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SAMRIDH and Redwing launch drone-based healthcare network in Rayagada, Odisha

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Pilot network is aligned with Odisha state governmentâ??s 5T Vision



The SAMRIDH Healthcare Blended Finance Facility, a multi-stakeholder innovation and financing platform supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by IPE Global, in collaboration with Bengaluru-based startup, Redwing, have launched a pilot drone network to enhance accessibility and affordability of healthcare services in the Rayagada district of Odisha.

This pilot programme will use Redwing's electric hybrid drones to deliver medicine and medical equipment by air to isolated areas in Rayagada District, Odisha.

Rayagada, a predominantly tribal district, faces significant challenges in accessing healthcare services. Of the 3,234 villages in the district, more than 800 are hard to reach and more than 160 face seasonal cut-offs, isolating them for certain periods of the year.

By improving the aerial delivery of essential diagnostics, drugs, and vaccines to primary and community healthcare centers, this initiative will reduce out-of-pocket expenditures and dramatically reduce the time for testing, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases, resulting in improved healthcare delivery in the rural and tribal areas of the region.

USAID/India Health Office Director Michelle Lang-Alli said, "This marks an expansion of the already successful healthcare drone model, supported by USAID and Redwing Labs, which has accelerated tuberculosis diagnostics and COVID-19 testing in other rural areas of India."

The pilot project will use Redwing's 'made in India' electric hybrid Vertical Take-off and Landing (VTOL) drones. Key collaborators on the project include the District Administration of Rayagada and the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, which will help evaluate the impact and feasibility of the initiative.