The Disha project is a partnership between the United Nations Development Programme and India Development Foundation, supported by the IKEA Foundation. It aims to improve the lives of one million underprivileged women in India by enabling them to acquire marketable skills and avail employment opportunities. Disha supports women to become economically self-sufficient so that they, their families and future generations can have better opportunities in life.
The IKEA Foundation believes that women can be the most important catalysts for change in their children’s lives. By empowering women, we can improve children’s health, education and their futures.
The Case for More Women Workers

Women face significant social and economic barriers in participating in India’s workforce.

Indian women’s workforce participation has declined by 10 percentage points between 2005 and 2010.


Women owned business account for only 20 per cent of registered businesses.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates suggest that India’s GDP could expand by 27 per cent if the number of female workers increases to the same level as that of men.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) estimates that if India’s female labour force participation reached parity with that of United States, its GDP could gain US$19 billion annually.
What We Do

CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING
We help bridge information gaps in schools and colleges so that young women can make inspired career choices and be ready for work.

EMPLOYMENT MARKETPLACES
We build matchmaking platforms for potential employers and the workforce of the future, supporting women to train on the job and learn critical skills that meet the needs of the labour market.

FOSTERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP
We provide women with training, mentoring and hands-on support to start or improve nano and micro enterprises, and help them access finance and markets.

ADDING VALUE FOR PRODUCERS
We assist women artisans and farmers to collectivise, bring value-adding activities closer home and connect them directly with buyers and markets to earn a better income.
Disha in the Skills Ecosystem

Disha works as a catalyst in the skilling eco-system through innovative public-private-partnerships with government, businesses, academia, training institutions, and civil society.

At key stages in the value chain, Disha creates and tests scalable solutions that directly enable women to secure marketable skills, connect to jobs or start their own enterprises.

We strengthen the continuum that connects education to skills, jobs and growth.
The Disha Skills Network

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