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Mumbai, India: L&T Finance Holdings Ltd. (LTFH), one of the leading Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) has empowered over 25 lakh community members so far through the 'Digital Sakhi' programme which is a key initiative under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The programme which was initiated in 2017, has consistently expanded its geographical footprint over the years. The aim of the programme is to provide community members with essential financial services through digital and financial literacy. Under the programme, LTFH has successfully empaneled over 1,370 Sakhis so far including new geographies of Karnataka and Kerala.

The Digital Sakhi project in Karnataka and Kerala was launched in the last financial year and the project has started to show results on the ground. In the first year of the project, more than 2,25,000 individuals were reached through various awareness activities.

Information Education Campaign (IEC) was undertaken through the creation of over 900 wall paintings across 310 villages, effectively covering a population of 5 lakhs. Similarly, the Digital Sakhi project in Kerala has empowered over 60,000 community members, and with intensive

IEC, more than 150 wall paintings across 100 villages were done, effectively covering a population of 2.5 lakhs. These visually striking artworks helped to create awareness and promote the Digital Sakhi project.

Speaking about the progress of the Digital Sakhi programme, Mr. Dinanath Dubhashi, Managing Director & CEO of LTFH said, "Our Digital Sakhis have played an active role in bridging the last mile gap and facilitating the convergence of government schemes, conducting sessions in Gram Sabhas and the State Rural Livelihood Mission programs and supporting the community to obtain the benefits of government schemes. The efforts of Digital Sakhis have been instrumental in bringing the larger community into the ambit of entitlements. Our Digital Sakhi project has continued to invigorate the women empowerment narrative with many women rising up the ranks, from the confines of their homes to being change agents in their community. Our Digital Sakhis have effectively helped empower rural communities they operate in by promoting digital financial inclusion, providing impetus to women empowerment and gender equality, thereby strengthening the nation at the grassroots level and contributing to the overall national development agenda."

Across our program locations of Digital Sakhi there has been a commendable 12 percent increase in the adoption of digital payments among the community members, promoting a cashless economy and enhancing financial inclusion. Furthermore, the initiative has identified and trained over 11,600 women entrepreneurs on essential skills for entrepreneurship, fostering economic empowerment and sustainable development in the community.