



Confederation of Indian Industry

## **CII Centre for Women Leadership**

India is home to approximately 663 million women, with about 450 million falling within the working age range of 15 to 64 years. Today the women are better educated and highly aspirational. In a survey conducted by CII with 700 working women, more than 40% of the respondents aspired to rise to the top of their companies.

Enabling women's entry and retention in the workforce has been the cornerstone of efforts towards women's economic empowerment.

The government has introduced numerous policies that are supportive of women at work - Equal Pay for Equal Work, Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act, the Maternity Benefits Act, Hostels for working women.

The industry has also been receptive to these efforts and have been taking proactive steps to ensure that women enter, stay and grow within the workspace.

But India and women within India is not a homogenous space. More than 90% of women in India are engaged within the Informal sector with limited security. India's extensive network of women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in both rural and urban areas, supported by government and non-government organizations, offers hope for promoting women's economic empowerment by promoting women entrepreneurship.

To advance women's entrepreneurship through SHGs, the government has initiated various programs. These include funding and training for women-led non-farm enterprises through programs like SVEP and NRETP. Additionally, schemes such as Mudra Yojana, Annapurna, and Udyogini provide collateral-free finance options for these women entrepreneurs. Indian Industry too through its social initiatives has focussed on creating livelihood opportunities for women in the rural and unorganized sector through a variety of initiatives ranging from skilling to market and financial linkages.

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## **What can we all do to enable these women achieve their goals?**

CII is proud to announce the launch of its **Centre on Women Leadership** in partnership with The Bill and Melinda Gates foundation.

While Intent, policy mandates and Programs are in place, they alone are insufficient to tackle a complex socio-economic issue such as gender. Identifying and acknowledging the various kinds of obstacles women face in reaching their full potential is the first step followed by multi stakeholder engagement required for co-creating ecosystems that enable women to achieve their full potential.

The centre proposes to address barriers to the entry, retention, and growth of women as leaders in the economy, both within the formal and informal sector, through a multitude of initiatives.

### **The CII Centre on Women Leadership**

A permanent secretariat committed to driving entry, retention, and growth of women as leaders within the economy.

**VISION:** To inspire leadership, in thought and action, to drive transformation, towards Women Leadership within the Economy.

**MISSION:** Co-Creating Ecosystems to enable women to achieve their full economic potential within the formal and informal sectors. We will achieve this by catalysing innovative ideas and solutions amongst all stakeholders, in India, and globally, to enable women to participate, grow, and lead within the economy.

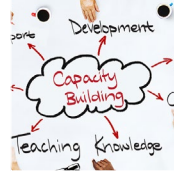
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**CO-CREATING ECOSYSTEMS TO ENABLE WOMEN TO LEAD AND ACHIEVE THEIR FULL ECONOMIC POTENTIAL**



**KNOWLEDGE CREATION**

- Research to inform policy and Industry
- Research around women in leadership
- Models and tools to promote inclusion in the workplace
- Matrices to assess and assist upscaling of women led business
- Skill mapping of women in SHGs



**CAPACITY BUILDING/TRAINING ADVISORY**

- Upskilling of women SHG members
- Upscaling of women led business
- Gender Audits
- Gender Responsive Workplaces
- Gendered Business Reporting
- Women Leadership



**PROMOTING BEST PRACTICES**

- Gender Parity Awards
- Roundtables and Conversations around Inclusion of women



**BUILDING ALLIANCES**

- Champions to promote inclusion of women in economy
- Inclusive Business Alliance
- Indian Women Network
- Alliance for promoting entrepreneurship



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### **About The Bill and Melinda Gates foundation**

The Bill and Melinda Gates foundation has been committed towards building Gender Equality through partnering with Government and Stakeholders. The foundation's Gender Equality Division works to accelerate progress toward a gender-equal world by identifying and dismantling the barriers that prevent women and girls from exercising bodily autonomy, planning for and starting healthy families, and being fully active in their homes, economies, and societies. BMGF has been focussing on Women in Leadership as well as Women Economic Empowerment and looks at the centre for women in leadership as an important partnership with the Industry and Government to shape the way the Indian Economy evolves.

### **About Confederation of Indian Industry**

CII is India's premier business association with more than 9100 members and indirect membership of over 300,000 enterprises from 291 national and regional sectoral industry bodies and reach to the government and civil society, the convening strength of CII is unique and powerful. Founded in 1895 and **celebrating 128 years in 2023**, CII charts change by working closely with Government on policy issues, interfacing with thought leaders, and enhancing efficiency, competitiveness and business opportunities for industry through a range of specialized services and strategic global linkages. It also provides a platform for consensus-building and networking on key issues. Since early 2000s CII has been engaging with industry on women empowerment through the CII Women Empowerment Committee. In addition to the Women Empowerment committee, in 2013 CII also launched the Indian Women Network (IWN) with the vision of being the largest network of career women. Through its 27 chapters across India, IWN has been providing various services to women and industry to drive inclusion. The Centre on women in leadership is an opportunity to move create knowledge, disseminate best practices, and work closely with all stakeholders to ensure inclusive development.

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