

# Pet toys: Providing livelihood for Rural Women

*Empowering women is critical if they are to be regarded as citizens of the country. This process begins with livelihood, as it allows women to exercise their choices.*

Many rural Indian women are unemployed or work in low-wage jobs that have historically been reserved for women, such as domestic help. Lack of access to skill-building opportunities, and support networks are preventing rural Indian women from earning a livelihood.

## **Objective:**

With the objective of providing rural women with the expertise, skills, and support they need to gain more control over their personal and professional life, along with assisting them in generating livelihood through Tisser Trust's end-to-end support, we reached Maan Deshi Foundation. Mann Deshi is a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening women, particularly financially.

Under this project which we started in **April 2021**, Tisser encouraged rural women to create their own income-generating activities in order for them to be economically active. We **skilled 30 women** in making pet toys as of now and up to more than 30 will join soon.

These **non-toxic, washable, chewable, and colourful pet toys** were created by a group of women using a mixture of colourful cotton/hosiery ropes to attract our furry friends and keep them engaged.

## **Why Pet Toys**



Dog and other pet ownership has grown significantly in India over the last decade, owing to changes in urban lifestyles and the growing number of nuclear households. On the strength of pet humanization and rising disposable income, India's pet care business continues to rise in double digits.

Pet toy sales have increased dramatically in recent years. Pet parents now consider their pets to be members of their family. Pet parents have been urged to give their pets the same level of luxury as they would for their own children or other family members as a result of this pet parenting fad. The growing relationship between people and their pets has prompted pet owners to spend more on luxury for their pets.

Chew toys are an important toy for pets since they aid with separation anxiety and oral care. Aside from that, plush toys' capacity to resist rigorous play has been a key factor in growing product acceptance.

### **Impact:**

This initiative has been able to make a positive impact in the lives of around 30 rural women by equipping them with skills in pet-toy making.

They were able to discover viable livelihoods, learn new skills, start livelihoods with in-kind assistance, and organise marketplaces and service providers as a result of the initiative.

As toys were easy to make by hand, hence easily learned, low on manufacturing cost, excellent quality, and cashed in on the ever-growing pet product industry, which is at its greatest level in the previous 50 years; Which also provided an alternative source of income and is poised to become their family's major source of revenue.

- We have made **200 toys and accessories** till now
- Sales have started under **3 retail shops and on our retail website**



## Testimonials:

*"I appreciate Tisser's initiative of bringing such a new and interesting concept of making pet toys to us and I was surprised to know people buy toys for their pets. As I started learning and making toys along with other women, I felt more confident and happy. I later showed toys to my daughter as well and she was ecstatic and eager to learn more. With the help of Tisser, I could support my family in the pandemic."*

- Ratna

*"Tisser gave us a patient and friendly expert who assisted us in learning how to weave the toys. Tisser representatives not only taught us how to make toys, but they also exposed us to a whole new market. They informed us about numerous items that people today use, as well as how we might put our abilities to work and profit from these prospective demands. We're interested in learning more."*

- Sonali



As a result, this initiative of Tisser introduced rural women to this flourishing market of pet toys and equip them with the necessary skills. It also provided consumers the opportunity to support rural artisans and make a sustainable decision when shopping.