



# Chandraprakash's Journey: Rebuilding a Sawmill, Restoring a Dream



Rebuilding doesn't just mean picking up where you left off—it means starting anew. That's exactly what Chandraprakash did.

A resident of a small village in Mirzapur, Chandraprakash Vishwakarma once ran a thriving sawmill business that provided quality lumber to his community. However, when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, his business took a severe hit, eventually forcing him to shut it down. The setback left him feeling dejected and uncertain about the future.

Amidst this struggle, Chandraprakash learned about the **Accelerating Entrepreneurship through Social Innovation Approach (AESI) project by Development Alternatives** through local field representatives. They encouraged him to restart his business, introduced him to various resources, and reassured him that support was available to help him rebuild. Inspired by this opportunity, he felt hopeful and motivated to start again.

As part of the program, he was connected with market traders and other entrepreneurs through peer-to-peer linkages, giving him access to a wider network. During these interactions, he learned about key government schemes, such as Khadi Gram Udyog, which provided opportunities for securing loans and adopting business revival strategies. With these resources and guidance, Chandraprakash gradually rebuilt his sawmill, overcoming the challenges brought on by the pandemic.

Support from fellow entrepreneurs further helped him streamline operations, manage logistics, and maintain a steady workflow.

Today, Chandraprakash earns approximately **INR 20,000 a month** and has created employment opportunities for five others in his village.

Looking ahead, he aspires to expand his enterprise by opening a furniture store. His journey—from the brink of closure to rebuilding a thriving business—is a testament to his resilience and the power of community support. Not only has he restored his livelihood, but he has also contributed to the economic well-being of his village, inspiring others to chase their entrepreneurial dreams.