

## Home-based Worker's Oral History



### Meet the woman who juggles three jobs to support her family Home-based worker Sangita from Nashik

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Sangita, 36 years, wears three hats: she is a home-based worker, a domestic worker, and an ambulatory vendor who sells her wares door-to-door. She lives in the Ambad neighbourhood of Nashik City. Her 6-member family comprises her husband, two son, and in-laws.

Sangita often begins her workday by selling 'usal' (Maharashtrian delicacy of cooked sprouted beans, legumes and lentils). Through *usal* vending, she is able to make about Rs. 3,000 per month. She then moves on to domestic work in two households, earning just Rs. 900 per month. The afternoon hours are dedicated to home-based work. Sangita has been a tailor for the past decade or so, and she provides a variety of tailoring services– fall-beeding, artisanally sewn blouses etc. She now also has a little saree business within her home, offering her customers a one-stop saree shop. Once a customer chooses a saree, it is ready for immediate wearing, and the associated services such as fall-beeding and blouse are customised quickly too. In her ingenuous saree-and-tailoring business, Sangita earns around Rs. 1000 per month. After three jobs and much hustle, Sangita is therefore able to earn an average monthly income of Rs. 5000. Her school-going son is a painter, and also contributes to home-based work, by selling his paintings. He also pools in about Rs. 800 per week to the household income.

Speaking about her challenges Sangita says, *“I got married at the age of 17 years and have been tailoring for the past 10 years... My husband lost his job as a factory worker, when his factory shut down during the pandemic. To make matters worse, he also met with an accident couple of years ago which has severely impacted his locomotor abilities... Now he is a daily wage labourer and works 2-3 days a week making a small income... I also had surgery a few years ago to remove my nasal blockages, that was a dent in our savings... I pay for household expenses from money generated through home-based tailoring work... but it is not enough... during the pandemic my home-based work came to a complete halt... I had to borrow money from my parents to run the house and educate my children... I want them to study and complete their education... so for an additional source of income, I took up domestic work at two homes and also started selling usal”*.

Sangita started doing home-based work to supplement the earnings of the main income-earner of the household, but the pandemic made her the main earner of the family. She strikes a balance between her work and all of the domestic chores in order to support her family and make ends meet.