



## **Vedanta ESL Inaugurates Agarbatti Manufacturing Unit under Project Jivika to Empower Rural Women**

**Bokaro, December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024:** In a step towards empowering rural women, Vedanta ESL, in collaboration with the Drishtee Foundation, inaugurated an Agarbatti (Incense stick) manufacturing unit under its flagship women empowerment initiative, Project Jivika. The new unit aims to create sustainable livelihoods for women in Madhuniya by equipping them with skill-based training and entrepreneurial opportunities.

### **About Project Jivika**

Project Jivika, a flagship women empowerment initiative by Vedanta ESL in collaboration with Drishtee Foundation, aims to enhance the socio-economic status of women in rural areas through skill-based training and livelihood generation. The project focuses on equipping women with the knowledge and tools needed to develop micro-enterprises across various trades such as bamboo handicrafts, poultry farming, mushroom cultivation, and detergent production. With a strong emphasis on market linkage, Jivika has transformed the lives of thousands of women, fostering self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods.

### **The growing demand for incense sticks in India**

Recognizing the rising demand for incense sticks in the Indian market and the interest expressed by local women, the agarbatti manufacturing unit was identified as major opportunity under Project Jivika. This initiative not only promotes rural entrepreneurship but also utilizes locally available raw materials that aligns with Vedanta ESL's commitment to environmental sustainability.

### **Inauguration ceremony graced by esteemed guests**

The inauguration ceremony of the Agarbatti Manufacturing Unit was held in Madhuniya, Bokaro, with the presence of esteemed guests, Kunal Daripa, Head CSR, Vedanta ESL, Rajeev Ranjan, Project Lead, Drishtee Foundation, Pradeep Kumar, Mukhiya, Madhuniya Panchayat and Abdul Jabbar, Ward Member.

### **ESL Steel's commitment towards women empowerment**

Speaking at the event, **Kunal Daripa, Head CSR, Vedanta ESL**, said, *"At Vedanta ESL, we believe in the transformative power of women in driving economic and social progress. The agarbatti manufacturing unit under Project Jivika is an initiative to empower our women through skill development and entrepreneurship. We are proud to provide rural women with the tools and opportunities to become self-reliant and contribute meaningfully to their communities."*

The initiative has received immense support from the local community with many women expressing optimism about the opportunities this unit will bring. By linking the beneficiaries to larger markets, this unit is set to become a hub for promoting rural entrepreneurship.

### About Vedanta ESL Steel Limited:

Located in Siyaljori village in the Bokaro district of Jharkhand, ESL Steel Limited is a leading manufacturer of steel products. It has a 2.5 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) greenfield integrated steel plant that produces pig iron, billets, TMT bars, wire rods, and ductile iron pipes. The plant works in sync with the prescribed environmental standards, bringing international expertise and solutions from reputed manufacturers to offer world-class services and products.

### About Drishtee Foundation

Drishtee Foundation, established in 2003, is a social organization dedicated to fostering sustainability and shared prosperity in Indian rural communities. Working closely with farming families and local entrepreneurs, Drishtee ensures access to essential services and the development of sustainable livelihoods within villages. The foundation adopts a value chain approach to connect rural and urban areas, focusing on rural women micro-enterprise development and livelihood generation. Through a franchise model, Drishtee also facilitates the efficient delivery of essential services. Guided by the core principles of sustainability, value creation, and entrepreneurship, Drishtee actively engages with communities to create lasting impact, promote self-reliance, and drive holistic rural development.









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