

Punjab to pilot women-led community healthcare entrepreneurship programme

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Punjab has initiated a programme to train and deploy women community health entrepreneurs in villages, to strengthen last-mile healthcare access and support rural livelihoods.

Bahaar Foundation has announced the launch of the Sehat Sevika programme in partnership with the Punjab Development Commission (PDC), marking the beginning of an effort to test and refine a community-based healthcare and women's entrepreneurship model in the state.

The Sehat Sevika Programme commenced in January 2026 with an initial cohort of 100 Sehat Sevikas in Rupnagar district. Insights from this pilot will help shape a phased expansion across other districts in the state in the coming years.

To support implementation, Bahaar has embedded a dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU) within the Punjab Development Commission to oversee training, monitoring, and ecosystem coordination. The Indian School of Business (ISB), Mohali, will conduct an independent impact assessment of the initial 100-village pilot to generate evidence and learnings from the pilot.

The Sehat Sevika model has already demonstrated measurable impact in states such as Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh. In

Bastar district, two batches of Sehat Sevikas (locally referred to as *Sangwaris*) have, over the last three years, supported a population of approximately 50,000 and established themselves as credible and trusted health and wellness support persons in their communities, while generating supplemental income for their families.

By equipping women with critical knowledge, monetizable skills, networks, and ongoing support systems, the *Sehat Sevika* programme enables them to generate steady supplemental income while strengthening public health systems.

Bahaar Foundation is inviting CSR leaders, philanthropic institutions, healthcare partners, and development agencies to join the Impact Coalition to support the programme's phased expansion as the model evolves and scales across the state