

L&T Finance Ltd. launches Digital Sakhi project in Saharsa

- The project will onboard 100 rural women as Digital Sakhis who will spread Digital and Financial Literacy (DFL) to rural communities across 400 villages in Saharsa, Bihar.
- L&T Finance Ltd. aims to reach over 5 lakh people in the region by the end of 2028.
- Digital Sakhis will identify and provide training and support to 1,000 rural women entrepreneurs, enabling them to expand and strengthen their existing micro-businesses.

Saharsa, August 27, 2024: L&T Finance Ltd. (LTF), one of the leading Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) in the country, announced the launch of its flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project – Digital Sakhi in Saharsa, Bihar. This program is under the Digital and Financial Inclusion vertical of LTF. This program empowers women to catalyse positive change in their communities through Digital Financial Literacy (DFL) and help create sustainable livelihood for women.

By achieving these objectives, the Company intends to have a significant positive impact on the lives of rural women and their families, fostering financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, and sustainable development in the region. The Digital Sakhi program focuses on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 – Gender Equality, wherein women are identified from rural communities and trained extensively on DFL, leadership, and technology.

Speaking about the progress of the Digital Sakhi program, **Ms. Apurva Rathod, Company Secretary and Chief Sustainability Officer at LTF**, said, "At the heart of our Digital Sakhi Project is a commitment to bridge the digital divide and ignite financial empowerment in rural communities especially women. In FY24, Digital Sakhi Project was launched in Supaul district where 100 Digital Sakhis nurtured 600 women entrepreneurs and benefitted over 1.25 lakh community members across 100 villages. After the success in Supaul district, we are now expanding the Digital Sakhi Project outreach to the adjoining district, Saharsa, Bihar. Our goal is to train 100 women as Digital Sakhis, who will then reach out across 400 rural villages, covering over 5,00,000 people by the end of 2028. These Digital Sakhis will not only educate and enlighten the communities about digital financial inclusion & government initiatives and benefits, but also identify and empower at least 1,000 rural women entrepreneurs to scale and strengthen their micro-businesses."

This project shall be implemented by LTF's existing agency in Bihar i.e., BAIF Development Research Foundation. Notably, since its inception in 2017, the project has created a cadre of over 1,770 Digital Sakhis who have benefitted over 45 lakh individuals and helped upskill over 14,000 women entrepreneurs. Earlier this month, the Digital Sakhi program was extended to Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh. Apart from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the Digital Sakhi project is currently active in the states viz. Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal.

About L&T Finance Ltd. (LTF):

L&T Finance Ltd. (LTF) (<https://www.ltf.com>), formerly known as L&T Finance Holdings Ltd., (LTFH) is a leading Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC), offering a range of financial products and services. Headquartered in Mumbai, the Company has been rated 'AAA' — the highest credit rating for NBFCs — by four leading rating agencies. It has also received leadership scores and ratings by global and national Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) rating providers for its sustainability performance. The Company has been certified as a Great Place To Work® and has also won many prestigious awards for its flagship CSR project – “Digital Sakhi”- which focuses on women's empowerment and digital and financial inclusion. Under Right to Win, being in the 'right businesses' has helped the Company become one of the leading financiers in key Retail products. The Company is focused on creating a top-class, digitally enabled, Retail finance company as part of the Lakshya 2026 plan. The goal is to move the emphasis from product focus to customer focus and establish a robust Retail portfolio with quality assets, thus creating a Fintech@Scale while keeping ESG at the core. Fintech@Scale is one of the pillars of the Company's strategic roadmap - Lakshya 2026. The Company has around 2.4 Crore customer database, which is being leveraged to cross-sell, up-sell, and identify new customers.

**About BAIF Development Research Foundation:**

BAIF Development Research Foundation is a not-for-profit organization based in Pune, India. Its mission is to create opportunities of gainful self-employment for the rural families, especially disadvantaged sections, ensuring sustainable livelihood, enriched environment, improved quality of life and good human values. This is being achieved through development research, effective use of local resources, extension of appropriate technologies and upgradation of skills and capabilities with community participation. BAIF is an apolitical, secular and professionally managed organisation.