



DISHA

Women Empowerment through
Entrepreneurship Development Training in
Uttar Pradesh and Bihar



HUMANA
PEOPLE TO PEOPLE INDIA



Humana People to People India has been promoting women entrepreneurship through the Disha Programme since 2016. YES Foundation has been supporting Project Disha since June 2021. In its current phase (FY 2025-26), the objective of Project Disha is to empower and enable 15,000 women from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to become financially independent by fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem that ensures economic security. The project has been promoting skill-based entrepreneurship development, establishing market linkages for existing women entrepreneurs, bridging the demand-supply gap in access to social security, and ultimately improving the quality of life for women across six districts.

Objectives:

- 15,000 women will receive entrepreneurship development training and business development support, which will enhance their understanding on entrepreneurship information, livelihood opportunities and setting up of new business and their growth
- Creation or expansion of 3,000 nano enterprises over a period of 1 year
- Providing market linkages, product enhancement and scale-up support to existing women entrepreneurs
- Linkages of women to Rural Self Employment Training Institutes, and credit support
- Providing digital and financial literacy to 3,000 women entrepreneurs

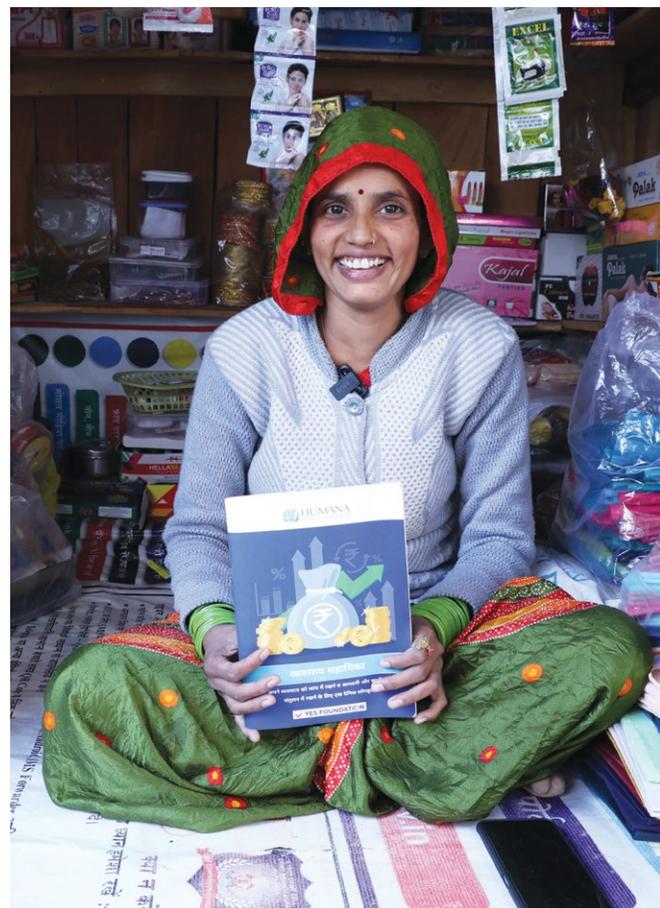
Duration: 1 year (April 2025 – March 2026)

Location: In the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh the districts include West Champaran, Agra, Hathras, Mathura, Jaunpur and Gorakhpur



Achievements during April 2025-December 2025:

- **15,382** women received entrepreneurship development training and business development support
- **2,949** women created and expanded new nano enterprises; of these, 2,670 were new start-ups and 279 were scale-up enterprises



Enterprise Type

Grocery

1,203

Bakery/Food

184

Tuition Class

41

Dairy

9

Footwear

7

Garment

115

Beauty Parlour

36

Bamboo Craft

24

Cosmetic &
Stationery

388

Handicraft

70

Handloom

8

Animal
Husbandry

56

Pottery Making

6

Tailoring

277

Vegetable
Selling

109

Bangle Making

64

Other

352

Number of
Enterprises

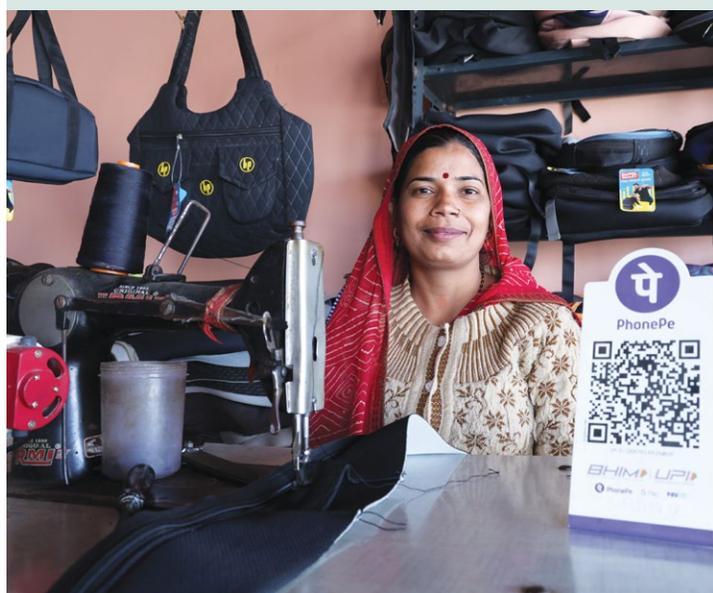
2,949

Nurturing Change from the Ground Up

“Earlier, working as daily-wage labourers in agricultural fields, both my husband and I found it very difficult to make ends meet and raise our three children. The lack of regular and adequate income was a constant strain on us. After receiving Disha’s entrepreneurship development training and the team’s constant motivation, I took the plunge and started my own bag-making business. I observed people frowning upon me for working in a shop without a veil, but I chose to ignore such chatter. Since I started making and selling bags six months ago, I have been earning Rs 4,000–5,000 per month, and our lives have changed. As a businesswoman, I have enough to run my household and provide better education for my children. I have hired an employee to support my business and have also helped other women learn the tricks of the trade and start their own businesses.”

Bhagwan Devi, 41

Navya Sliai Centre
Sahat, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh



Breaking through Barriers

“Although I was earning an income at a private school as a teacher, the low salary and lack of professional respect propelled me to explore entrepreneurship. Now, have been selling sarees and women’s suits for the past year in my shop. I am making a profit of Rs 10,000–12,000 per month, and I plan to grow further. With the success of my business, I am able to educate my daughters well, and support my family of six, of whom I am the sole earning member. I want to educate my daughters well so that they are independent. I had faced many difficulties starting a business as my family did not support my decision; at one point I was even locked in a room, as according to them women are not supposed to run a business. But I was resolute in my decision and Project Disha supported me throughout my entrepreneurial journey. My daughters have seen my struggle and will learn from me and become fierce and self-sufficient.”

Sona, 35

Sona Ladies Garments
Chhatikara, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh



Shaping My Future

“I knew some pottery from earlier, and I also learnt from the Matikala Board, Uttar Pradesh, to explore opportunities for making more income. Initially, I didn’t know what to do with my skills, but with the entrepreneurship training provided by the Disha team, I got a roadmap to start my own work and business. Taking a leap of faith was difficult, as in the place where I live, breaking away from the norm is not supported. Earlier, I used to work as a labourer in the fields with my husband, where we could just about manage to survive. Now, with the business I am able to run my family — my husband and three children — and still save Rs 3,000–4,000 per month. I sell my products in different melas or fairs. I am proud of my work. A special moment was when the actress and politician Hema Malini bought pottery products from my stall during a Diwali mela in Mathura. She praised my work! Making things creatively and having other people like them is such an empowering feeling. I look forward to growing my work.”

Rekha Prajapat, 30

Pottery Business
Kamai, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh



Empowered by Entrepreneurship

“After Project Disha’s business training, I have grown my business immensely. Earlier, I was earning only Rs 300 per day with no signs of growth. Now, I am able to make Rs 1,100 per day. I have increased my inventory and invested more in the products my clients needed, so they no longer have to go elsewhere. I have also learnt to save money regularly. I love doing makeup, especially bridal makeup, and being able to pursue the work I enjoy through a profitable business has been a liberating experience. You know, I have even bought a gold ring from my savings! I would advise all women to start a business and become independent.”

Naval, 23

Pari Cosmetics and Beauty Parlour
Lakhanpura, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

Paving the Way to Success

“Project Disha has given me a new direction towards becoming an independent woman. Being educated only till 5th grade, I never thought I could earn much. I used to work as a labourer in the agricultural fields and support my family. Now, I am a businesswoman running a cosmetics store where most of the women from the village come and purchase their products. Interacting with customers has taught me how to engage with customers, listen to their feedback and serve them better. I am passionate about growing my business. Besides making a monthly profit of Rs 10,000–12,000, I have gained confidence and respect within my community through my work and business.”

Sargina, 25

Mayra Cosmetics
Sahar, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh



Building a Better Life

“Being a single mother, I was raising my three children with great difficulty. After my husband’s untimely death in 2013, I started selling cow’s milk and doing odd jobs in the fields to keep my family afloat. However, with rising prices and my children growing, I needed to earn much more. In this time of crisis, Project Disha’s introductory meeting seemed promising. I took their Entrepreneurship Development Training, and seeing the need for a grocery shop in our village, I began selling grocery products from my home. As I started earning Rs 700–800 per day, I saved enough to buy and install a small kiosk outside my house to sell groceries. From my grocery kiosk, milk sales, and occasional farm work, I now earn about Rs 12,000 per month. With this additional income, my children are able to attend a better school, and our meals have improved too. The Disha team supported me throughout my entrepreneurial journey.”

Baby Devi, 34

Grocery Store

Kaitholi Kheragarh, Agra, Uttar Pradesh





YES Foundation is a charitable Trust driven by a vision of an empowered and equitable India. The Foundation strives to achieve this by focusing on building innovative and inclusive ecosystems to catalyze social transformation. YES Foundation was registered in 2012 with YES BANK as its 'Settlor'. Being a part of the financial sector, YES BANK has embedded CSR into its core business operations, keeping in mind the impact it has on people, planet and prosperity. YES Foundation is YES BANK's concrete step to realize this vision of an empowered and equitable India.



HPPI is a development organisation registered as a not-for-profit company under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956, since May 1998. It is a non-political, non-religious organisation working for the holistic development of the underprivileged and marginalised people in rural and urban India. We work through social development and poverty alleviation interventions by coordinated, strategic approaches focusing on school education and teacher education, life skills, improved livelihoods, health, women empowerment and environment protection.



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