



### Self-Reliance Awards for 1st women e- rickshaw riders of Mirzapur

**W**omen entrepreneurs supported by Development Alternatives (DA) under the Work 4 Progress program were awarded at a district level ceremony at Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh. Mrs. Pragya Devi and Mrs. Bhagwani Devi were awarded the “Nari Swavalamban Puraskar” by the District Magistrate of Mirzapur on 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2018 for doing pioneering work in the sector of transportation as the 1<sup>st</sup> women e- rickshaw riders in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh, along with 264 other women. The ceremony was presented by Mrs. Anupriya Patel, Minister of State, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (Government of India).

Only 11% of those behind the wheel are women, according to the Road Transport Yearbook 2015-16. This highlights the issue that women are denied independent access to mobility and therefore opportunities. Restrictions on mobility hinder women and girls in accessing basic facilities such as education, health care facilities and basic independence to be able to move outside their homes without support. Transportation, particularly in case of women is a major barrier for participation in the workforce.

The women run e-rickshaws have been supported in line with program objective to remove socio-cultural barriers for women to promote entrepreneurship. Pragya Devi and Bhagwani Devi have both been willing to “drive” the extra mile and operate e-rickshaws to provide safe transport for women and girls, and were hence provided with technical and soft support to kick-start their e-rickshaw services.