

## 6th edition of Aarya Manch held in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh



Glimpses of the Aarya Manch

**A**arya Manch is a platform where women e-rickshaw entrepreneurs actively dialogue with local ecosystem stakeholders. The Manch is part of the Safe Mobility initiative, which seeks to address women's economic and social disempowerment due to lack of mobility and connectivity. By promoting women-led e-rickshaws The Aarya Manch places women at the forefront of mobility challenges. This month, the Manch completed its sixth edition in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh.

The primary objective of this Manch was to identify new women's groups interested in setting up battery charging stations. It was attended by a mixed group of women, including Cluster Level Federation (CLF) and Self-Help Group (SHG) members, as well as individual business owners. A productive round-table session was held, where attendees were divided into four groups to co-create a new business plan, submit their proposals, and collectively address entrepreneurial challenges.

The event's major highlight was the zeal of rural women to actively engage and work as a team to come up with a business plan of their own for how they would want to run it. Following this was a group discussion that explored the necessity of a battery charging station, its charging time, potential battery theft risks, battery expiration dates, electricity unavailability, potential electricity consumption, and estimated costs for setting up the station for investors.

The Aarya initiative, led by Development Alternatives and Manviya Dristikon Sewa Samiti, supported by Fundación "la Caixa" and ISS, has empowered 110 women from rural areas of Mirzapur to start their e-rickshaw enterprises.