



A PROJECT FUNDED
BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

Nirmanshree

Empowering Women through Social Enterprise



Habitat
for Humanity®
India

WINGS OF EMPOWERMENT

A Project Nirmanshree Newsletter

Breaking Barriers





PROJECT IN BRIEF

Habitat for Humanity India, in partnership with the European Union, is implementing Project Nirmanshree in Maharashtra's Beed and Osmanabad districts, and Dhenkanal and Jajpur districts in Odisha.

Project Nirmanshree is aimed at empowering marginalised women in Odisha and Maharashtra by providing them with economic and social opportunities by primarily improving their access to housing-related government services, providing construction and entrepreneurial training, and identifying gaps with key stakeholders for women in construction.

The project aims to facilitate the entry of a well-trained women workforce into an otherwise male-dominated construction sector. This opens the door to better livelihood opportunities for women and allows for the gradual transformation of the housing eco-system. Habitat India is bringing women together by collaborating with women federations and self-help groups.

Project Nirmanshree set out with the aim to provide technical and entrepreneurial skills to 3,000 women and establish around 50 social enterprises.

The term 'Nirmanshree' is an amalgamation of two words. 'Nirman' comes from Hindi and means 'construction', while 'Shree' finds its roots in Sanskrit and represents the 'female gender'. When brought together, 'Nirmanshree' means 'building women'.

Construction Skill Building: 3,007 women participants have undergone Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) training, which is recognised by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the Government of India. Out of the 3,007 participants, 2,956 women

have received their passing certificates issued by the NSDC.

Entrepreneurship Development Programme: Habitat India has also trained 3,275 women in technical and entrepreneurial skills under Project Nirmanshree.

Backward and Forward Linkages through government schemes: Participants are also made aware of the various schemes and subsidies established by the government and how they can explore different linkages of financial support. They are also given the handholding support needed to apply and access these schemes, an example of which is the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP).



200K OUTREACH

Improving the habitat of 2,00,000 women: An update



Project Nirmanshree seeks to improve the quality of habitat of 2,00,000 families in Odisha and Maharashtra, through the orientation and inclusion of women in government funding schemes. In this manner, the project aims to facilitate 2,00,000 women to improve the quality of their habitat, not only for themselves but for their entire household as well. Habitat has made use of its cascade model to engage women through the provision of an orientation on basic construction topics.

This model aimed to leverage over 3,007 Recognition of

Prior Learning (RPL)-trained women to engage with 20,000 self-help groups, eventually facilitating the improvement of habitats for 2,00,000 women. This benefits not only them but their households as well. The assumption is

that a woman represents one household in the project. The orientations provided are intended as a springboard for the women to pursue more advanced learning related to construction, and to access government funding schemes. Of these, many women have indicated that they would want to pursue further learning and support and have been referred to the appropriate local government institutions/ departments facilitating their house improvement.

2,12,719, out of a target of 2,00,000 women, have been oriented in both states on the basics of construction and government funding schemes.

200k Month wise Orientation			
Months in 2023		Odisha	Maharashtra
Sr. No.	Month	Women reached per month	Women reached per month
1	May	5,334	6,937
2	June	8,993	8,522
3	July	23,284	12,761
4	August	8,907	13,333
5	September	62,590	19,817
6	October	-	42,241
Total		1,09,108	1,03,611



AWARENESS EVENTS

Spreading Awareness



Habitat India has taken the initiative to conduct 60 awareness sessions in both Odisha and Maharashtra to acquaint women with Project Nirmanshree. The sessions, totalling 30 in each state, delve into the accomplishments of the project while elucidating the various government schemes at their disposal. These gatherings serve as an introductory platform to familiarise attendees with Habitat India, Project Nirmanshree and its multifaceted endeavours and the support given by the European Union.

As part of the sessions, an awareness video on the project is screened. The video provides a comprehensive overview of the project's mission by illustrating a fictional story of women in the construction sector, their challenges, and how they can overcome these challenges. Furthermore, a dedicated segment is carved out to elucidate the various government schemes and entitlements accessible to women. To provide a more personal touch, the sessions also throw a spotlight on women whose lives have been impacted by Project

Nirmanshree. These women are given a platform to share their experience which encourages other women. These narratives encompass experiences stemming from Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) training, engagement in social enterprises, and active participation in women collectives.

The inclusive nature of the sessions extends to fostering interaction, with a special emphasis on a question-and-answer segment at the conclusion. Beyond disseminating information, the goal is to create a vibrant and supportive community, laying the groundwork for a shared journey of empowerment. The holistic approach includes not only imparting knowledge about the project and government initiatives but also facilitating a platform for women to exchange insights, build practical skills through workshops, and establish meaningful connections.



NIRMAN HAAT



Under Project Nirmanshree, Habitat India has played a pivotal role in the establishment of 50 women-led enterprises. In our continuous commitment to these enterprises, we provide handholding support, offer technical guidance and consistent monitoring to enhance their micro-businesses and livelihood opportunities.

To amplify the impact of these initiatives, Habitat India has introduced Nirman Haat, a promotional event conducted in both Odisha and Maharashtra. This event serves as a platform to showcase the diverse range of products and services

offered by the women-led enterprises. Nirman Haat stands as a testament to talent, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit, featuring a spectrum of offerings from fly-ash bricks to cement and coir products.

This collaborative effort is a dynamic space where women entrepreneurs from Project Nirmanshree converge, not only to display their skills but also to market and sell their products. The inaugural Nirman Haat stalls were exhibited in Jajpur, Odisha, during the Palishree Mela organised by the Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS), Government of Odisha, from

October 19 to October 23, 2023. They were also given a certificate by ORMAS. Five enterprises exhibited their products. Subsequently, the second Nirman Haat unfolded in Beed, Maharashtra, on October 28, 2023. Six enterprises exhibited their products. The enterprises in Odisha and Maharashtra received widespread appreciation for their products from the stall visitors. The momentum of these events continues, with six more Nirman Haats scheduled to be completed by December 2023.

The overarching aim is to not only provide a marketplace for these enterprises but also to foster an environment that encourages sustainable practices, innovation, and economic autonomy for women in the construction industry. Through initiatives like Nirman Haat, Habitat India endeavours to create a lasting impact on both local economies and the broader landscape of women-led entrepreneurship in construction.



VOICES FROM THE FIELD



Amrapali Kamble lives with her husband and two children in a village around 30 km away from Kalamb city at Hasegaon in Osmanabad. As the village primarily relies on agriculture, there were limited livelihood opportunities aside from farming. Moreover, due to the seasonal nature of agricultural activities, she used to spend months trying to find alternative

employment throughout the year.

She needed to find work as her husband's income was not enough to support her family. She then heard about work on a construction site in the village. Amrapali and the women in her neighbourhood began going to the construction site to work. They began working

for Rs. 200 a day. Her dream was to educate her children as she did not want them to experience a difficult life where they did not have enough to get through the day. Her daughter, Anuja, studies in Class 11, while her son Saurabh studies in Class 7.

Meanwhile, the Project Nirmanshree team started working in a few villages in

“I became more confident because of the training I received. Without taking a firm decision to leave the house yourself and start working, your family will not progress. Today, I am able to interact with bank and other officials without fear.”

the Kalamb and Washi blocks of Osmanabad district. She was one of the participants in a baseline survey conducted in the village as part of the inception of the project. Soon enough, Amrapali, who has completed her education till Class 9, formed a Self-help Group (SHG), the Mayawati Mahila Group, which consisted of 11 women. The group started putting Rs. 100 per member per month at the Maharashtra Gramin Bank in Shirdhon, which would come up to a saving of Rs. 1,100 per month for the group.

She eventually started participating in every meeting conducted under

Nirmanshree and received Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP), and Entrepreneurship Skill Development (ESD) training. “I became more confident because of the training. Without taking a firm decision to leave the house yourself and start working, your family will not progress. Today, I am able to interact with the bank and other officials without fear.”

She eventually established Saurabh Construction Services, a centring plate service, in June 2022, with the seed capital provided by Nirmanshree. By 2023, her

sales had already crossed Rs. 80,000 with orders coming in from across the village. She received guidance and support from the Nirmanshree team and applied for the Chief Minister Employment Generation Programme scheme, a state-level programme that provides financial assistance to eligible entrepreneurs for setting up new businesses in the state. “Today, my enterprise is doing good business,” she concluded.



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