

## Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Flags Off Development Alternatives' Safe Mobility Initiative in Gorakhpur



Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath and MP Ravi Kishan flagging off 10 women-driven e-rickshaws at Yogi Baba Gambharnath Prekshagrih, Gorakhpur along with Development Alternatives CEO Shrashtant Patara and Associate Vice President Kanika Verma.

On 21 December 2024, Development Alternatives (DA), represented by CEO Shrashtant Patara and Associate Vice President Kanika Verma, had the privilege of showcasing its Safe Mobility Initiative at an event organised by the Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM) at Yogi Baba Gambharnath Prekshagrih, Gorakhpur. The event was graced by Hon'ble Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and MP Ravi Kishan, who flagged off 10 women-driven e-rickshaws, marking a significant milestone in promoting women-led enterprises under the National Rural Livelihood Mission.

The Safe Mobility Initiative, developed in partnership with "la Caixa" Foundation and accelerated in Uttar Pradesh with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has already empowered 110 women e-rickshaw entrepreneurs in Mirzapur, enhancing safe transportation for over 100,000 women and girls. Building on this success, DA is expanding the initiative to establish 1,000 women-led e-rickshaw enterprises across the districts of Ayodhya, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, and Kaushambi, with 250 enterprises in each district by May 2025.

This effort aligns with DA's broader mission to generate 1 million jobs by 2027 in Uttar Pradesh through 250,000 sustainable enterprises, fostering a transition from subsistence-based entrepreneurship to aspiration-driven opportunities.

The Safe Mobility programme is rooted in Inclusive Entrepreneurship, empowering under-represented groups, especially women, to become job creators. Systemic barriers such as caste, gender, and economic inequality continue to inhibit women's participation in the workforce, particularly in Uttar Pradesh. DA's innovative approach, co-created with communities, addresses these barriers while creating sustainable pathways for women entrepreneurs.

DA's efforts include activating dedicated district-level platforms to create a community of e-rickshaw entrepreneurs. By leveraging Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) and converging with government initiatives like *Lakhpatti Didi* and *Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY)*, the initiative ensures continuous support for women entrepreneurs through training, financial assistance, and market linkages. Technology solutions and data management systems will further enhance the programme's scalability and impact.



Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath and MP Ravi Kishan meeting with women e-rickshaw entrepreneurs

The initiative aims to create micro-ecosystems for safe and secure transportation, enabling women to overcome mobility challenges and pursue education, employment, and entrepreneurship. "Our goal is to empower women to take charge of addressing the challenge of safe mobility, a barrier that limits their potential in society. We envision a future where young girls feel free and secure to pursue education, and women have the independence to earn their livelihoods," said Kanika Verma, Associate Vice President, Development Alternatives.