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# Hindustan Zinc's army of 25,000 women from Sakhi initiative redefining rural Rajasthan

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**UDAIPUR (India CSR):** "I never imagined I could be the architect of my own life, but today, thanks to Sakhi, I am not only independent but also inspiring countless women like me to believe in their dreams and carve their own futures," shares **Manju Meena, Federation Manager of Sakhi Shakti Samiti**. She is one among 25,000 women rewriting Rajasthan's story through the Sakhi initiative, Hindustan Zinc's flagship women empowerment program.

## Introduction to Sakhi Initiative

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of over 2,000 Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Sakhi uplifts women to break stereotypes, driving social and economic progress in their communities.

### The Uthori Initiative

A cornerstone of this transformation is the Uthori initiative, a powerful campaign led by 77 Sakhi leaders. Uthori has reached over 2 lakh individuals across 170 schools and 110 villages, addressing critical societal issues like child marriage, gender violence, menstrual hygiene, and harassment. Through creative methods such as street plays, songs, and community outreach, these leaders have ignited conversations on long-standing taboos, fostering a new era of awareness and social reform.



### Exemplary Leaders in Sakhi

Leaders like Vijayshree Vaishnav, a Suraksha Sakhi from Gulabpura Agucha, exemplify this spirit of change. Recognized by the Special Investigation Unit for Crimes Against Women, she has played a crucial role in helping women and children in distress, reflecting the dedication and courage that drive the Sakhi initiative.



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### Economic Empowerment through Sakhi

Sakhi has also been instrumental in fostering economic empowerment. With Rs 4.75 crore in credit linkages through major banks, over 270 SHGs have expanded their livelihood activities, building foundations for financial independence.

Collectively, Sakhi members have amassed savings exceeding ₹20 crore, while inter-lending has surpassed ₹100 crore.



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### Exposure Visit and Independence Day Recognition

Recently, 40 Sakhi women participated in an exposure visit to Pune's SaarthiMahasangh, where they learned best practices in financial management and institution-building. They returned equipped with insights to strengthen their federations and inspire their communities. During the Independence Day celebrations at Red Fort, five Sakhi women were invited by Ministry of Mines to attend the parade serving a beacon of pride for the communities they were representing and for future generations.

### Recognition at FICCI Summit

Sakhi's accomplishments have earned recognition at the FICCI Women in Workforce Summit, where representatives like Ms. Tara Ranawat and Ms. Aasha Kunwar shared their journeys of transformation. They highlighted how modest savings of just Rs 20 have grown into thriving enterprises, exemplified by brands like Daichi and Upaya. These women are not only achieving financial independence but also building sustainable business models with a far-reaching impact.

### Sakhi: A Movement for Social Change

Beyond financial empowerment, Sakhi is a movement fostering a new narrative of self-reliance and social change. Women, driven by their strength and determination, are becoming architects of progress, breaking barriers, and uplifting entire communities.

### Hindustan Zinc's Broader Community Initiatives

Hindustan Zinc's community development initiatives extend beyond women's empowerment, touching over 20 lakh lives across education, sports, youth skill-building, sustainable farming, and rural infrastructure development. Operating in over 3,700 villages across Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, Hindustan Zinc remains among India's top CSR spenders, committed to creating lasting social impact. With Sakhi leading the charge, Hindustan Zinc is nurturing self-sustaining ecosystems and transforming the rural landscapes of Rajasthan into hubs of growth and resilience.

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