

Development Alternatives Joins UN Women Retreat on Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning Programme

A UN Women's 'Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning Programme' (SCE) team retreat was held by the UN Women on 28 and 29 July, 2022 to discuss the prospects of scaling-up and sustainability of the programme with implementing partners at the India Habitat Center, New Delhi. Ankit Mudgal, Programme Officer, Development Alternatives and Prema Gera, External Coordinator, Development Alternatives joined the programme retreat to discuss the efficacy of tools and prototypes that were implemented by the partners on the ground.



Participants at the UN Women's 'Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning Programme' in New Delhi

The UN Women's SCE programme enables women to re-enter formal education, access vocational training, learn entrepreneurial skills, and helps connect them with employment and business opportunities. The programme is part of a multi-country effort that is active in low- and middle-income countries, namely, Australia, Cameroon, Chile, India, Jordan, and Mexico, which have high levels of poverty pockets, issues of crisis and displacement, and marginalised indigenous groups.

The programme in India is funded by the BHP Foundation, and implemented by Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN) as the lead partner along with other implementing, consortium, and state government partners, such as the Department for Skilling and Entrepreneurship Development, Government of Maharashtra, and the Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA). From 2018 to 2022, the programme has reached out to more than 50,000 women across four states in India - Odisha, Bihar, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra - and impacted more than 15,000 through education, training, and entrepreneurship opportunities.

In this programme, Development Alternatives facilitated setting up and supporting 490 enterprises across 9 districts in Odisha, Bihar, and Maharashtra. The facilitation was done through knowledge transference and technical support to partner organisations using the approach of systematic processes of scanning for potential enterprises, capacity building, and ecosystem creation.

Mr Mudgal and Ms Gera discussed how these tools can further provide support in the upcoming phases of the programme and scale up the enterprise initiatives of the same. The retreat had participation of over 40 members from 10 organisations – UN Women, PRADAN, Manjari Foundation, Chaitanya, Aga Khan Rural Support Program, B-able Foundation, Preservation and Proliferation of Rural Resources and Nature, Aaina, Pratham, and Development Alternatives.