

CII FOUNDATION

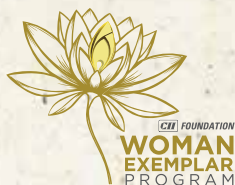
Celebrating

THE NEW NATION BUILDERS



15 grassroots
change makers
CII Foundation
Woman Exemplar
Program 2019





The Woman Exemplar Program seeks to identify, recognise, empower and amplify women at the community level who have, against all odds, excelled and contributed significantly to the development process in India.

The program was initiated in 2005 with the primary objective to promote women empowerment by way of identifying and recognizing unsung women achievers who have looked beyond their limitations and contributed to their communities in a significant way. These women work relentlessly in the field of Education, Health or Micro-Enterprise to become models of change especially in the rural geographies or from any challenging or disadvantaged environments.

The three key components of the Woman Exemplar Program comprise:

a. Identification – Receiving nominations from Pan India, followed by desk reviews and telephonic interviews and concluded with due diligence visits to the grass roots leaders in order to identify the Woman Exemplars annually.

b. Recognition – One nominee from each category receives an award each year which includes a citation, a medallion, and cash reward of Rupees three lakhs each for the winners. The Steering Committee of the program selects the winner each year based on the due diligence visits. Apart from this, the whole cohort receives a citation and recognition by CII Foundation.

c. Mentoring and Amplifying – Capacity building, leadership training, mentoring and access to an India-wide peer network for the Woman Exemplars to expand their work. Parallel to this, the exemplars are provided with various platforms for outreach and networking depending upon their needs.

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Nation Builders- Education Sector



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Bhimavva Chalwadi

Woman Exemplar 2019
Education category

Daughter of a rag picker, Bhimavva became a devadasi at the age of 15. Her rescue from sex work put her on the path of child protection. Bhimavva has counselled and prevented 2500 girls from joining the Devadasi practise. She has provided rehabilitation support to 1400 women rescued from sex work. A child protection champion and advocate of education, Bhimavva herself is unschooled. She has created a unique algorithm of symbols and images to decipher and comprehend the languages. Bhimavva has taught this code to other sex workers like her. A firm believer in vocational education, Bhimavva leads Swift Wash Laundry -a unique social business- that has opened up jobs with dignity for 280 women who were once engaged with sex work.

Directly impacted **5000**
at-risk girls and women

2500 girls prevented
from being committed
to the Devadasi tradition

1400 rescued women
have been counseled

More than **280 women**
have been given
vocational training

Jacinta Kerketta

Woman Exemplar 2019
Education category

Jacinta overcame extreme poverty, violence, traffickers and hate crime to graduate as a journalist. A tribal change leader, she founded Adivasi Ekta Manch and has engaged 15000 members of the Oraon tribe to end rampant child marriage, revive their progressive cultural practices and promote education for girls. 120 adolescent girl changemakers trained by Jacinta, use prose, poetry and theatre to inspire hundreds of girls in remote villages to challenge gender norms and complete their schooling. These young change agents are further inspiring girls in their villages to go to school and complete their education.



120 adolescent
girls completed their
secondary education

Created **120** young
change agents

15000 Oraon tribals
recommitted to revive
the cultural traditions

Kanchan

Woman Exemplar 2019
Education category

Born into a family of Dalit agricultural labourers, Kanchan has survived child marriage and purdah to open pathways of education for Dalit children. Working in the remote interiors of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, she has rescued, rehabilitated and instilled life skills and the quest for education among 5000 Dalit children. She has also mobilized 8000 Dalit women to speak out against caste-based violence, including caste discrimination that pushes Dalit children out of the education system.



5000 children
directly impacted

900 children
rescued from bonded
labour/home-based work

300 drop-out girls
re-enrolled through
bridge course

200 child
marriages prevented

8000 women
from collectivized
under the Dalit
Mahila Mukti Manch

Mana Mandlekar

Woman Exemplar 2019
Education category

Daughter of a Dalit goat herder, Mana is the first college graduate from her village. This “Iron Girl” from Harda mastered karate to combat her daily experiences of sexual harassment. Today, she leads a Sport for Development movement for rural girls across 10 Panchayats and 12 towns of her district. Providing karate and self-defence classes in 45 remote schools, community centres and colleges, Mana and her team have transformed more than 4000 adolescent and youth with lifeskills, and agency.

1500 adolescent
and youth
directly impacted

35 peer
leaders trained

50 drop outs children
mainstreamed to
government schools

4000 children
& youth participated
in life skills training



Rama Sharma

Woman Exemplar 2019
Education category

Overcoming marital violence and financial crisis, Rama Sharma is enabling girls from the marginalized Banjara community, to enter and succeed in the formal schooling system. She leads the Pehchanshala model of bridge schools which has impacted 3928 girls with lifeskills and mainstreamed more than 300 out-of-school girls into government schools. The Pehchanshala pedagogy has been integrated into the state Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan program, impacting thousands more vulnerable girls.



3928 girls directly impacted through life skills training and bridge course

300 girls employed post completion of formal education

Pehchanshala model integrated into the state
**Sarva Shiksha
Abhiyan program**

Nation Builders- Health Sector



Vanlalruati

Woman Exemplar 2019
Health category

Vanlalruati overcame poverty, drug abuse, violence and family abandonment to become a towering champion for women living with HIV. Discriminated by the state health system, she became one of the first Mizo woman to publicly declare her HIV positive status. Vanlalruati founded the Mizoram Positive Women's Network (MPWN) and has directly impacted 20,000 persons living with HIV in the state. In a state with the highest prevalence of HIV, she has pushed for large-scale policy shifts, leading to the integration of persons with HIV in the general healthcare system.

Directly impacted
20000 persons and
women living with HIV Aids

3500 received access
to government schemes

200 received
Legal aid for case work

800 received
financial assistance

Dulari Khatoon

Woman Exemplar 2019
Health category

From the brink of being burnt to death, Dulari has today transformed herself and 1000 women survivors of violence into women's rights leaders. Working in poor, Muslim communities of Kolkata from where she hails, Dulari has organized 453 women into 36 community groups that prevent and act against gender-based violence. To create a culture that makes violence against women unacceptable, Dulari leads large-scale campaigns that reach more than 50,000 individuals every year, including religious leaders.

Directly transformed lives
of **1000 women**
survivors of violence

300 survivors
of violence counselled and
mentored for handling legal cases

456 women mobilized
into 36 community groups
acting against
gender-based violence

700 survivors linked
to government schemes
for rehabilitation

250 women linked
to income generation schemes

630 community women
and NGO workers trained
to address violence issues

Lali Dhakad

Woman Exemplar 2019
Health category

Crippled by polio, surviving child marriage and polygamy; subjected to de-humanizing practises after her widowhood, Lali today empowers widowed and single women. She leads India's only women-led, mass-based organization dedicated to advancing the rights of single women in the country. Lali has directly transformed the lives of more than 2000 single women and trained 100 more change agents like her. Together, they have impacted 60,000 rural single women in Rajasthan.

Directly impacted
2000 women members

500 cases of domestic violence, land and property and legal inheritance have been won

Created a cadre of
100 leaders for varied responsibilities like legal counselling, record keeping, case management, etc.

60000 women
members enrolled for the rural single women movement

Nibha Das

Woman Exemplar 2019
Health category

A Dalit child labourer, who survived the brutal practices of village quacks, Nibha is improving maternal and child health in marginalized communities of remote Jharkhand. She is demonstrating how health data collected with empathy and accuracy can be a game changer. Nibha has trained 300 women as barefoot data collectors and health counsellors, who have reached out to 1 lakh people with awareness on maternal and child nutrition and ensured accurate health interventions for 25,000 individuals.



Directly impacted
15,000 people
through awareness programs

Reached out to over
1 lakh people
reducing infant mortality

Trained **300 women**
as data collectors

Sreeja Debnath

Woman Exemplar 2019
Health category

Domestic abuse, trafficking, and abandonment by family; Sreeja faced the wrath of all by her adolescence. She grew up in a shelter home where dance changed her life. This led her to train in and champion Dance Movement Therapy (DMT). Sreeja co-founded Kolkata Sanved, an organization that uses DMT to transform survivors of sexual violence into healers and leaders. Her work has directly impacted 5000 girls and women and led to the integration of DMT into the government rehabilitation policy.

Directly impacted over
5,000 children & youth
survivors of violence

Children having
survived trafficking
and gender-based violence

Children living in
red-light areas, on streets or
on railway platforms

Chronic
drug users

Children living with
HIV/AIDS

Nation Builders- Micro-Enterprise Sector



Supported by



Nilima Tigga

Woman Exemplar 2019
Micro Enterprise

Small savings from a SHG and earnings from her micro-enterprise enabled Nilima to pull her family back from the brink of starvation. With this conviction, she grew from a SHG peon to setting up Shankhdhara Mahila Vikash Mandal (SMVM), a federation of 1030 SHGs in Lohardargah, Jharkhand, one of the most backward districts of India. Under her leadership, SMVM has created significant income increase for 15000 women and their families through SHGs and 700 women through micro-entrepreneurship.

13000 women
directly impacted

1030 Self Help
groups formed

12000 women
received loans

15000 people
linked with govt. schemes

700
small businesses initiated



Akli Tudu

Woman Exemplar 2019
Micro Enterprise

Akli Tudu, a change agent from the Santhal community, is opening up micro-enterprises in the forested, Naxal-affected Gorabanda block of Jharkhand. Identifying acute water scarcity as the root cause of tribal distress, Akli and her team have braved threats by Naxal groups to construct 53 ponds which host multiple micro-enterprises such as fishery and duckery, while providing year-round water for agriculture. The ponds have tripled the incomes of 2000 individuals in 500 households and stemmed the flow of distress migration.

Directly impacted
2000 people

53 ponds
constructed in 15 villages

Increased the income of
300 households

Curbed school
drop out rated

Sadhana Deshmukh

Woman Exemplar 2019
Micro Enterprise

Sadhana Deshmukh is a serial entrepreneur with a knack for scaling village enterprises. As an entrepreneur and a barefoot business coach, Sadhana has enabled more than 1,000 women in the drought-affected district of Latur, Maharashtra to use entrepreneurship to climb out of poverty.

Emerging from the restrictive confines of her conservative family, Sadhana runs two businesses of her own. She is an innovator in Soya Products and her ventures have benefitted 2500 families with products that address their clean energy, health, sanitation and food security needs.

Directly mentored **1000**
grassroots business women


700 business
models created

Clean energy solutions for
2500 rural customers

Savitri Rai

Woman Exemplar 2019
Micro Enterprise

A survivor of marital family violence, Savitri Rai has overcome structural challenges to establish (AASKTNUSS), an organisation dedicated to realising women's economic empowerment in marginalised communities. She has directly worked with over 2000 women to build their financial independence through self-help groups and micro-entrepreneurship, in an area where enterprise is not familiar for men and women.



1500 women directly impacted
through Self Help Group practices

700 business
models created

400 women and girls
trained as beautician and
tailors through her centre

Ushaben Vasava

Woman Exemplar 2019
Micro Enterprise

Ushaben is giving 3000 tribal, asset less women like her own self, the identity and recognition of being women farmer-entrepreneurs. Through modern and organic agricultural practises, access to land and property rights, and linkages to subsidies and government schemes, Ushaben is building the rural ecosystem for grassroots women entrepreneurs to flourish. She organizes trainings in modern and organic agriculture including setting up their own greenhouses vermi-compost pits, bio-gas plants and linkages to local seed providers.



Directly impacted
3000 tribal women to convert
them to farmer-entrepreneurs

Linked **2000** women
to government
schemes and programs

Secured land titles for
433 widow women

Introduced organic
farming, greenhouses,
vermi-compost pits
and biomass plants

Our Supporters





CII Foundation (CIIF) was set up by CII in 2011 to undertake a wide range of developmental and charitable activities pan India by enabling industry for infusing inclusive development. CIIF works towards inclusive development by providing a meaningful bridge between marginalized communities and donors, especially corporates by providing strategic guidance on CSR and developing and managing high impact programmes. The thematic areas of CIIF include: Early Childhood Education, Women Empowerment; Climate Change Resilience; Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation. In this effort, the Foundation works together with corporates, governments, communities, and civil society institutions to channelize their collective resources towards social and community development.