

**Press Release:**  
**Empowerment of Women in development**

During their meeting on January 25, 2014 in Delhi, as part of a broader discussion, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe highlighted the importance of the potential of women as a development driver.

The two leaders welcomed ongoing cooperation and progress in such areas as:

- **Unlocking rural women's potential:** USD 931 million support has been provided to water supply projects through Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) in Rajasthan, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, which benefited 3 million Indian women involved in daily water supply by reducing their water collection burden and enabling them to participate in more productive economic activities.
- **Improving livelihood of women in forest areas:** During the past nine years, ODA for the forestry sector of India has amounted to USD 25.6 million, contributing to the improvement of income and financial status of 335,000 Indian women working in the sector,
- **Supporting disadvantaged women groups at local level:** During the past five years, USD 3.6 million grant assistance has been provided for 41 projects implemented by local NGOs and other organizations working in such areas as women's leadership in local communities, vocational skill development, and healthcare.
- **Launching women led manufacturing in India:** Women are expected to play an important role in the Indian manufacturing industry driven by the Japanese private sector. Yamaha Motor, a major Japanese motor cycle company, started a new assembly

line run exclusively by 200 Indian women in Uttar Pradesh.

While great strides have been made, disadvantages for women still persist. To achieve a society in which women shine, the two leaders announced the India-Japan Empower Women Initiative to accelerate efforts to promote women's advancement in collaboration with the private sectors of Japan and India, which include:

- **Urban Women Empowerment:** India and Japan will cooperate in advancing maternal and child healthcare condition in urban areas in India through: cutting-edge medical infrastructure development, introduction of high-tech healthcare system and comprehensive capacity building of medical and healthcare providers.
- **Women Empowerment by Japan Inc.:** Japanese companies in collaboration with the government will launch new projects such as; menstruation education, women's leadership of small and medium-sized enterprises, and employment of women in the Industry.
- **MOU on India-Japan Women Empowerment:** The Embassy of Japan in New Delhi and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Government of India will conclude a MOU on women empowerment and child development in various areas including: human resource development, people-to-people and technical know-how exchanges and financing towards empowerment of women.