

## NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE DRIVING FOR WOMEN FOR BETTER ACCESS TO LIVELIHOODS AND OPPORTUNITIES

**New Delhi, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2021:** Shell Foundation, a UK based charity and the UK Government in association with **Moving Women Social Initiatives Foundation (MOWO)** have launched ‘**Moving Boundaries**’, a campaign to encourage women to pick up driving skills and remove roadblocks within the ecosystem to increase their job prospects in transportation businesses including as taxi and e-rickshaw drivers or as delivery agents for e-commerce companies.

Under this campaign, Jai Bharathi, founder of MOWO is touring India on her motorbike from October 11th for a period of over 40 days and covering over 20 cities to create awareness and encourage women to learn driving to increase their job opportunities. Today, Ms Bharathi reached New Delhi on the current leg of her tour. Starting from Hyderabad, she has covered Bangalore, Chennai, Kochi, Goa, Pune, Mumbai, Surat, Udaipur, Jaipur and would now be covering Lucknow, Varanasi, Patna, Guwahati, Kolkata, Ranchi, Bhubaneshwar, among others.

The campaign seeks to promote awareness on the importance of women acquiring the power of driving and travelling safely to expand their horizons in all aspects of their lives. The focus is on enabling women to not only learn driving but also own electric vehicles to generate income which in turn can also reduce carbon emissions from transport.

‘Even Cargo’, a social enterprise providing training, employment, and electric vehicle ownership to women drivers is also supporting this campaign.

As part of the campaign, a WhatsApp based chatbot has been rolled out for women who would like to learn driving a two or three-wheeler vehicle or apply for a job as taxi, auto or delivery rider. Any interested person can express their interest by dropping "Hi" on the WhatsApp number +91 8885916606 and the chatbot will connect them to nearby partner organizations like Even Cargo which offer training and employment opportunities to women. The chat support is available in multiple languages.

Commenting on ‘Moving Boundaries’, **Ms. Jai Bharathi, Founder of MOWO** said, “Women all over the world face restrictions on their mobility. They are unable to travel long distance to acquire decent education or take up jobs which involve complex or unsafe commute which results in a restricted pool of job opportunities. I am very excited to take on this 40-day journey on my motorbike across the country to meet women from all strata and hold workshops to make driving an aspirational and achievable employment choice for them. Creating a safe environment where women have access to reliable transportation and they can drive their own vehicles to earn a living is a great way to increase employment opportunities for women in a sector which has predominantly been male-centric.”

Speaking on the partnership, **Mrs. Shipra Nayyar of Shell Foundation** said, “We launched ‘Moving Boundaries’ to promote safe, affordable, and clean transportation for women for better access to basic amenities like healthcare, education, and jobs. The focus is also to create an environment whereby more women can enter the workforce by learning how to drive and becoming owner-entrepreneurs of their vehicles in the transportation linked sectors such as e-rickshaws and as delivery agents. Our ambition is to enable equal access to opportunities for women by helping them

become more mobile. We hope that in the next 5 years, by supporting and helping build capacity of more such enterprises that train and employ women from low-income households, we will see a sizable number of women drivers owning and driving electric vehicles in over 100 cities and villages across India increasing safe transportation and connectivity for other women”

Promoting employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for women is an important goal for Shell Foundation. Together with the Government of UK, Shell Foundation launched POWERED (Promotion of Women in Energy Related Enterprises for Development) in 2017, a women-focused programme to increase participation of women across the clean energy and mobility value chain in India. POWERED programme supports enterprises that promote inclusion of women in jobs in the transportation and logistics sector as well as enable them to own electric vehicles to earn an income.

### **About Shell Foundation**

Shell Foundation is an independent UK registered charity (Reg Charity No: 1080999) that exists to support people living in low-income communities to escape poverty and ease hardship. We create and scale business solutions to enhance access to energy and affordable transport as a means to achieve this.

### **About the UK Government in India**

Working as a joint force for good the UK-India partnership helps enhance investment and trade; increase prosperity and jobs in both countries; strengthen joint action on global issues of mutual concern including poverty and climate change; and widen access to knowledge and technology.

### **About Moving Women (MOWO)**

Based in Hyderabad, MOWO is a revolutionary initiative aimed at empowering women to be independent by offering them two and three-wheeler training and related livelihood opportunities. Based in Hyderabad, India, so far, MOWO has reached out to 10000+ women and trained 1500+ in riding two-wheelers, with required driving licenses, and placed a few of them in logistic delivery jobs.

### **About Even Cargo**

Even Cargo- India’s first women only logistics delivery company trains women on mobility and logistics and employs them as delivery agents to enable them to reclaim public places. Even Livelihoods ensures sustainable and equal access to mobility and livelihoods with dignity through women-centric modules of training, social and financial support. They help women acquire electric bikes to work as delivery associates with major e-commerce partners and many more. Since 2016, Even Livelihoods has trained 500 and employed 250 women as Delivery Associates, with presence in more than 7 geographies in India.