

SEWA success becomes Harvard lesson

Nayan Dave | TNN

Ahmedabad: First year students at world's premier business institute Harvard Business School (HBS) will study the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) model from the next academic year.

Along with success stories from global conglomerates like General Electric, Royal Dutch Shell, Toyota Motors, British Petroleum, Exxon Mobil, HSBC Holdings, Goldman Sachs, SEWA's model of micro finance in agriculture will be taught to management students in the US B-school.

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with SEWA to study various aspects of weather insurance products for Indian farmers. "Findings of this study would also be incorporated in the curriculum," said Shawn Cole, professor at HBS. Cole is heading the research team.

SEWA's initiative to introduce

an integrated model for micro finance in agriculture sector has interested HBS scholars. The model covers a wide range of aspects ranging from sowing, supplying quality seeds, training, risk coverage, market linkages and even futures prices.

"Of the total nine lakh SEWA members, nearly 60 per cent are associated with agriculture. The research project was carried out in 108 villages in Gujarat. Around 7,000 farmers agreed for getting a risk cover through weather insurance," said Reema Nanavati, director, SEWA.

The organisation, along with Harvard University, Centre for Micro Finance (CMF), a Chennai-based non-profit body, and National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange Ltd, is also carrying out a research project on prices in futures market. "Under this project, farmers are equipped with futures price information," she said.