

# Wireless for Communities

## Phase IV

### **W<sup>2</sup>E<sup>2</sup> PROGRAMME**

*(Wireless Women for Entrepreneurship & Empowerment)*

## Implementation Closure Report

*An initiative of*



<b>Programme name</b>	Wireless for Communities
<b>Project phase</b>	Phase IV
<b>Project name</b>	Wireless Women for Entrepreneurship & Empowerment (W2E2)
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>A. To promote Internet-based social and micro-enterprises specifically among women, enabling them to become agents of change in the community;</p> <p>B. To promote Internet and ICT for gender inclusion as well as for social and economic empowerment within the community, helping them to reach their market more directly by cutting out middlemen</p> <p>C. To boost traditional skills among women in cluster-based environments, helping their businesses become more self-sustainable</p>
<b>Locations covered</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ranchi (Jharkhand)</li> <li>2. Chanderi (Madhya Pradesh)</li> <li>3. Shivpuri (Madhya Pradesh)</li> <li>4. Tura (Meghalaya)</li> <li>5. Baran (Rajasthan)</li> </ol>
<b>ICT equipment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Laptop-1 unit</li> <li>2. Laser printer-1 unit</li> <li>3. Digital camera-1 unit</li> <li>4. Dongle for Internet-1 unit</li> <li>5. Photo printer with cartridge-1 unit</li> </ol>
<b>Activities undertaken</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide digital skills development and capacity-building workshops for 40 women micro-entrepreneurs</li> <li>2. Provide connectivity and access through wireless Internet and mobile wireless data cards</li> <li>3. Set up a website for each of the 40 women micro-entrepreneurs</li> <li>4. Set up a website for the W2E2 programme</li> <li>5. Help set up women's wireless Internet- or ICT-based micro enterprises</li> </ol>

## Overview

Ten women from each of the five locations were identified and selected for training on digital skills and entrepreneurship. A total of 50 women undertook programmes on (a) basic computer skills; (b) productivity applications, during which they learned how to use spreadsheet software like Microsoft Excel to develop and maintain registers, as well as analyse data using charts and graphs, and; (c) entrepreneurship, English language skills and e-marketing for handloom products. Each course was three-months long, with several starting in March 2014. Many of the trainees are members of self-help groups in fields such as agriculture and education, and have various skills like tailoring and painting, from which they wish to earn additional income.

After they had completed the programme, the majority of the women were provided with digital tools and devices to aid them in their income-generating projects. In Shivpuri, Chanderi and Baran existing connectivity from W4C centres were used to provide Internet access to women, while wireless data cards were used in Ranchi and Tura. Having been trained on basic computer use and productivity applications, women have also taken to visiting social networking sites and playing online games as they became more adept in using digital devices. Websites for the new micro-entrepreneurs are now under development, and the programme's umbrella website [w2e2.org](http://w2e2.org/) (<http://w2e2.org/>) now contains the profiles of the 50 women trainees, as well as success stories facilitated by the project.

Activity	Location				
	Ranchi	Tura	Chanderi	Shivpuri	Baran
1: Selection and training of women entrepreneurs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of women</li> <li>Age range</li> </ul>	10 19-40	10 25-40	10 18-35	10 18-25	10 18-25
2. Digital skills development and capacity-building for women micro-entrepreneurs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Computer skills</li> <li>Productivity applications</li> <li>Entrepreneurship</li> <li>English language</li> <li>E-marketing</li> </ul>	√  √ √	√ √ √ √	√ √ √ √	√ √	√ √
3. Providing connectivity and access through wireless Internet and mobile wireless data cards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of women beneficiaries</li> </ul>	7	10	10	10	10

Equipment/Devices:					
• Laptop	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Laser Printer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Digital Camera	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Photo printer with cartridge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Dongle for Internet	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Location	Outcome
Ranchi	Seven out of ten women trainees have secured office spaces and are currently running Community Information Resource Centres (CIRCs). Two have been employed by DEF as CIRC coordinators, and the remaining trainee runs a CIRC centre and provides digital services in her own dhabha <sup>1</sup>
Tura	All 10 women trainees have secured office spaces to open CIRCs
Chanderi	Women beneficiaries made use of their newfound skills by subsequently holding hands-on workshops for some 4,000 girls and women on digital literacy. Each woman further trained 200 girls and women in their own villages all in all helping to build the capacity of 4,000 women and girls of another programme, HWGO (Help Women Go Online). Five are now using their laptops at home for their daily activities—two, Irfana Bano and Shabana Bano, are using these to manage Anganwadi <sup>2</sup> data. Kavita Kohli has been employed by DEF as centre coordinator under the Chanderiyaan project, while Saiyadda has opened her own design centre, where she also provides digital skills training to students.
Shivpuri	Following their completion of the W2E2 courses, each of the 10 beneficiaries in Shivpuri likewise trained 200 community members in their areas of residence, helping 2,000 women and girls in total. Six are using their laptops to aid them in their education, and one has started working as a digital literacy trainer.
Baran	During the W2E2 programme, the women passed on their newly learned digital literacy skills to women aged 45-55, as part of the <a href="#">Doosra Dashak</a> programme. All ten are now working as CIRC trainers or coordinators, using ICT tools provided by DEF and office facilities provided by the Sankalp Foundation

<sup>1</sup> Dhaba is the name given to roadside restaurants in India and Pakistan (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dhaba>)

<sup>2</sup> Anganwadi means "courtyard shelter" in Indian languages. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anganwadi>

**Challenges faced**

- Several women pulled out after a few days of training. This caused disruption in the programme as new trainees needed to be identified to replace them;
- In Ranchi and Shivpuri, women could not give priority to the training programme due to their daily tasks and activities. As a result, the programme had to be extended from three to six months.
- Prior to digital skills training, programme implementers first needed to provide a basic English course to trainees, resulting in the programme being extended by another three months.
- Women in Ranchi are intent on establishing their own small ventures using existing facilities and infrastructure. However, the district's unstable power supply prevents them from fully utilising the digital tools at their disposal
- Some women lacked confidence to start business initiatives and thus need continuous training and support
- Gender-based norms in Chanderi and Shivpuri restrict women to certain activities, preventing them from exploring new business and learning opportunities.

**Solutions:**

- Developed a community mentorship programme for established women entrepreneurs to help interested women set up their own business
- Incorporated a basic English language workshop and confidence-building exercises in the digital literacy training programme
- Developed basic learning materials that women can take home to encourage self-paced and continuous learning outside the training programme

## Success Stories

Anita Devi, aged 30, hails from Ranchi and belongs to a farmer family. She runs a dhaba, or a roadside restaurant with her husband as their livelihood. After participating in the W2E2 training programme, she started providing digital services from her dhabha while also using her laptop to manage her restaurant's inventory.

Krishna Koli, 28, comes from a weaver's family but has opted to become a radio jockey at the local community radio station, Chanderi Ki Awaz, after completing her studies seven years ago. "I had some previous training in computers but had no idea how to use the Internet. This was a weakness in my work, as I personally could not use the Internet to do background research for various programmes I was planning as a radio reporter and programme host. I am very thankful to Chanderiyaan for giving me this opportunity to learn how to use the Internet. Now not only can I do research and collect background material but also connect with other radio stations, and communicate with people using e-mail and other channels," she says. Krishna is also looking at various ventures that can be launched using her skills. "I am now learning about how to start a business and run it so I have not decided yet. Let me learn a bit more and then I will decide," she says. After uploading her resume to Naukri.com, Krishna recently received a job offer as an audio editor, but she says she prefers to instead continue her training under the W2E2.

Saiyadda, 33, is a highly skilled weaver of Chanderi with a weaving experience of more than 12 years. Along with weaving, she has also mastered the art of stitching and embroidery at an early age. Saiyadda immediately volunteered to be one of the 10 participants in the W2E2 program. She aspires to be a designer of Chanderi sarees, and to contribute to enhancing the traditional art form using digital tools. Saiyadda believes that computer education should be imparted to students from a very early age as it has become an inevitable part of a child's life. She has opened her design center and also providing digital skills to students through that design centre.

Manisha Devi, who belongs to traditional agriculture family, has long wanted to encourage sustainable farming practices in her hometown. To do this, she started a self-help group with 17 other women, using their monthly savings for their initiatives. After developing their own drip irrigation system, she joined the W2E2 programme to learn new skills that could enhance her group's activities. She intends to use the Internet to gather more information about sustainable agriculture techniques and practices from around the world.

Until early 2014, 22-year old Sunita Mahato, whose husband is a subsistence farmer, managed her home and the education of her two children with a household income of less than USD100 (Rs 6,000) a month. Empowered by new vocational skills, digital literacy and access to the Internet, she now leads five self-help groups (SHGs) working in such areas as piggery, poultry, and vermin compost and bio pesticide production. She uses ICT tools to maintain the operational accounts of the SHGs she leads, and to keep track of their sales and inventories. Sunita, who had limited learning opportunities past secondary school, comes from a community that belongs to what the Indian government has termed Other Backward Castes (OBC). She lives in Rupru, a remote village on the hills some 50 kilometers away from Ranchi, the capital of one of India's least developed states, Jharkhand. "I had never even dreamt of seeing a computer let alone touching it and using it. But now I use the computer in various ways," she says. She wants to become a master trainer so she could teach more women and children in her village how to use the computer and the Internet. "That will also help me earn some money because I will be charging a fee for the training," she adds.

Janu A. Sangma, a 32-year old teacher in a local school, is determined to help transform the lives of women and children living in the Garo hills. The W2E2 training programme, she said, gave her a new perspective on empowerment through education. "This was a dream come true, to learn how to use computers and then get an opportunity to teach other women and children in my community how to use ICT tools," she says. "I had no idea how much we can transform our lives by accessing information through the Internet and by learning how to use computers and information technology." She now organises classes to teach children mathematics, English and science using her Internet-enabled laptop.

Thirty-three year-old Suchitra R. Marak, who works as a secretary at a self-help group cluster in Tura, wants to make sure that she can provide effective leadership to the women with whom she works. The training she received from the W2E2 programme, she says, will enable her to manage her cluster's data online, learn about and share various government schemes with other women, and use online banking services to transact with self-help group members. In the longer run, she wants to use social networking sites such as Facebook for marketing her self-help group's products

### Women Profile & their Entrepreneurship activity status

S.N	Name	Age	Occupation	ICT activities	Digital literacy level			Remarks
					Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	
1.	Anita Devi	30	Running a local restaurant, also known as a dhaba, with her husband and producing mahua products such as pickles and sweets	Tasks using Microsoft Office suite; Internet-browsing	x			Presently she is using the W2E2-provided laptop for inventory and record-keeping. She intends to open a digital shop that provides services like photocopying, printing, and photo-printing and computer-related work.
2.	Jyoti Kachhap	22	Teacher in private school		x			She is using the W2E2-provided laptop as a teaching aid
3.	Kiran Devi	23	SHG member and organic farmer		x			She is currently using her laptop for record keeping
4.	Manisha Devi	32	Member of an agriculture SHG		x			She is using her laptop to maintain records of agricultural grains for her group, but later wants to use it for bookkeeping
5.	Rita Devi	26	Screen printing work and teacher in private school				x	The W2E2 programme has enabled her to use her laptop to make digital prints, which she used to do manually. She is in the process of starting her own screen-printing business
6.	Sheela Devi	29	Agriculture, vermicomposting			x		She wants to use a laptop to keep crop records. She also wants to start agri-based information kiosk.

7.	Shiromani Gari	47	Anganwadi worker			x		She uses her laptop to manage the records of Anganwadi and provide video-based educational content to Anganwadi children.
8.	Sona Devi	32	Teacher in public middle school			x		She uses her laptop to keep student records and provide educational content to her students.
9.	Sunita Devi	23	National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) worker,, SHG reporting			x		She uses her laptop to manage the records of NRLM and her self-help group. She is also working with DEF on its DCIRC project
1	Archana Ahirwar	21	University student	Basic computer operation; tasks using Microsoft Office suite; drawing applications; use of online services such as instant messaging, gaming, shopping, videos, e-ticketing			x	She wants to use a laptop as a teaching tool.
2	Bhavana Dubey	21	University student			x		She wants to use laptop as a teaching tool
3	Deshna Jain	21			x			She wants to set up an e-ticketing kiosk
4	Kavita Koli	21	University student and weaver			x		She is using her laptop to do research on weaving designs. In time, she wishes to start using it to create her own designs
5	Krishna Koli	27	Graduate student				x	She wants to use her laptop to write advertisements for newspapers as her source of income
6	Prachi Singhai	23			Downloading books on stitching			x
7	Roshni Ojha	18	University student	Basic computer operation; Tasks using Microsoft Office suite; drawing applications;		x		She is presently using her laptop for her studies. After she graduates she intends to use it as a teaching aid

8	Saiyadda Kosar	31	Student and weaver	use of online services such as instant messaging, gaming, shopping, videos and e-ticketing		x		She is using her laptop to view weaving designs online to inspire her own weaving.
9	Shanti Koli	18	University student			x		She is presently using her laptop for her studies. After she graduates she intends to use it as a teaching aid
10	Shanu Jain	23	University student and weaver				x	She is using her laptop to do research on weaving designs and wants to start using it to create her own designs.
1	Arshi Ansari	18	University student	Information searches; social networking; tasks using Microsoft Office suite		x		She is using her laptop to view her exam results, apply for jobs and pursue further learning opportunities
2	Asma Parveen	19				x		She wants to use a laptop to teach English and Urdu to Madrasa students
3	Ayushi Joshi	19	University student	Tasks using Microsoft Office suite; searching for government schemes online		x		She wants to open MP Online using laptop in her community
4	Shahana Mirza	25	Graduate student	Social networking, email services; searching for and downloading content; watching videos		x		She wants to use a laptop to provide online services for her community
5	Rukhsar Khan	23	University student	Tasks using Microsoft Office suite; social networking; email services; searching for		x		She wants to use a laptop to provide online shopping services and teach Adobe Photoshop to interested learners

6	Shadma Bano	19	University student	and downloading content; watching videos	x			She is using her laptop for her studies: checking exam results, downloading information and searching for jobs
7	Soniya Mirza	20	Student	Tasks using Microsoft Office suite; social networking; email services; searching for information; watching videos	x			She wants to use a laptop to provide digital services to her community
8	Tasleem Qureshi	21	Student		x			She wants to use a laptop to provide computer training to women and children in her community.
9	Yasmeen Mansoori	19	Student			x		She wants to teach students using videos on YouTube
10	Nausheen	20	University student				x	She is now working as digital literacy trainer with DEF's flagship project, DCIRC
1	Tengkrimchi Nora T Sangma	23	Computer typist	Tasks using Microsoft Office suite; online shopping and banking; e-ticketing services			x	A laptop will help to enable her to open a shop that provides basic services like DTP (Desktop publishing), photocopying, railway e-ticketing, printing and scanning
2	Polina G Sangma	24	Assistant in a grocery shop	Tasks using Microsoft Office suite; graphics applications			x	With a laptop and Internet connection, she wants to continue her data entry job from home. This will enable her to earn additional income while performing her daily tasks
3	Suchitra R Marak	35	Secretary of an SHG	Tasks using Microsoft Office suite, desktop publishing and graphics editing software			x	With the help of a laptop she will be able to manage all the data related to her self-help group (SHG) digitally. She also wants to use the Internet to transact online, and to find government schemes or her SHG
4	Effoline Marak	38	Voluntary health worker under church service with	Tasks using Microsoft Office suite, desktop publishing			x	She is using the laptop to manage village health data, enabling her to save the money she used to pay to

			Comprehensive Child Survival Programme	and graphics editing software; online ticketing services			use cyber cafes' facilities to type her reports. With the help of the internet she will download health Insurance claims forms provided by the government of Meghalaya for a fee for village people. In free time, she intends to teach computer skills to other people who cannot go outside and learn.
5	Lethina W Sangma	40	Mission worker in Seventh Day Adventist Church	Tasks using Microsoft Office suite; Internet-browsing		x	She wants to teach a large number of Garo women, particularly those living in hill villages, how to use a computer and the Internet for a minimal fee using her laptop
6	Hellen K Sangma	36		Tasks using Microsoft Office suite and graphics editing software; Internet-browsing		x	She wants to start a computer centre through which will provide digital literacy skills training and online services
7	Lucky Merry G Momin	22		Tasks using Microsoft Office suite, desktop publishing and graphics editing software; Internet banking		x	She wants to establish her own service centre from her home as there is currently no public computer facility in her community
8	Janu A. Sangma	33		Tasks using Microsoft Office suite and desktop publishing software; Internet-browsing		x	She wants to start digital literacy training among women and children in village. With the help of the Internet she will also share information related to education and scholarships, which very much important for rural areas.
9	Sairamuni D. Marak	41				x	She wants to start her own insurance business. using her laptop

**Annexure 3:**

**Photo gallery of  
Women  
entrepreneurs**



