Internet Saathi Program

Google India and Tata Trusts will expand their Internet Saathi Program to villages in Punjab and Odisha.

- The Internet Saathi Program was **launched** in the year **2015.**
- **Aim:** To facilitate digital literacy among women in rural India.
- **Implementation:** Women from villages are trained on using the internet and are made equipped with data-enabled devices. These women are known as Internet Saathis and work as trainers, to help other women in their village to get started on their internet journey and benefit from it.
- **Coverage Area:** The programme started as a pilot in Rajasthan has been expanded to states including Gujarat, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal, Tripura, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana,Tamil Nadu, Goa, Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Telangana. Punjab and Odisha will soon get added to this list.
- **Progress:** It has, so far, trained 70,000 'Internet Saathis', who have in turn impacted 2.6 crore million women in the country.
- **Impact:** The program has contributed towards **bridging the digital gender divide** in rural India - female to male ratio was 1 in 10 in 2015 and in 2018, it increased to 4 in 10.

    - Some of the women trained under the programme have also started their own micro-business like stitching, honey bee farming, and beauty parlours.
    - There are also many who are driving awareness for issues like girl child education, menstrual hygiene and more within their communities.

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