



NHAI Encourages Women Focused Skill Development through 'Project Saksham'

Posted On: 15 MAY 2026 3:09PM by PIB Delhi

Reinforcing its commitment to promote inclusive development, National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) in partnership with the Vertis Foundation is driving meaningful social impact through 'Project Saksham', an initiative focused on empowering rural women through structured skill development for sustainable livelihood opportunities. Beyond skilling, the initiative aims to create pathways for long-term financial independence and social empowerment.

Project Saksham operates through a network of 12 training centres across the country, providing access to underserved communities to industry-relevant skills and pathways into the formal workforce. To date, the initiative has trained over 6,000 youth, with more than 4,000 successfully placed across various sectors. Beneficiaries are earning average monthly incomes in the range of Rs.13,000 – 16,000 often surpassing entry-level wage benchmarks in several states. Notably, over 80% of the beneficiaries are women, underscoring the program's strong emphasis on gender-led empowerment.

Aligned with NHAI's broader vision of inclusive infrastructure development, Project Saksham is anchored in the belief that communities residing along the National Highways, in particular rural women, should directly benefit from the economic opportunities generated by infrastructure expansion. The initiative seeks to bridge this gap by enabling access to skills, employment and financial independence for communities that are connected, yet often excluded from the economic momentum surrounding infrastructure expansion.

Project Saksham is distinguished by its strong on-ground engagement model. Field teams work closely within rural communities, engaging with families to build trust, address socio-cultural barriers and encourage participation of women in skill development and employment opportunities, often for the first time. Participants are trained in a diverse range of vocational skills, including electrical work, plumbing, appliance repair, tailoring, general duty assistant nursing and multi-skill technician training. These programs are designed to equip beneficiaries with practical, market-aligned capabilities that enhance employability. For many participants, it represents a transformative journey, enabling them to achieve economic self-reliance and redefining aspirations for themselves and their communities.

This initiative underlines NHAI's commitment to ensure that infrastructure development not only delivers enhanced connectivity but also provides opportunities for inclusive growth that will further contribute towards creating stronger, more resilient communities across the country.

GDH/DS

