**Case Story:**

**“She hopes that this year production will help her family come out of all the misery and pain”**

Dhanuben is a single woman, widowed, having 8 kids; 7 daughters and 1 son. All of her daughters were married and son is currently pursuing his education. She is a Koli , one of the backwards castes in Gujarat. Dhanuben along with eldest daughter and son, are living in Akhtariya village, Mahuva block, Bhavanagar District.

She owns 0.6 acre of land. As typical to the region, monsoon is highly uncertain. Coastal salinity and lack of water have lessened the productivity around the areas and her land is no exception. This has left her with no option but to depend on winter crops.

Since she has no another means of livelihood, she has to work as an agricultural labourer to sustain her family and her son’s education. She was unemployed due to the lockdown across the nation in the month of March. This made the situation of family abysmally difficult to survive. Her family was selected as a relief partner for distribution of food kit- a small immediate relief support to the families who lost their livelihood due to the lockdown by Utthan. Being a member of Mahila Mandal facilitated by Utthan in Akhtariya village, she shared her struggle with a member of Mahila Sangathan. Dhanuben knew that monsoon crop will help restore from the crisis situation but the problem was of seeds and fertilizer. Since, the lockdown created a cash crunch among small and marginal farmer, she didn’t have enough cash on hand to buy the seeds for the crop. In crisis situation, member of women federation suggested her name for the distribution of Kharif Kit supported by Utthan. The kit has 14 kgs of groundnut seeds and trichoderma for seed treatment to control fungal diseases on crops.

Procuring seeds was not the only problem she had to think about. Ploughing is yet one challenge that she has to overcome. Being a small and marginal farmer, she hasn’t had any equipment for ploughing. Moreover, her land was surrounded by large land owning farmers who have already planted in the field which makes accessibility of her land even more difficult. She was not having any livestock to rely on for ploughing. The only option she was left with to plough her field was to do it manually. Dhaniben Gujariya, a member of Sanghathan facilitated by Utthan, agreed to support her for ploughing. Dhanuben, with the help of Dhaniben and her son manually plough the land. They sow ground nut in 0.3 acres of land and in remaining 0.3 acres Bajari.