

HAAT BAZAAR

A BOON FOR
SMALLHOLDER FARMERS



Haat Bazaar: A Boon for Smallholder Farmers

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CARITAS INDIA

January 2025

Caritas India gratefully acknowledges the financial support of CARITAS Austria for the SAFBIN project.

Haat Bazaar

A Boon for Smallholder Farmers



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Message Executive Director



Dear Readers,

Haat Bazaars or community markets are not just centers of trade; they are vital engines for local development and empowerment. These people-led markets eliminate middlemen, thereby increasing farm incomes and promoting entrepreneurship among farmers and small business owners. By creating avenues for self-reliance and economic growth, community markets are transforming lives of hundreds of rural households and strengthening local economies.

Beyond economic benefits, Haat Bazaars are powerful mechanisms of fostering and cementing community solidarity. They bring people together, instill among them a sense of community and shared purpose. In an age where cities are often seen as the primary sources of goods and services, these local markets serve as remarkable models of sustainable and inclusive development.

It is my privilege to extend heartfelt gratitude to our implementing partners, JDSSS Jabalpur and MVSS Sagar, for their tireless efforts in facilitating the establishment of two Haat Bazaars under the SAFBIN programme. I also wish to thank Caritas Austria for their invaluable support especially the technical guidance of Mr. Matteo Putzolu and Mr. Sunil Simon which has significantly enhanced the impacts of SAFBIN.

I am overjoyed to witness these community markets growing stronger with each passing day. I earnestly hope that these Haat Bazaars will inspire local communities to create many more such initiatives, reinforcing the vision of vibrant and self-reliant villages.

Fr. Antony Fernandes
Executive Director
Caritas India

Introduction

Empowering Smallholder Farmers with Haat Bazaar

Smallholder farmers have traditionally been at the mercy of both markets and climate. While the latter remains largely beyond their control, concerted community action can provide sustainable relief and protection against the former. Lacking the power to influence or control markets in their favor, small farmers have often fallen victim to profiteering and exploitative market forces. They face challenges on two fronts: the unpredictability of the climate, which frequently destroys their crops, and the indifference of the market, which devours any potential profit they might earn if the weather gods are benevolent. Smallholder farmers, therefore, need protection not only from the vagaries of the climate but also from the harshness of the market.



Big farmers in contrast do not share the vulnerabilities that smallholder farmers are exposed to, neither in terms of intensity nor magnitude. Yet, they have more voice in the decision-making platforms, and they often represent the market itself. So much is their clout and power. Seldom one will see traders and middlemen teaming up with smallholder farmers whereas the nexus of big farmers and traders is ubiquitous and deeply entrenched.

Smallholder Adaptive Farming & Biodiversity Network (SAFBIN), a joint initiative of Caritas Austria and Caritas India, aims to insulate smallholder farmers from the vulnerabilities created and aggravated by climate change. SAFBIN also assists farmers gain greater self-reliance in agriculture effectively freeing them from the clutches of exploitative market. Dependency on market has been far from beneficial for smallholder farmers. There is a direct relationship between the market dependency of farming communities and their disempowerment which eventually results into exploitation. In the present rural context where local economy of villages is getting wedged open by the market, the first casualty of the bulldozing run of the market is farmers' self-reliance. The organic relationship that once existed in rural societies between production, distribution and consumption is being devoured by the greedy and self-serving market.

Caritas India and her partners had promoted *Haat Bazaar* or weekly market as a remedy not only to the dependency syndrome of the smallholder farmers but as a powerful mechanism to bolster the micro-economy of villages. Despite the numerous benefits of local markets, communities had not fully explored the possibilities of establishing them. The reluctance to start local markets stems from various challenges, such as a lack of adequate space, administrative hurdles, the absence of a community-based market management system, and community apprehensions. To address these barriers, SAFBIN adopted a strategy focused on facilitation and capacity building. Over the past year, SAFBIN has successfully assisted the communities of Kolua in Sagar district and



Silpura in Mandla district in setting up local markets, which have thrived since their inception.

SAFBIN, implemented in two districts of Madhya Pradesh, is a farmer-led initiative to achieve climate resilience, improved farm production and better health of farming eco-system. While helping farming communities to achieve self-reliance, SAFBIN popularizes affordable and eco-friendly farm practices for arresting and reversing environment damages. One of the considerations of SAFBIN was to develop *Haat Bazaars* that are (i) more democratic in character, promoting participation and decision-making; (ii) more empowering for farmers; (iii) more economically beneficial, ensuring better prices for produce; (iv) more accessible to farmers; and (v) more locally sustainable, fostering stronger consumer-producer connectivity.

SAFBIN implemented several sustainable agricultural measures that enabled smallholder farmers to significantly enhance their self-reliance in farm inputs, resulting in increased savings. These measures also helped reverse the adverse effects of chemical farming and boosted farm production in an eco-sensitive manner. Having supported farmers in achieving farm-level efficiency and economic stability, SAFBIN logically progressed to helping smallholder farmers establish *Haat Bazaars*, which hold untapped potential to deliver the following five key benefits.

Firstly, SAFBIN recognized the need to establish an efficient mechanism to absorb surplus production while assuring farmers good returns. The farming-strengthening initiatives of SAFBIN significantly increased yields, surpassing the subsistence threshold and generating surplus production that needed to be sold. This was the primary

motivation for communities to initiate local markets.

Secondly, rural communities often face challenges due to the long distances they must travel in unfavorable conditions—physical, social, and cultural—to reach the nearest markets for selling their produce or procuring supplies. This results in financial losses on two fronts: travel expenses and the inflated prices charged by traders exploiting the villagers' lack of alternatives. Local markets offer immense potential to reduce these financial drains and increase returns for farmers.

Thirdly, women's entrepreneurship and the remoteness of markets are inversely related. Simply put, the farther the market, the lower the opportunities for women entrepreneurs. Cultural constraints on women's mobility and participation in business further exacerbate this issue. By localizing markets, SAFBIN aimed to bridge this gap and create more opportunities for women to showcase their entrepreneurial abilities.

Fourthly, dependence on external agencies often serves as a significant financial drain for rural communities. They usually pay steep premiums for goods and services that could easily be sourced or mobilized locally. Community-led markets help reduce such dependencies, enabling households to save more by keeping resources within the local economy.

Fifthly, local markets foster a strong consumer-producer connection. They enhance transparency and trust, allowing consumers to know the origins and quality of the products they purchase. This direct connection ensures better quality and freshness, especially for perishable goods like fruits and vegetables. By eliminating intermediaries, consumers benefit from lower costs while farmers enjoy higher profit margins. Furthermore, this connection strengthens the sense of community and supports local economies.

The *Haat Bazaars* stand as powerful testaments to community cohesion and collective will. Beyond the financial gains achieved by the communities, these local markets have become democratic spaces where a village's micro-economy can flourish. They also serve as fertile grounds for nurturing rural entrepreneurship, particularly among women. The weekly markets have thus emerged as convincing examples of sustainable, equitable, and empowering cyclical economy that everyone profits from.

Dr. Saju MK
Zone Programme Lead, Caritas India

Silpura Haat Bazaar Drives Growth in the Local Economy

The establishment of the Haat Bazaar in Silpura village has ushered in a new era of opportunities for small farmers, who previously had to travel 18 kilometers to sell their produce in towns. This arduous journey was not only expensive but also consumed valuable time. With the commencement of the Haat Bazaar in their own village, farmers can now sell fresh vegetables directly to consumers, bypassing middlemen and reducing transportation costs. This shift has enabled them to secure better prices for their produce while fostering a sense of community.

The local circulation of money and the check on money drain from the village have strengthened the economy of the village, making the Haat Bazaar a beacon of empowerment and progress for Silpura's smallholder farmers. Silpura, a tribal dominated village, is located in Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh which has for years experienced high vulnerabilities due to climate change.

“Earlier, we had to go to the market 18 kilometers away to sell our produce, which was a waste of both time and money,” said Mr. Kishan Lal Uike, a local farmer leader. “Now, through the Haat Bazaar, we can sell our vegetables in the village itself, which is giving us good profits. On the very first day, I earned ₹ 310 in just two hours, and now I am confident that when I set up my stall from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., I can earn ₹ 1500 a day. This Haat Bazaar is opening a new way for my livelihood”, Uike said.

The market's impact extends beyond farmers, providing opportunities for other traders who sell goods such as sweets, tea, snacks, toys, baskets, brooms, and household essentials. This has created a dynamic economic hub within the village, offering affordable goods to the community.

The establishment of the Haat Bazaar was spearheaded by the three Smallholder Farmer Collectives (SHFCs) of Silpura which the SAFBIN project had raised as platforms for farmers to identify solutions to their farming challenges. SAFBIN, supported by Caritas Austria and Caritas India, had launched a slew of initiatives to empower small farmers and strengthen the local economy. Recognizing the need for a dedicated market, the SHFC members came together and presented the idea to the village panchayat. The panchayat leaders approved the village market plan and allocated space at the village's main junction. The SAFBIN team coordinated efforts between farmers and traders, ensuring the market's smooth setup and long-term viability.



The inauguration of the Haat Bazaar on November 29, 2024, marked a significant milestone. Held at the village square, the ceremony was a celebration of months of meticulous planning and collective effort of the community. Mr. Sonu Bhalavi, District Panchayat President of Mandla, officially inaugurated the people's market amidst cheers from the farming community. "The Haat Bazaar will prove to be a milestone in the development of the area. It will not only give new livelihoods to the local communities but also strengthen the solidarity of the rural community," he said.

Fr. Dominic Thomas, Director of Jabalpur Diocesan Social Service Society (JDSSS) an implementing partner of SAFBIN, highlighted the market's broader impact, "The bazaar will not only support the farmers but will also benefit other local traders. Youth of the village will have more profitable livelihoods and farming will become more profitable" Panchayat member Lal Korram emphasized how the market has become a lifeline for Silpura and nearby villages, fulfilling daily needs and promoting local commerce. "With the establishment of a market in Silpura, the people of the nearby five villages will be able to fulfill their daily needs of food items, vegetables, grains, agricultural equipment, salt, etc., from the local market," he said.

In the span of just one month, Silupra Haat Bazaar has become an impressive success – there were 62 shops, out

of which 13 of them of the Silpura farmers, in the last Haat Bazaar. Most of the other shops were of farmers from the neighbouring villages where SAFBIN project is being implemented. Significantly, as many as 26 shops are of women, who traditionally suffer from lack access to market.

Reflecting on the past, Mr. Kishan Lal, a farmer leader, recalled an earlier attempt in 2007-08 to establish a local market, which failed due to widespread poverty and lack of participation. "Traders came for two-three weeks and then they stopped opening shops. That was the end of the local market then," he said. However, the current Haat Bazaar stands as a testament to resilience and collective determination, transforming Silpura's economic landscape.

"The inauguration of the Haat Bazaar has started a new chapter for Silpura village. Now the doors of development and business have been opened for us," said Mr. Naresh Marko, the Sarpanch of Silpura. "This market has become a symbol of hope and progress for our community," he added.

The Haat Bazaar in Silpura is more than just a market; it is a symbol of hope, collective will, resilience, and community-driven progress. As villagers continue to make substantial economic benefits, the Haat Bazaar stands as a shining example of how local efforts,

Rise of a Woman Farmer Trader

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Haat Bazaar has opened new doors of livelihood for many women.

In the small village of Silpura, a two-acre farm was all that Tulsabai Paraste and her husband Narendra had to support their family of five. The couple faced frequent financial difficulties including the costs on the educational and healthcare of their children.

Tulsabai saw an opportunity when the Haat Bazaar was started in Silpura in November 2024. Without informing her husband, she invested ₹ 2,000 to purchase groceries from Mandla town to start a small shop at the market.

"I opened the shop on a Friday," Tulsabai recalls. "My husband initially didn't know about it, but when he saw my determination, he supported me wholeheartedly." "I made sales worth ₹ 4,000 on the first day itself. It was a proud moment – like a dream come true," Tulsabai said with a beaming smile.

Encouraged by this success, she reinvested her earnings to expand her shop's stock. Today, her shop carries goods worth ₹ 10,000, and she envisions adding a sewing and cosmetics section in the future. "This transformation is all thanks to the SAFBIN project," Tulsabai says. "Their efforts have been a blessing not just for me but also for 12-15 other new entrepreneurs in our village. The Haat Bazaar has opened new doors of livelihood for many women."

Expressing her gratitude she adds, "I thank the SAFBIN for bringing Haat Bazaar to our village. It has truly been a catalyst for development, not just for my family but for our entire community." Tulsabai's journey from a struggling farmer to a confident entrepreneur is a testament to how collective efforts and innovative projects can empower rural communities.





Chhoti Bai Kulaste and her family of four relied on a one-acre plot for their livelihood, barely making ends meet to cover expenses for their children's education, health, and daily needs. Life took a pleasant turn when the Haat Bazaar was started in Silpura, offering an opportunity for Chhoti Bai to become a trader.

Seeing the potential, Chhoti Bai and her husband decided to start a shop selling groceries, dried mahua flowers, and homegrown vegetables. "On the first day, we invested ₹ 7,000 from our savings to buy goods like salt, brooms, mahua flowers, and vegetables from Mandla city," Chhoti Bai shared. Their efforts paid off when they made ₹ 10,000 in sales during the market's opening day, with salt and brooms being especially popular. "It is believed that buying salt and brooms in the first market brings happiness and prosperity to the home," she added.

The success of their venture has been transformative. With daily sales ranging between ₹ 1,000 and ₹ 1,500, the couple now runs their business from home, selling groceries, mahua flowers, and vegetables every day. The income has brought newfound pride and stability to the family, allowing them to manage household expenses, invest in their children's education, and save for the future.

Inspired by their success, the couple plans to construct a permanent shop to expand their business and better serve their customers. "Thanks to SAFBIN, we now have healthy food, stable finances, and a secure future for our children," Chhoti Bai said, reflecting on the initiative's impact on their lives.



Chhoti Bai's Market Success

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We now have healthy food, stable finances, and a secure future for our children.

Life presents a dual challenge for Kishan Lal Uikey, a differently abled farmer in Silpura village. With a family of eight to support, earning a livelihood from his three-acre rain-fed farm has been a constant struggle.

A turning point came when the Bajrang Smallholder Farmers Collective (SHFC) helped establish a Haat-Bazaar in Silpura, creating livelihood opportunities for over 60 villagers. Among them was Kishan Lal, who ventured into selling vegetables. "Since the Haat-Bazaar was set up, I started a vegetable shop and, for the first time, I feel in control of my livelihood," he shared. "I had discussed opening a shop with my family many times, but the lack of space and customers in the village always held me back."

Kishan Lal's first day at the market was a breakthrough—he earned a profit of ₹ 400. "It was a proud moment, holding the weighing scale in my hands as a shop owner," he said. Since then, his profits have grown to around ₹ 3,000, providing a steady supplemental income. This has helped him cover household expenses, including his children's education, beyond what farming could afford.

Buoyed by his success, Kishan Lal now plans to open his vegetable shop daily and expand his ventures by adding a puncture repair shop and a tea-snack stall. "The Haat-Bazaar has given me hope and the confidence to dream bigger," he says, embodying resilience and the power of community-driven initiatives.

Haat Bazaar Empowers Differently Abled

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Haat-Bazaar has given me hope and confidence to dream bigger





At 28, Kanhaiya Lal Patta from Silpura village found himself grappling with limited employment opportunities. Although he considered migrating in search of work, he stayed back, being the only child of his parents. To make ends meet, he frequently traveled to Mandla for labor work.

The introduction of the Haat Bazaar in Silpura changed his life. Kanhaiya started a small grocery shop at the village fair, earning ₹ 4,000 on his first day. "It was a proud moment for me to sell ₹ 4,000 worth of goods in a single day," he shared. Now, he earns ₹ 300–₹ 400 daily from his shop, a consistent source of income that has transformed his outlook.

The village market has not only benefited Kanhaiya but has also become a lifeline for the local community. "Earlier, we had to spend ₹ 60 just to travel to Mandla for daily needs. Now, the market fulfills the weekly needs of people from 4–5 nearby villages," he said. Buoyed by this success, Kanhaiya plans to expand into online and stationery businesses in the future.

"The Haat Bazaar started by SAFBIN has given a new direction to the youth, connecting them with self-employment opportunities," Kanhaiya remarked, reflecting on the initiative's impact on Silpura's young population.



From a Labourer to a Trader

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Haat Bazaar has given a new direction to village youth

Haat Bazaar Transforms Livelihoods

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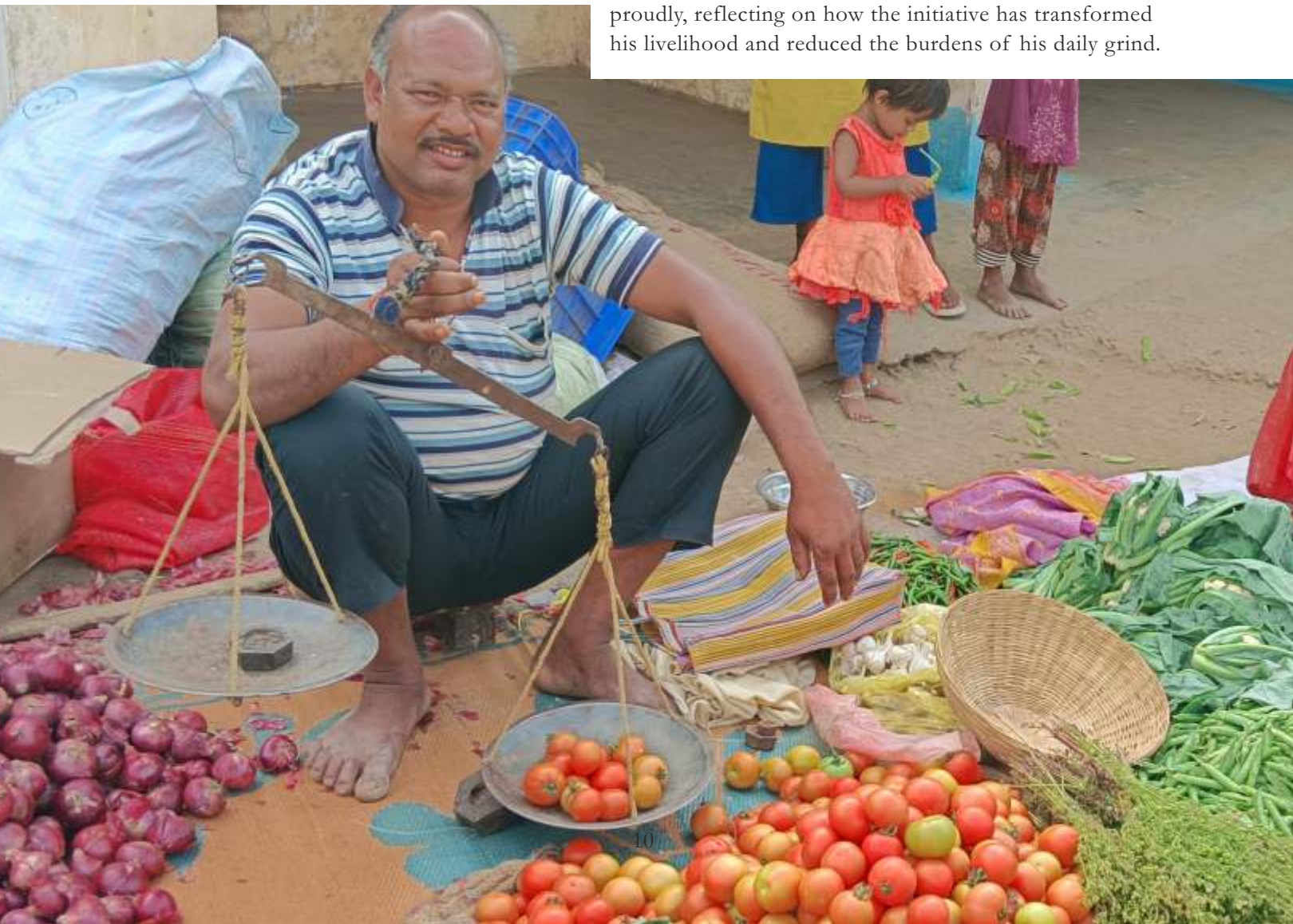
Haat Bazaar is a boon for every farmer

For Suresh Marko and his family of six, survival depended entirely on their four-acre farm, which was vulnerable to unpredictable rainfall. While he had long cultivated vegetables the struggle to earn a living was daunting. To avoid the exploitative middlemen, market rents, and wasted travel time, Suresh used to sell vegetables by cycling from village to village every morning and evening. This exhausting routine was driven by necessity, as his family relied solely on vegetable cultivation for their livelihood.

SAFBIN project helped him in two ways – increasing farm yield without compromising on his pocket or the fertility of land and creating a market where he could profitably sell his produces.

With the launch of the Haat Bazaar in Silpura, Suresh opened a shop and sold vegetables worth ₹ 3,000 on the first day. "Instead of hawking vegetables from village to village, I now earn more through the Haat Bazaar," he shared, relieved by the newfound stability.

“The Haat Bazaar is a boon for every farmer,” Suresh said proudly, reflecting on how the initiative has transformed his livelihood and reduced the burdens of his daily grind.





Naresh Kumar Marko, the 35-year-old Sarpanch of Silpura Gram Panchayat, gained more respect of his villagers by clearing the hurdles for the Haat Bazaar in November 2024. A staunch supporter of community development, Naresh is deeply involved in initiatives like climate vulnerability analysis, children's rallies for Gram Sabha, water conservation, sustainable agriculture, millet cultivation, and the promotion of farmer led research.

As an active participant in SAFBIN, Naresh has consistently motivated the community—particularly small farmers, youth, and women—to embrace change and work towards progress. "The community's long-standing demand for a market in Silpura was swiftly addressed, and a unanimous resolution was passed in the Gram Sabha," he recalls. "The successful establishment of the market, with SAFBIN's support, has created a golden opportunity for self-employment, particularly benefiting local youth who would otherwise migrate for work", he added.

Naresh shared that the Panchayat is working to secure financial assistance from the Finance Corporation for new shopkeepers and youth interested in joining the Haat Bazaar. The Panchayat is also exploring the possibility of registering the market officially to further strengthen its role in the village's economy.

"The Haat Bazaar has made it easier for villagers to access locally grown vegetables, grains, fruits, and flowers, fulfilling daily needs for the entire week," says Naresh. This initiative has become a convenient and vital resource for Silpura and the surrounding area.

A Sarpanch Packing a Punch!

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**Haat Bazaar has given a new
direction to village youth**

Haat Bazaar as a Beacon of Circular Economy and Market Access

A transformative initiative under the SAFBIN III project has established a Haat Bazaar in Kolua village, offering a lifeline to smallholder farmers and creating a dynamic hub for local trade. For years, farmers from this small village in Madhya Pradesh travelled 20 kilometres to neighbouring Sagar city and villages to sell their produce, incurring significant time and transportation costs. With the market now at the village's main junction, their fortunes have changed. Farmers can sell fresh produce directly to consumers, strengthening the local economy and saving both time and money.

The Haat Bazaar, inaugurated on 19 November 2024 has quickly become a symbol of empowerment and economic progress. Local farmers bypass middlemen and secure better prices while fostering community connections. “The market has not only increased our income but also saved us the trouble of traveling long distances,” shared farmer Purushottam Sen. On the first day, he earned ₹ 470 in just two hours. “I am confident of earning much more in the coming weeks,” added a beaming Sen.

Haat Bazaars are traditional marketplaces where villagers sell goods directly to local consumers, including their fellow villagers. Held weekly, these markets offer fresh vegetables, fruits, and other essentials, ensuring fair prices for farmers and keeping money circulating within the community. Beyond agricultural produce, Kolua's market features stalls with sweets, tea, toys, and household items, making it a bustling economic hub.

The Kolua community felt the need for such a market as their farm production, especially vegetables, increased substantially through improved farming practices and resilient cropping systems promoted by SAFBIN. As harvests grew, the need for a local market became more pressing, compelling villagers to find a solution that could increase their returns without dependence on middlemen.

The establishment of the Haat Bazaar was the result of meticulous planning and community collaboration. The SAFBIN project team organized local farmers into two Smallholder Farmers Collectives (SHFC) of women and one SHFC of men to deliberate on the challenges faced by farmers. Through community meetings and micro-planning sessions, the team worked closely with villagers and the local panchayat to identify a solution that would create direct access to a fair market and reduce the burden of long travel. Under the SHFC banner, local farmers proposed the idea of a Haat Bazaar to the Gram Panchayat. Recognizing the potential, panchayat leaders approved the initiative and allocated a central space in the village for the market.



The SAFBIN team played a pivotal role in coordinating with farmers and traders to ensure the market's smooth setup and long-term sustainability. What began as a simple idea has transformed into a thriving marketplace, benefiting farmers and local traders who sell a variety of items, including sweets, tea, toys, and household essentials.

Fr. Thomas Philip, Director of Manav Vikas Seva Sangh, which implements SAFBIN in ten villages of Sagar district, highlighted the community's efforts, saying, "This initiative supports farmers and local traders, making Kolua more self-reliant. Besides, the Haat Bazaar has given local farmers the opportunity to become first-generation vendors."

Sarpanch Bhupendra Chadar, while inaugurating the Haat Bazaar, commended the villagers' collective action and the significant contribution of SAFBIN to strengthening the local economy. "The Haat Bazaar will not only boost our economy but also foster a sense of community pride," he said.

Local farmers are thrilled by the new opportunities. Sonu Ahirwar, a farmer, shared, "I earn handsome returns, sometimes as high as ₹ 2,000 in a single day selling my farm produce." Women farmers also see

great promise in the local market as nearly 50% of the total vendors in the market are women farmers. Lalita Bai, a vegetable grower and a seller remarked, "This market saves us travel costs and gives us direct access to buyers."

Initially scheduled for two hours on Tuesdays, the Haat Bazaar expanded to every Thursday due to overwhelming demand, offering villagers a wider window to trade and shop. Villagers are already feeling the positive impact. "The introduction of the Haat Bazaar has infused new energy into our lives," said Sen. "Now, we buy fresh produce locally, save travel expenses, and strengthen our village economy."

The Haat Bazaar is more than just a market—it represents a turning point for Kolua, fostering economic resilience and community spirit. As the village embraces this new opportunity, it stands as a model for empowering smallholder farmers and revitalizing rural economies.

Homemaker Woman Becomes Earner!

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Haat Bazaar is a turning point for my family

Rajkumari Ahirwar, a 30-year-old resident of Kolua village, faced immense financial hardships. Her husband, Dhaniram, a 34-year-old small-scale farmer, struggled to provide for their family through farming and daily wage labor. With limited job opportunities in the village, he often had to migrate with his family in search of work. Caring for their two young daughters, Rajkumari depended entirely on her husband's income for survival.

Owning just one acre of land, Rajkumari initially grew vegetables solely for her family's consumption. However, with guidance from SAFBIN, she significantly increased her production of tomatoes, beans, cauliflower, spinach, radish, coriander, and eggplant. The surplus produce brought a new challenge: finding a market to sell it.

The launch of the Kolua Haat Bazaar on November 19, 2024, became a turning point. Setting up her vegetable stall on the first day, Rajkumari earned ₹920—a promising start. Since then, she has consistently participated in the weekly market, earning approximately ₹ 800 on each market day by selling her fresh produce.

"The Haat Bazaar is a turning point for my family," Rajkumari shared with pride. "The additional income is vital for us, and it has given me the confidence to support my household financially." Today, she feels a sense of accomplishment and empowerment as she contributes meaningfully to her family's well-being.





Sunita Ahirwar, a 29-year-old home maker of Kolua village, lives with her husband, Surendra Ahirwar, and their two children. With just one acre of agricultural land and no livestock, the family struggled to meet their daily food needs. Her husband's work as a daily wage labourer and caretaker of village livestock provided only a meagre income, barely sustaining the household.

Through the SAFBIN initiative, Sunita began cultivating a variety of vegetables, including bottle gourd, beans, bitter gourd, eggplant, tomatoes, cauliflower, and leafy greens, using scientific and eco-friendly methods. This approach not only boosted her farm's productivity but also improved her family's food and nutritional security.

The launch of the Kolua Haat Bazaar presented Sunita with an opportunity to sell her surplus produce. By setting up a vegetable stall, she now earns an average of ₹ 300 every week, supplementing her family's income and reducing their financial strain.

“I have always worried about our financial situation, but the Haat Bazaar initiated through SAFBIN has given me a new way to earn,” Sunita shared. “This market has made me capable to contribute to family income.”



Vegetable Farmer to Vegetable Vendor

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Haat Bazaar has made me capable to contribute to family income

A New Chapter with Haat Bazaar

Haat Bazaar ensures a more stable and sustainable source of income

Ramesh Patel, a 55-year-old street vendor from Barkheda Khuman village, earned his livelihood by selling vegetables in nearby villages. With a bicycle as his only means of transport, he travelled long distances daily to make a small profit by reselling vegetables purchased from the market. Supporting a family of six, including two sons who work as daily wage labourers, Ramesh's income rarely exceeded ₹ 500 per day. However, as he aged, the physical strain of cycling across villages became increasingly challenging.

When Ramesh heard about the launch of the Haat Bazaar in nearby Kolua village, he seized the opportunity. Setting up his vegetable stall on the market's first day, he discovered a more efficient way to reach customers from both Kolua and Barkheda villages without the need for extensive travel. On market days, his earnings have soared to ₹ 1,200, doubling his previous income.

The Haat Bazaar provided Ramesh with a stable selling platform, significantly reducing his physical effort and increasing his profits by nearly 60%. The fixed location not only improved his earnings but also brought a sense of ease and stability to his life.

“Haat Bazaar has not only strengthened my livelihood but also brought a positive change, ensuring a more stable and sustainable source of income,” Ramesh Patel shared with gratitude.





Damodar Patel, a 48-year-old resident of Barkheda village, supports his family of six by selling vegetables across nearby villages, cycling long distances daily. In addition, he runs a small grocery shop at home, managed by his sons. Despite juggling two sources of income, his daily earnings barely touched ₹ 600, leaving him under constant financial strain as household expenses grew.

The launch of the Haat Bazaar in Kolua, a neighbouring village, brought a transformative change to Damodar's business. Instead of traveling to multiple villages, he began setting up his stall at the weekly market. This shift allowed him to sell up to ₹ 1,400 worth of vegetables in a single day, with all transactions paid in cash, significantly improving his financial stability.

“Haat Bazaar has helped us greatly,” Damodar shared. “It eliminates the need to travel from village to village and has increased my earnings. Earlier, much of my time was wasted commuting, but now I can focus on selling, which has boosted my profits by 70%.”

With reduced physical effort and increased income, the Haat Bazaar has eased Damodar's financial burden. “This market has truly lightened my financial burden and given me hope for a more secure future,” he said.



Haat Bazaar Boosts Profits by 70%

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Haat Bazaar has given us
hope for a more secure
future

Govind Ahirwar, a 19-year-old from Kolua village, had to leave his education behind to support his family. As the eldest of three children, the weight of responsibility fell heavily on his shoulders. With just 2.5 acres of farmland, his family cultivated wheat, chickpeas, lentil, and soybean, but their monthly income barely exceeded ₹ 5,000—insufficient to meet their basic needs.

To supplement the family's income, Govind began selling vegetables as a street vendor in neighbouring villages. The launch of the Haat Bazaar in his village brought an invaluable opportunity to youths like Govind. On the first day of the market, he made a profit of ₹ 480 by selling vegetables. Since then, his stall has become a regular feature of the weekly market every Tuesday. “Now, I earn up to ₹ 700 per market day,” Govind shared proudly.

This initiative has not only boosted his family's income but has also enabled Govind to stay in his village, eliminating the need to migrate for work.

“The Haat Bazaar has given me a stable source of income and employment,” Govind said. “Such local markets are a blessing for youth like me to secure their livelihoods and support their families,” he added.

A Young Vendor Finds Hope in Haat Bazaar





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