

eSARAS: Expanding Markets, Empowering Rural Women

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From weavers and potters to women-led cooperatives, rural artisans are powering India's inclusive growth story. Through the eSARAS platform, thousands of Self-Help Groups are gaining direct access to national markets, digital infrastructure and institutional support. By eliminating intermediaries and integrating with major commerce platforms, eSARAS is transforming how rural craft reaches the consumer. The platform's expanding reach across blocks and districts nationwide underscores its growing significance in rural livelihoods. Initiatives like eSARAS continue to play a pivotal role in driving women's entrepreneurship, preserving cultural heritage and building a digitally empowered, self-reliant rural economy.

Crafting Change from the Grassroots



Over the past eleven years, the Digital India programme has transformed governance and public service delivery- making them more transparent, accessible and efficient. This transformation has reached beyond cities into rural India, where technology is now a tool for economic empowerment, livelihood strengthening and community-led enterprise.

Within this landscape, eSARAS (SARAS Aajeevika) has emerged as one of the most significant outcomes. It is developed by the **Ministry of Rural Development** under the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)**. It stands as a flagship example of how digital infrastructure can be channelled into grassroots economic change.

What is eSARAS?

eSARAS is the **official online marketplace** of DAY-NRLM, built exclusively for products made by women Self-Help Groups and their federations. The well curated handcrafted goods emerge from the very heart of the country- from weavers in Chanderi sarees from Madhya Pradesh to marble artisans in Rajasthan. They also include Pashmina producers nestled in the hills of Jammu & Kashmir. Every product on eSARAS carries a story, and every purchase is a direct connection to the artisan behind it.

The platform lists local products across **major categories**:

- Home and Living
- Women's Apparel and Accessories
- Men's Apparel and Accessories

- Personal Care
- Food Items
- Kids Toys & Accessories

Over 8.62 crore women SHG members have a digital storefront through eSARAS, of whom 85% are directly linked to the Ministry of Rural Development's network (as on February 2024). It gives them not just a marketplace, but institutional support for marketing, branding and logistics.

DAY-NRLM covers **7,627 blocks nationwide** and has built a cadre of **1.51 crore community members** to support these enterprises at the grassroots level.



From Portal to e-Commerce Ecosystem: Key Milestones

What started as a simple web portal has, in just a few years, grown into a full-stack e-commerce ecosystem. It now combines a **mobile app**, **physical gallery**, **national melas**, a **logistics fulfilment centre** and integrations with India's largest online marketplace platforms.

Platform Evolution	Detail
eSARAS Portal Launch	e-Commerce portal https://www.esaras.in/ launched for better and more effective marketing of Saras products
eSARAS Mobile App Launch	Mobile app launched alongside the eSARAS Fulfilment Centre . It is used for processing, packaging and shipping of products.
ONDC	SHG products made available across 11+ buyer apps (20 crore+ buyers on ONDC platform) with 800+ handcrafted products listed
UMANG	eSARAS listed on UMANG ; platform now serves 2,572 services with 796.69 crore transactions (June 2026)
SARAS Shakti Collection	Premium curated gift collection launched at Rashtriya Gramin Vikas Sammelan 2026 for institutional and corporate markets
SARAS Aajeevika Gallery	Permanent retail gallery established at Baba Kharak Singh Marg, New Delhi, showcasing curated SHG products.



The Road Ahead: Craft, Commerce and Community

With expanding integrations across ONDC, UMANG and other digital platforms, eSARAS is positioning rural producers to compete in larger markets while preserving India's craft heritage. As the ecosystem grows, it is expected to play an increasingly important role in creating sustainable livelihoods and advancing inclusive rural development.

In doing so, eSARAS exemplifies how Digital India is empowering women, preserving India's rich craft heritage and driving inclusive, women-led rural development.

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