loan of Rs 20,000/- in 2006. Today, we count our profits in lakhs and I am proud to say that I have formed 27 SHGs among the Khodas and Morkalikia tribes of our area.

2. Sushila Sahu, Nari Shakti SHG, Mayurbhanj
I was very young when my husband left me and our daughter. Our local AWW asked me to join a SHG. Today because of Mission Shakti, I have a small grocery store and have educated my daughter.

3. Kalyani Deep, Indira Shakti SHG, Bolangir
My husband died in 2004 leaving me with 5 daughters and 2 sons. The women of our village counselled me to join a SHG. I was afraid as I had no idea of what to do. However, in 2005, I joined the Indira Shakti SHG. We run a successful rice business and with the money I earned, I educated all my children well. I now ask all women to be part of SHGs.

4. Anandini Sahu, Maa Gayatri SHG, Bolangir
I had an inter-caste marriage in 1998 due to which I was excommunicated from the village. Our local ABOC encouraged me to join an SHG. Due to Mission Shakti, I got an extended family. Today I am a successful entrepreneur in my locality.

5. Ketaki Behera, Maa Laxmi SHG, Sambalpur
After joining Maa Laxmi Self Help Group, I was encouraged to pursue higher studies. It is only due to the encouragement and financial support I got from my group that I was able to complete my Master's Degree and the B.Ed. course. I am proud to be a district level trainer today. Thanks to Mission Shakti, women like me have found our identity.

6. Jahnabi Swain, Maa Mahadevi SHG, Sambalpur
Our Anganwadi Worker compelled us to form an SHG in 2007. We had no idea about banks or loans. Initially we used to collect sal leaves and sell them in the local haats. Subsequently we took the lease of 3 village tanks. Today we are successful in pisciculture and earn around 5 lakhs every season. I encourage all women to join Mission Shakti.

7. Anjuman Ara, Kalyani SHG, Khurda
Many years ago, I formed our SHG with 15 women. It was not common for women of our community to come out during those days. But we continued our journey and today I am the District Federation Secretary apart from being a successful entrepreneur. I have participated in many exhibitions across the country.
Addressing the challenges around personal hygiene of women and adolescent girls, Arati Behera of Maa Bimala SHG from Kumanda, introduced low cost sanitary napkins in urban and rural markets of Angul district. Under her leadership, the SHG further started manufacturing LED bulbs and marketed it at a low cost to make it affordable for rural women.
Women SHGs have a vital role in reviving the dying weaving history of the famous Makidia tribe. This form of weaving produced fabric that was once upon a time exported to other countries in a hollow bamboo culm. Maa Laxmi SHG, Jaleswar block, stepped forward in 2002 to rejuvenate this traditional legacy. With an annual turnover of Rs. 25 lakh, these women weavers have been able to spearhead an initiative of restoring a primitive art of weaving in Odisha.

Matialapada SHG is another group from Baleswar. The members are adept in making and packing moodhi (puffed rice) which is a popular food item. From the sale of moodhi alone they have an annual turnover of more than fifty lakhs.
Bhadrak - literally means baked earth (Italian). In Odisha the craft is traditionally undertaken by men. However, many SHGs are now involved in the activity. Ghanta Basuli SHG from Bonth, has been involved in making of terracotta artefacts since 2002 an annual turnover of Rs. 10 lakh.

Woollen fabric applique is an ornamental needlework done on pieces of woollen fabric which are sewn together or stuck on a larger piece to form a picture or pattern. This traditional form of applique work has been promoted by Jay Durga Shakti Group from Bonth, who have an annual turnover of Rs. 20 lakh. The group has also been preparing different types of applique cotton and jute bags which are highly in demand in urban and rural markets of the state.
Bargarh Sarees, as the name shows from Bargarh region of Bargarh district. These sarees are traditionally hand-woven involving the process of tie & dye. Bargarh is the home of the world famous Pasapalli weave. Jagadamba SHG from Bargarh involved in weaving of Bargarh sarees, was established in 2002 and has an annual turnover of Rs. 85 lakh.
Haragauri SHG from Balangir district of Western Odisha have expertise in handwoven sarees. The sarees feature bands of brocade in the borders and also at the ends, called anchal or pallu.

Maa Biraja SHG of Kulthipali village, has been making laddus with ground nut and jaggery for supply to the nearby Anganwadi centres for the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) programme. Odisha has a unique decentralised feeding programme through the SHG network. With a state-of-the-art production facility in this remote location and an annual turnover of Rs. 25 lakhs, this SHG has 4 women with disability as its members.

Catering to the daily culinary needs of an Indian kitchen, Nari Shakti SHG of Saintala, ventured into the world of spices in 2007. Setting up a micro enterprise, these women entrepreneurs adopted advanced manufacturing and packaging practices to market powdered red chilli, cumin, black pepper, cardamom and other dried spices under the brand name ‘Nari Shakti’. Marketing its products across the state of Odisha, this SHG has been able to showcase brilliant entrepreneurship and market networking skills in western Odisha.

Incense sticks, a traditional cottage industry, has witnessed phenomenal growth over last few decades. Shakti Swarup SHG, Bolangir, has taken up the manufacturing of incense sticks as a livelihood initiative since 2009. Mechanised manufacturing has been introduced on a large scale. Marketed under the brand name ‘Shakti Swarup’ in four fragrances and three different packs, this enterprise has an annual turnover of 21 lakhs.
Biswa Sarbadamana SHG from Baliguda has been commercially producing spices and papad since 2013. Organic spices produced by this group is in great demand in nearby districts.

Phulatoli Geja from Biswaranjana Sarbadamana SHG, Baliguda, has been a source of inspiration for Persons with Disability. She has been associated with spice, badi and papad making since 2013 with continuous monitoring of product quality. Her attention to detail over the processing line has helped this group adhere to stringent quality parameters.

Maa Pataneswari SHG from Boudh, has been making Chatua (THR) for supply to the nearby Anganwadi centres for the ICDS programme. They have an annual turnover of more than a crore.

Golden coloured terracotta figurine and decorative items are being made by Kasturba A SHG in Badhigaon since 2003. Mrs. Prabhati Pujahari has been the inspiration behind this group activity.
Arisa Pitha is a traditional sweet pancake from Odisha. The crispy outer layer surrounds a sweet and soft core. The main ingredient is coarse ground rice and jaggery with other condiments, perfect for snacking at tea time. This tasty pancake is prepared especially on the occasion of marriage and festivals. Mahima SHG of Cuttack has special expertise in this sweet delicacy. The annual turnover of the group has reached Rs.9 lakh.

Large scale coconut farming in the coastal belt of Odisha has been supporting the age-old coir craft in the state. Toys, door mats, wall hangings and other decorative items made of coir are highly appreciated in the rural as well as urban markets. The eco-friendly craft uses natural dyes and colourful threads and wool for a vivid display of colours in coir produce. Kabita Sahu has been the driving force for adoption of coir craft by Maa Tarini SHG, Kajidiha, with an annual turnover of around 30 lakh.
Deogarh

The picturesque district of Deogarh surrounded by mountains, springs, falls, forests, and rich collection of flora and fauna has been a destination for fish farming. Applying scientific principles of pisciculture such as rearing a mix of bottom feeder, mid feeder, and top feeder fish varieties in the community tank, Maa Mangala SHG of Utunia, has been able to inspire others to undertake sustainable intensification of fresh water aquaculture.

Rearing goats under semi-intensive and intensive systems for commercial production has been widely adopted by women SHGs in this part of the Eastern Ghats. Traditional knowledge coupled with improved veterinary healthcare practices has enabled 51 SHGs to take up goat rearing on a commercial scale while managing an average herd strength of 500 goats.
Dhenkanal

Dhokra metal-casting uses the lost-wax technique, one of the oldest and most advanced methods of metal casting known to human civilization. This unbroken tradition coupled with the intrinsic starkness and vitality of the art form makes Dhokra coveted by collectors. There is a primitive simplicity and imaginative use of design and pattern, well nurtured by women SHGs. SHGs of Dhenkanal District have been earning up to Rs 1.6 crores annually by making Dhokra products.
Traditionally the highly nutritious millets, also referred to as nutri-cereals, formed a substantial part of the diet and the cropping system in the tribal areas of Odisha. Pulverised finger millet and other millet-based recipes by Jaya Guru SHG, Jajpur, are even relished by diabetics and weight-watchers.
GANJAM

The Berhampuri silk saree is unique due to its typical style of weaving with kumbha, phoda, and temple motifs. The zari work border is also unique. The sarees also adorn the deities of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra at the Jagannath temple in Puri. Aditya SHG of Ganjam, has been weaving Berhampuri silk pattu sarees generating an annual turnover of 28 lakhs.

The SHGs of Ganjam are famous for making pickles from mango, lemon, garlic, green chilli, jack fruit, bater, mushroom, banana stem, bitter gourd and shrimps, lentil and rice based crunchy snacks such as muriaka, chips, chips and fried dals are also in the product list of many SHGs. They also play an important role in supplying chhutua for the ICDS programme.
JAGATSINGHPUR

Palmyra palm leaf craft - the genesis of this craft like many other can be traced to the Jagannath temple of Puri where offerings are packed in baskets made of woven palm leaves. Maa Mangala WPSD at Raghunathpur, formed in 2000, has been undertaking Palmyra leaf craft with an annual turnover of 2 lakh.

Dried fish locally known as “Sukhua” is an Odia delicacy prepared through traditional methods such as drying, smoking and salting. Dried fish has a storage life of a few months, and is a common way to preserve food in subtropical climates. Maa Swayam Sahayak Gosti from Kujanga, formed in the year 2001 has been preparing several varieties of dried fish from marine and fresh water fish, shrimps and prawns. It has a steady clientele and members get regular income from this activity.
Jajpur

In Odisha, paddy and oyster mushrooms are commercially cultivated for sale in local markets. Mushroom, a rich source of protein, minerals and vitamins, is a nutritious food for the vegetarian population. Biswa Jajpur SHG from Balbana has been cultivating mushroom since 2009 and earning handsome profits.

Siddheswari SHG from Bari, has been associated with stitching uniforms for last few years. This includes school uniforms, women’s garments and doormats. With an annual turnover of 5 lakhs, this SHG has been providing uniforms to schools run by the School and Mass Education Department.
The Women of Maa Amba SHG of Jharsuguda are proud of their hand-crafted achievements. They stitch beautiful motifs on fabric though machine stitching. Of the more common of these motifs are the elephant, parrot, peacock, ducks, creepers, trees, half-moon, sun, planets and flowers like lotus, jasmine.

Jharsuguda

Maa Metakani SHG from Kolabira, has been doing tailoring on a commercial scale, manufacturing school uniforms and women wear since 2004. The group sells school uniforms to institutions and has advanced mechanised manufacturing with an annual turnover of Rs. 6 lakhs from this activity alone.
KALAHANDI

Combining minimalist and contemporary design principles with the beauty of bamboo, the members of Bamboo Art & Craft SHG, Sainicipal, Koyala create home décor items which are eco-friendly and trendy. This SHG has an annual turnover of more than 30 lakh.

Working with heavy machinery, the women of Maa Sarbamangala SHG, Kalhori, Juncapri are involved in the processing of groundnuts and making tasty snack items. They have an annual turnover of over 9 lakhs from this activity alone.
Abundantly available forest products like Sal leaves are used to make cups and plates for serving and packaging food stuff. Prasaitara SHG of Nuagam, has successfully taken up leaf plate making as an eco friendly enterprise. These leaf plates have a great demand in local and far-off markets of the state.

Turmeric from Kandhamal tract is popular for high content of curcumin which has anti-inflammatory effects and is a strong antioxidant. Organic ginger grown in this agro-climatic zone is highly preferred for preparation of traditional herbal medicines and mouth fresheners. SHGs from Kandhamal cater to the demands of organic turmeric and ginger in far-off markets in the country.
KENDRAPARA

The main distinguishing feature of Golden grass, the long gilded golden stem which is mostly found in Kendrapada district, is its natural brightness and golden colour. At harvest, the flower bud is removed and scattered in the wet grassland where they are transplanted. Mahabir SHG at Jhajanga, has pioneered this craft with an annual turnover of Rs. 10 lakh. Baskets, bags, flower vases, jewellery boxes, lamps, mats, wall hangings, tapestry and other decorative items are manufactured by this SHG.

Sri Krishna SHG Ichhapur, formed in 2017, has taken up soft toy making as a source of livelihood support. This generates an annual turnover of Rs. 6 lakhs.
Keonjhar

Badi is a traditional Odia delicacy that accompanies a traditional serving of rice-based lunch or dinner. This crispy nugget is made of black gram in combination with sesame seeds, pumpkin, ash gourd or ground nut. The floral designs are quite appealing and the baddis can be baked, pan fried or deep fried to suit different taste buds. Aila Ambikekanti SHG of Tentulindia, has been a pioneer in Badi making with an annual turnover of around 20 lakh.

Inspired by Premalata Sutar, paper mache was adopted by the Sutar Mahila Paper Mache SHG, Fakirpur, in 2008. The artists pick up waste paper and waste cloth and prepare masks, figurines, danglers and other decorative items. With an annual turnover around 50 lakh, this SHG has received accolades from various state and national level organizations for mainstreaming this traditional art form. Each member of this SHG makes 10 to 40 thousand per month, setting a bright example of craftsmanship based entrepreneurship.
KHORDA

The Applique work by Maa Mangala SHG from Khorda, is known for its bold character and vitality. The members deftly stitch traditional motifs such as elephants, peacocks and flowers on umbrellas, canopies, lamp shades wall hangings on cloth background to form harmonious and colourful patterns with embroidery work. They have an annual turnover of 10 lakhs.

Dairy farming plays a significant role in the rural agrarian economy of Odisha. Maa Parvati SHG of Balipatana, has adopted dairy farming as a major source of livelihood thereby ensuring a sustainable income along with nutrition security for the households. This SHG not only deals in milk but also produces paneer, khoya, ghee and curd.

The women of Kalyani SHG of Khorda have developed a knack for low cost and durable but attractive folders, bags, files and table mats. They have created a sizeable market for their products.
Kotpad handloom is a vegetable dyed fabric woven by tribal weavers of the Mirgan community of Kotpad. Cotton sarees with solid borders are made with natural dyes got from the Aul tree grown here. Satkabir SHG of Kotpad, draws its income from the craft and sells this product across the country.

In the hilly terrains of Koraput, Bamboo is a major non-timber forest produce supporting livelihoods of people. Sabari SHG of Jeypore, formed in the year 2010 has taken up Bamboo craft as a major source of livelihood for its members. The group has an annual turnover of Rs. 4 lakhs.
Hill Broom Grass has emerged as one of the most widely cultivated cash crops in the district of Malkangiri. It is an eco-friendly product of great utility. The Gulung Pursunga SHG of Malkangiri, formed in 2001, comprising Bonda women has taken up this activity as a commercial enterprise. The group has an annual turnover of 6 lakh.

Maa Banadurga SHG of Puruna Gumara, was formed in 2013. This SHG has been undertaking fish farming on a commercial scale since 2015 adopting improved practices in fresh water aquaculture. They have been associated with stocking fish fingerlings to serve as a storage cum distribution point for other SHGs interested in pisciculture.
Sabai grass is a natural fibre plentiful available in the forests of Mayurbhanj. Sabai grass is collected from the wild by rural folk and made into ropes by semi-automatic machines. The items made from Sabai grass are baskets, coasters, flower vase, trays, hats, bags, sofa sets, etc. Durga Devi SHG from Gohaldih, has been manufacturing products from Sabai grass using semi-automatic machines and has an annual turnover of 30 lakhs, supplying to FabIndia and other popular chains.

With more than 100 designs in earrings, necklaces, bangles and bracelets, Jagruti Mahila Mandal SHG from Bijayramachandrapur, has been manufacturing silk thread jewellery. Handcrafted with precision, this is slowly becoming a sought-after addition to the traditional attire of women across the country. With an annual turnover of 10 lakhs, this SHG has been using social media as platform to promote its unique range of products.
Nawarangpur

Inland pisciculture undertaken by Jalanimata SHG of Nabarangpur, is a splendid show of traditional wisdom coupled with improved fresh water aquaculture practices. The community tank has been acquired by the SHG on a long term lease basis. The business generates an annual turnover of 6 lakhs and has been a major source of livelihood for the group members.

The members of Maa Durga SHG of Nabarangpur have been involved in designing and making tribal jewellery with brass and each piece is hand crafted to perfection. The products include necklaces, bracelets, bangles, ear rings, finger rings and toe rings.
NAYAGARH

Maa Mangala SHG is involved in the production of liquid dishwash under the brand name ‘Win’. They also make liquid blue for whitening clothes, phenyl and bleaching powder. Their products are sold locally and through exhibitions and fairs held across the state.

Millennium SHG of Nayagarh has been associated with production of Badi and turmeric powder since 2013. This SHG has an annual turnover of 6 lakhs.
Honey collection has been an activity amongst forest dwelling communities for centuries because of its medicinal value. Jaya Hanuman SHG, formed in 2001, has been collecting and processing honey from the wild. They have also undertaken dal processing. With an annual turnover of 34 lakhs, this SHG is a forerunner in processing of non-timber forest produce along with agricultural produce.

Skilled fine wood work is a traditional craft practised mostly by men. However, Maa Bhaivab Lakshmi SHG of Nuapada has undertaken natural wood applique as a sustainable livelihood option since 2013.
The Chandua Applique work owes its origin to the Lord Jagannath culture. Maa Lakshmi SHG from Konark, with an annual turnover Rs. 20 lakhs, manufactures applique works and has a clientele within the state and outside too.

As part of the Green Initiative, the members of Bhagabati SHG in Gopalpur have been making jute bags as an alternative to plastic. The group has a factory installed with high-speed machines with motors, cutting machines and screen-printing machines to make jute bags of different sizes, designs and dimensions. With an annual turnover of Rs. 50 lakhs, the SHG has been leading the manufacturing of jute bags in Odisha while making a noteworthy contribution to environmental protection.
Rayagada

Pulses like green gram, black gram, Bengal gram, red gram and pigeon pea are an indispensable food in the daily diet in Odisha. In recent times, women SHGs have transformed the traditional household practice of hand operated dal processing to a commercial enterprise with mechanization and semi-automation. The Maa Majhi Gouri Mission Shakti Sangha from R K Nagar, is into large scale procurement and processing of different pulses in Rayagada district since 2014. Good quality packaging with branding and product quality assurance has been the mantra of its commercial success. This SHG not only markets its items in the local markets, but also supplies to schools and other educational institutions under different government schemes and social welfare programmes.

The Dongria Kondh women from Niyamgiri Hill formed an SHG in order to preserve and propagate the identity of tribal Dongria Kondh shawls and sarees which are unique to their region, using traditional thread and cloth.
Sambalpur

The famous Sambalpuri saree is a traditional handwoven ikat pattern where the warp and the weft are beautifully woven. Sambalpuri sarees are known for their traditional motifs like shell, wheel, flower, all of which have deep symbolism. Bhim Bhoi SHG of Kandhara, with an annual turnover of 24 lakhs, has customers across India and overseas.

Mahalakshmi SHG from Sahebi, are skilled in model casting on stones. They collect premium quality stones from nearby forests for casting. The most common models represent gods and goddesses. This enterprise has an annual turnover of 6 lakhs.
SONEPUR

Soneswar SHG from Kuhibahal, makes exclusive terracotta items such as statues, bells, decorative lamps, figurines, vases and other decorative items. With an annual turnover of 10 lakhs, this SHG has represented this craft in several state and national level fairs and exhibitions.

The Saktapar sari, from the weaving looms of Sonepur are identifiable by the double dot checkerboard pattern (Pasapalli) and brocade border. Traditionally worn by priests during rituals, Saktapar sari has great demand across the country. Sampurna SHG of Binika, with an annual turnover of 30 lakhs, has been handcrafting textiles made with different patterns, colours and textures.

The Saktapar sari, from the weaving looms of Sonepur are identifiable by the double dot checkerboard pattern (Pasapalli) and brocade border. Traditionally worn by priests during rituals, Saktapar sari has great demand across the country. Sampurna SHG of Binika, with an annual turnover of 30 lakhs, has been handcrafting textiles made with different patterns, colours and textures.
Dibyajyoti SHG of Jhirpani runs a successful baking enterprise. With a huge demand for cookies, muffins, pastries & cakes, they cater to Rourkela & other nearby towns. Their Chocolate flavoured cookies are especially famous & they have an annual turnover of 15 lakh.
SHGs in Odisha continue to break gender stereotypes in their quest for empowerment and identity. Many SHGs are involved in electricity meter reading and bill collection from households. Their involvement has led to higher rates of compliance both in rural and urban areas of Odisha.

It is not uncommon today to see SHGs undertaking construction work of roads and buildings. They have equipped themselves with knowledge of masonry techniques and civil construction. People are happy to hand over construction of public facilities to SHGs.

Hospital management in many public health centres is also being done by SHGs. These and many more such activities are no longer the preserve of men. Mission Shakti SHGs are trail blazers for others to follow.
Usha Rani Nayak of Durga Devi SHG, Mayurbhanj routinely gets her sabai orders on WhatsApp and posts her product designs on Flipkart and Facebook. This allows the group to take orders online, customize designs, enable the products to reach a much larger clientele, work flexibly and improve financial autonomy. This group is just one among the many SHGs who are challenging stereotypes and accessing the digital space for business growth. Basic orientation on computer applications have enabled SHGs to undertake not only sales but documentation, database management and business monitoring through computers and smartphones.

Clearly for our SHGs - the sky is not the limit.