

GENDER EQUALITY

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

THE CHALLENGE



Women in India represent 29% of the labour force, down from 35% in 2004.



47% of India's women do not have a bank or savings accounts for their own use



Over 51% of work done by women in India is unpaid. 95% is informal and unprotected, and women are not well represented in business leadership



In India, 60% of women compared to 30% of men have no valuable assets in their name



Women farmers comprise 38.87% of agricultural labour and yet control only 9% of land in India



Rate of crimes against women stands at 53.9% in India. In Delhi, 92% women reported having experienced sexual or physical violence in public spaces



At 17%, India has a lower share of women's contribution to GDP than the global average of 37%.

THE OPPORTUNITY



The economic impact of achieving gender equality in India is estimated to be US\$700 billion of added GDP by 2025. The IMF estimates that equal participation of women in the workforce will increase India's GDP by 27



Women spend 90% of their income on their families. Economically empowered women boost demand, have healthier and better educated children, and raise human development levels.



Globally, women make or influence 80% of buying decisions and control US\$20 trillion in global spending



54% of India's women don't have cellphones and 80% don't use them to connect them to the internet. If as many women as men had phones, it could create US\$17 billion in revenue for phone companies in the next 5 years.



1 in 3 private sector leaders reported that profits increased as a result of efforts to empower women in emerging markets

Government Initiatives

India's MUDRA scheme to support micro and small enterprises and direct benefit transfers under the Jan Dhan Yojana seek to empower women. Women entrepreneurs account for about 78% of the total number of borrowers under MUDRA.

POTENTIAL AREAS OF FOCUS

- Vocational and technical training, life skills and financial literacy programmes for women to help them **develop marketable skills** and better decision-making abilities, and embed them in formal value chains
- Link women’s skills to employment opportunities: **Bridge the gap between skills and jobs** and enable women’s access to decent work
- **Invest in women entrepreneurs** through **microfinance**, and bring their goods and services into **supply chains** for industry
- **Enhance women’s access to the internet and ICT**, and use this emerging market of connected women to link them to business opportunities
- **Invest in women’s security against violence at home and in public spaces, and enable their mobility through inclusive transport**

UNILEVER’S SHAKTI PROGRAMME

Unilever’s Shakti programme in India relies on women and their family members to distribute Unilever products in hard-to-reach villages. 70,000 women work as “Shakti entrepreneurs”, reaching more than 4 million households in 162,000 villages. These women earn double or triple the typical village income they would likely have earned without Shakti. The programme accounts for about 5% of Unilever’s total revenues in India.

TELENOR’S PROJECT SAMPARK

Telenor India’s Project Sampark trained female health workers to sell joint SIM packs and spread messages about why women should use mobile phones. These packs contained paired SIMs, one used by a woman and the other by a male household member, so that a recharge of either benefitted both. Five months after the project’s launch, the SIM plans accounted for more than 30% of new Telenor subscribers in 87 villages.

SDG Goals

