

MoU to Promote Tourism for Women Economic Empowerment

August 26, 2020

A formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) and FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) with the Ministry of Tourism for women empowerment. Through this initiative FLO & TAAI would lay emphasis on personal and hospitality skills, a **more flexible work balance and greater options for entrepreneurship with significantly lower capital.**

Tourism for Women Economic Empowerment

There is a need to **organize and popularise training and skill development programmes targeting women**, including those in rural and remote areas, create **awareness about digital technologies and facilitate them to be part of decision making at the community level.** Therefore, it becomes the responsibility to ensure that women in the travel and tourism sector are encouraged to come forward and participate in the development of tourism, which would not only benefit the sector, but would also help in their upliftment and empowerment. There are many areas in tourism where women can excel, like homestays, tourist facilitators, catering business and more.

The state chapters of FLO and TAAI will create awareness, along with state tourism departments and state tourism corporations, to highlight the vital role the tourism industry can play as a **model for sustainable livelihood for women** and ensure their economic upliftment. This collaboration will help in initiating and engaging women at grassroot level, the middle level in semi urban, urban areas and the urban educated unemployed. **FLO and TAAI will be the facilitators in the process** connecting women with the relevant stakeholders,

undertaking training in specific verticals for enhancing their livelihood opportunities, increasing their self-awareness as equal partners in the nation's growth and working towards their economic empowerment.

The main components proposed under the initiative are:

- **Encourage travel to at least 15 destinations within the country** under the DekhoApnaDesh initiative. This will be a mandate for FLOs & TAAIs membership base of over 8000 women and their family support systems.
- **Conduct community-based tourism activities** around one iconic monument or tourist landmark in each state. Women will be the tour guides, run food stalls, souvenir stalls with their own arts & crafts, handle the overall accounts and running of the landmark.
- **Tie up with training agencies for tourism workshops** for training women about concepts on food safety, health & hygiene, sanitation, environment, culinary skills and entrepreneurship skills.
- Women to be engaged and **sensitised about the atithidevo bhava motto** through sensitisation workshops to be organised by NGOs, implementing agencies, travel industry associations etc.
- Create community-driven and women-led initiatives for rural and urban **homestays** to provide livelihood opportunities for women.
- Create awareness about the **Incredible India Tourist Facilitator (IITF) Certification Programme**.