

P R E S S R E L E A S E

## Volvo Construction Equipment expands global skills engine to power industry transformation

The construction industry is advancing across multiple technologies—but faces a skills shortage that threatens to limit progress. Volvo Construction Equipment (Volvo CE) is addressing this constraint by evolving its Iron Women program from an initiative into a repeatable global model for workforce development—unlocking capacity, safety, and productivity simultaneously.



Volvo Construction Equipment (Volvo CE) today formalized Iron Women as a unified global platform to solve a severe shortage of skilled operators, technicians, and service professionals. The initiative is positioned not as a symbolic gesture but as essential business infrastructure—a repeatable model that expands workforce capacity by attracting and developing long-overlooked talent.

"No skills, no scale. It's that simple," said Melker Jernberg, President of Volvo CE. "We can develop the most advanced machines, the smartest products and solutions, and the cleanest technology—but none of it matters if there aren't enough skilled people to deploy it. Iron Women isn't about diversity for diversity's sake. It's about competence and growth—and the entire industry grows when we unlock capacity together."

**Proven success in Ukraine and India**

The Iron Women concept was originally introduced by Volvo Trucks in 2016 and has enabled over 700 women across 10 countries to enter professional driving roles. In 2024, Volvo CE adapted the model for construction equipment, launching its first program in Ukraine to educate women as certified heavy equipment operators. Through partnerships with training provider ETS Group and Swedish non-profit Beredskapslyftet, the program is part of a broader initiative aimed to reskill 1,000 women across industries to support Ukraine's rebuilding efforts.

In 2025, the program expanded to India—a high-growth market facing acute skilled labor scarcity. Working with dealer partner Pollutech Engineering, mining customer KCCL, and government infrastructure institute IIIC Kerala, Iron Women offers three specialized tracks: operator certification, worksite technician training, and factory floor technician programs. The first graduates achieved 100% placement and are now working at customer sites and dealerships. A second cohort of 25 women recently completed operator training and is entering placement.

"Where I come from, women are rarely encouraged to step into roles like this," said Laxmi Naik, Participant of Iron Women India. "When I joined the program, I carried a lot of hesitation about whether I could really succeed. But over time, the training and support helped me discover my own potential. Today, I walk away not just with skills, but with confidence and the belief that I can build a different future for myself."

### **Unlocking industry capacity at global scale**

With proven results, Volvo CE is now expanding Iron Women from regional pilot programs into a scalable model. By training operators, technicians, and service professionals across regions, the model enables faster technology adoption, higher equipment uptime, and more resilient supply chains.

"The model works," Jernberg said. "The next step is scaling it—expanding Iron Women to build workforce capacity where it's needed most, at a pace that matches industry transformation." Volvo CE will expand Iron Women into additional regions throughout 2026 and is currently exploring Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland.

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