

AkzoNobel's Indradhanush Women Entrepreneurs Paint a More Inclusive Future In Rural India

Category: Business

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Imagining a professional painter. Is it a man or a woman Now imagine a world free from gender stereotypes. This International Women's Day, AkzoNobel India is celebrating its 'Indradhanush' women who are challenging the status-quo in the male-dominated industries of decorative painting with the transformative power of paint.



Kashmira Begum, our Indradhanush paint retailer now better supports her family with the incremental income in Horwah, West Bengal

In under four years, AkzoNobel's social initiative, Project Indradhanush has created a new sustainable livelihood-driven ecosystem for more than 3,100 rural women in in more than 940 villages across seven states of India. Noteworthy that over 2,100 women are now vocationally trained, financially independent professional painters while another 1,000 women are successful paint-preneurs.

Celebrating every Indradhanush woman, **Rohit Totla, Executive Director of AkzoNobel India** said, *"At AkzoNobel, we believe that communities flourish when women thrive. The true magic of Project Indradhanush lies in harnessing the untapped potential of rural women – from introducing opportunities in the paint industry and helping them develop livelihood-linked vocational skills to providing necessary resources for their success. What we're most proud of is seeing our Indradhanush women carve out new careers and paint the future, both for*

themselves and their families. A future that's more equitable, empowered and colourful for all."

For thousands of women, like 40-year-old Avanti Bai Dhakad – a seasonal agricultural labourer from Nagari village in Ratlam district, Madhya Pradesh – Project Indradhanush has been life-changing. Through decorative painting, she found not only a source of stable income but also a newfound sense of confidence and independence. Likewise, Anil and Antim Balas dream of growing their income from their small general store is now a reality. After becoming paint-entrepreneurs, their monthly income has increased by 70%, giving them the hope and means to build a brighter future for their young children.

Initiated in Darrang, an aspirational district in Assam in 2021, Project Indradhanush has since then rapidly expanded, touching more lives with each passing year. Today, the initiative empowers rural women across nearly 270 villages in Villupuram, Thiruvallur and Kanchipuram districts of Tamil Nadu; over 480 villages in Howrah, Bankura, West Bardhaman, Purulia, East Midnapore districts of West Bengal; nearly 120 villages in Ujjain, Ratlam and Mandsaur districts of Madhya Pradesh; 30 villages in East Singhum, Jharkhand; and in the Nuh district in Haryana.

For more information, please visit www.akzonobel.co.in.

