

# There's no looking back for Suman Now



Suman's single-room apartment at Sultanpuri is a busy sight, with a large vessel diffusing the sweetness of milk and honey on the boil. Nothing edible is being made here, but a range of organic soaps she produces in her enterprise 'Noor Soaps'. She has just completed her first big order of a hundred soaps and is busy with her team preparing for the next consignment.

"Life's taken a complete turn from where I started," says Suman recalling the initial challenges she has had to face. They were a group of 15 women who decided to take ETASHA's Entrepreneurship Training, but starting a business meant investment which made many women to back out, leaving just three in the group – Muskan, Dhanuri and Suman. The women who retreated had their own reasons – earlier they spent their hard-earned money and time on getting trained at a private centre where they were assured of jobs, but nothing happened. Suman too had a difficult start. She spent ten years cooking, sweeping and offering home-based massage services in the neighbouring affluent colonies.

"My husband used to drink and spend all the household income, so I took up any job that came my way. It was hard work and I didn't earn much. So, I needed to do something else. My family didn't trust my decision either. My mother-in-law and my neighbours would make fun of me, and try hard to make me believe that this time too I would end up failing," she says with a deep sigh. "We just had to put in our capital and hard work of course. But then who doesn't, for their start-up business? ETASHA taught us everything else that is required to do good business. From guiding on how to source the raw material to negotiation skills, to managing money and making sound business decisions, they have taught us all," she says.

"We work together and share our problems with each other, this makes the work all the more enjoyable," she adds. She fondly remembers the day she got her first order – "It was like a stepping stone not just in economic terms, but mostly because it gave me my lost sense of dignity and I regained my family's support. Today, my mother-in-law uses the soap I make and my children take pride in introducing the brand to their friends."

From offering door to door massage services, to having her own brand of luxury soaps – Suman's life has come a full circle. But it's just the beginning – ETASHA-trained Noor group now wants to take their efforts to a different level by introducing vitamin-E & Exotic Oils as ingredients to their products –of course, when they can afford it.

**ETASHA's Women Entrepreneurship Program trains women from low resource settings on entrepreneurship skills and provides hand-holding support for sustainability.**

**Support ETASHA to Support Vulnerable Women**

Thank You!

**Meenakshi Nayar**  
President- ETASHA Society

**CONTRIBUTE**

**#FightBEROZGAARI**

[www.etasahasociety.org](http://www.etasahasociety.org)

