



Womaniya: Building Inclusive Market Access for Women Entrepreneurs

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Key Takeaways

- The Womaniya initiative **enables women entrepreneurs and SHGs to sell directly to Government buyers** through the **GeM platform**.
- It covers designated categories such as **handicrafts, handloom, jute, coir, home décor and office furnishings** for procurement.
- **Over 2.1 lakh women MSEs are registered on GeM, securing 13.7 Lakh order volume in FY 2025-26.**

Introduction: Womaniya-Opening the Door for Every Woman

Public procurement constitutes a major organised market in India. With the expansion of **digital procurement through the GeM**, the system has become more transparent, standardised and accessible to a wider supplier base. In order to encourage the participation of **women-led micro and small enterprises (MSEs) and Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** the Government introduced the **Womaniya Initiative** on GeM in 2019. The initiative aims to **strengthen the inclusion of women entrepreneurs in public procurement by providing a designated digital interface, simplifying access requirements and creating structured pathways for women-entrepreneurs and SHGs to connect with Government buyers.**

What is GeM?

Government e Marketplace (GeM) is an online platform that facilitates end-to-end procurement of goods and services by various Central/State Ministries, departments, organizations, public sector undertakings, Panchayats and Cooperatives. GeM, launched in 2016 under the vision of **“Minimum Government, Maximum Governance,”** is a paperless, cashless and contactless platform enabling Government buyers to directly procure goods and services from pan-India sellers online.

To know more visit: <https://gem.gov.in/>

Womaniya Initiative

(Launched in 2019)



Encouraging Women-Led MSEs and SHGs



Dedicated
Digital
Platform



Simplified
Registration &
Listing of Products



Opportunities
in Public
Procurement



Connecting
with Institutional
Buyers

Source: Ministry Of Commerce & Industry

MSEs- Micro and Small Enterprises
SHGs- Self Help Groups

Womaniya Initiative: A Dedicated Platform for Women Entrepreneur

Womaniya is an inclusion-focused initiative on the GeM that helps in addressing constraints that limited women's access to formal Government markets. Under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, it provides a dedicated digital interface through which women MSEs and SHGs can register & list their products such as handloom, jute, coir and home décor items, etc. to be purchased directly by Central Ministries and PSUs anywhere in India.

💡 Did you know?

SHGs are a grassroots **informal organisations aiming at empowering rural women**. SHGs normally **include 10 to 20 members** who pool their resources, work together to save money and provide a helping hand to one another and engage in income generating activities.

As of February 2026, **10.05 crore women** have been mobilised into **90.09 lakh SHGs**, expanding **financial inclusion** and **collective economic action**.

The initiative **supports women entrepreneurs by improving market visibility, enabling transparent buyer-seller interaction and reducing dependence on intermediaries**. It also aligns with the Government's broader inclusion priorities and supports national objectives of:

- Expanding supplier diversity,
- Strengthening women-led entrepreneurship and
- Integrating under-represented groups into organised procurement channels.

What is SWAYATT?

SWAYATT (Startups, Women & Youth Advantage Through e-Transactions) is an initiative of the Government e-Marketplace launched in **February 2019** to promote **inclusive participation in public procurement**. The initiative focuses on enabling **startups, women entrepreneurs, youth, Micro & Small Enterprises (MSEs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and marginalized communities** to access government markets. SWAYATT aims to **remove entry barriers and enhance ease of doing business** for these groups on the GeM platform.

Womaniya complements the broader inclusion agenda under the **SWAYATT** programme.

Product Categories Under Womaniya

Womaniya groups product-segments where women-led enterprises and SHGs already have strong production capacity. These categories are formally identified under the initiative and made searchable for Government buyers through curated storefronts on GeM. They include:

- *Womaniya Handicrafts*
- *Womaniya Grocery and Pantry*
- *Womaniya Office Accessories*
- *Womaniya Handloom Textiles*
- *Womaniya Personal Hygiene and Care*

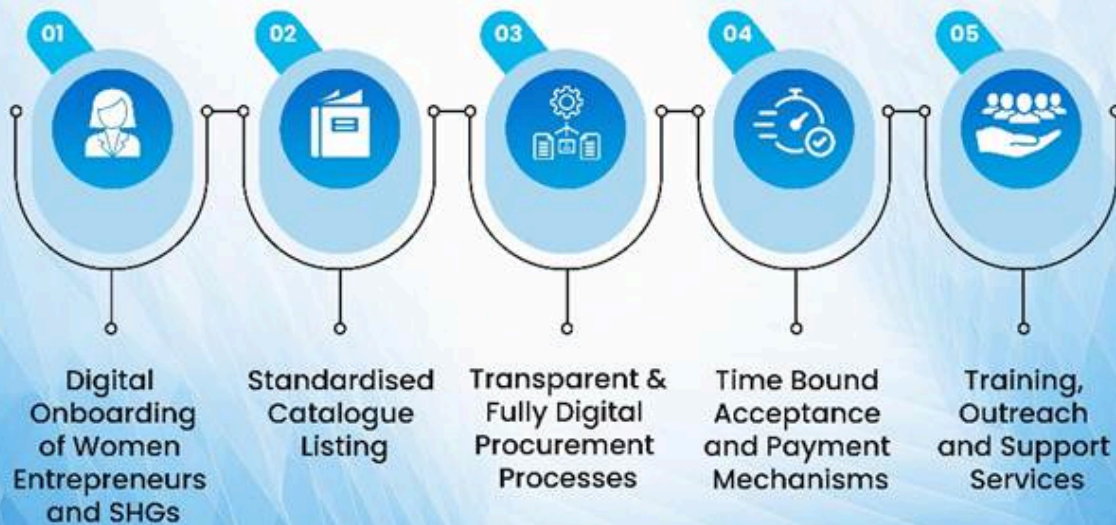


By listing these items within a unified category framework, **GeM improves product discoverability and makes it easier for departments to source from women-led producers at scale.**

Key Features of the Womaniya Initiative

The initiative harnesses specialised platform features on the GeM to open new pathways for women-led enterprises and SHGs, enabling them to access Government markets, showcase their products and steadily expand their businesses within a transparent and supportive digital ecosystem.

Features of Womaniya



Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry

Digital Onboarding of Women Entrepreneurs and SHGs

Women led micro and small enterprises are onboarded through a digital process using **Udyam verification and essential documentation**. Mobilisation and capacity building of women MSEs is further reinforced through immersive onboarding sessions conducted through offline and online training workshops by GeM.

Standardised Catalogue Listing

Products are listed using **uniform catalogue templates** with defined technical specifications and attributes, ensuring comparability across sellers and simplifying buyer evaluation.

Transparent and Fully Digital Procurement Processes

All procurement activities including **bidding, order placement, acceptance, invoicing and payments** etc., are executed digitally. This **reduces intermediary dependence** and **enables direct engagement between women led enterprises and Government buyers**.

Time Bound Acceptance and Payment Mechanisms

Digitised workflows help ensure timely payments, a critical support for micro and small suppliers operating with limited working capital.

Training, Outreach and Support Services

Under SWAYATT and Womaniya focused programmes, GeM conducts capacity building activities such as **onboarding workshops, vernacular training and buyer seller meets across states**.

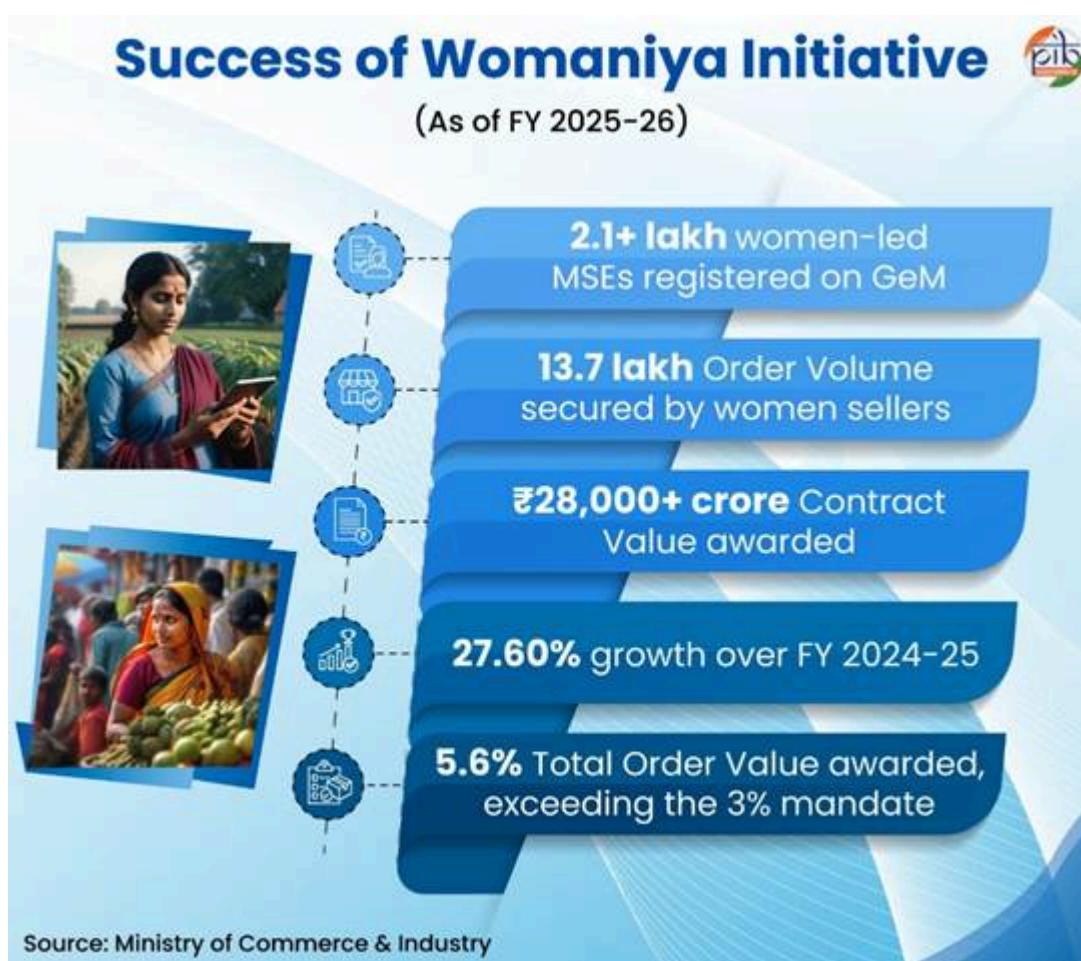
Implementation of “**Womaniya on GeM**” is a step towards a gender inclusive procurement portal.

Government buyers place orders and create demand for Womaniya-listed products and integrating women producers into procurement cycles.

At the grassroots level, district administrations, enterprise support centres, and training institutions conduct onboarding drives, training programmes, and product catalogue workshops to enhance seller readiness.

Notably, the Womaniya Initiative has expanded significantly since its launch. In **FY 2025-26**:

- **Over 2.1 lakh women MSEs** registered on GeM, with total order volume of **13.7 Lakh**.
- More than **₹ 28,000 crore contract value awarded** to women MSEs with **27.60% growth over last year**.
- **5.6% of GeM’s total order** awarded significantly **surpassed the mandated 3%** procurement target.



The initiative has evolved from a specialised inclusion effort into one of the largest organised public procurement channels for women-led enterprises in the country.

Together, the interconnected roles of digital infrastructure, field-level mobilisation, capacity building, and institutional demand create a synergistic enabling environment that supports women’s economic participation at scale.

By giving women-led enterprises and SHGs a direct path into one of India's largest public markets, **Womaniya Initiative on GeM** converts existing production strengths into formal, sustainable enterprise participation. As more women gain visibility, build capacity and connect with Government buyers, **Womaniya becomes not just a procurement initiative but a pathway to greater economic independence and wider representation ensuring that public procurement reflects the capabilities and aspirations of the better half of society.**

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