













ACKNOWLEDGMENT



"Building Equitable Workspaces" is a handbook that is inspired by the understanding that the small changes make workspaces for equitable and inviting for all employees.

We want to thank ILO for supporting this handbook and acknowledging that the construction sector is an important space for driving inclusion.

We want to thank the companies from within the construction equipment industry for participating in the survey and the group discussions and sharing their good practices as well as their challenges.

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We hope you find these inputs useful as you continue on your journey of including women in the workforce.

INTRODUCTION

Advancing women's employment could add \$12 trillion to global GDP, reports the World Economic Forum report 2022. A higher participation of women in the workforce. raising the number of hours spent by them on the iob. and including them in higher-producti vity areas will help spur such economic growth.

The economic growth of any country is wholly dependent on its people. India has seen a period of immense growth with new companies setting up businesses and industries growing steadily in the recent years. While every organization tries to stand out and attract the best talent available, what makes some stand out more? What is that one common characteristic that distinguishes successful organizations from the rest? Undoubtedly, it is the culture that propels growth and sustenance for all critical stakeholders in the ecosystem. It has been time and again established by high-growth organizations and testified by their employees' the world over. Such conducive culture is not created in a day. It requires organizations to listen to their employee's needs and concerns as well as learn from other organizations that have constituted practices that are laudable. Industry best practices get adopted by organizations within the industry overtime because of the tangible benefits they bring.

Women make up only 12% of the labour force of India's dynamic construction industry, a study by Primus Partners and WTCA in 2023 reveals. Traditionally perceived as a male-dominated sector, the infusion of female talent in the construction. industry has to be prioritized to tap into the huge ecosystem of talent available to the industry. The primary rationale in women's recruitment lies in the culmination of a diversified skill set. Women bring unique perspectives, problem-solving approaches, and leadership styles that augment the overall efficiency of the construction industry. The untapped potential of female talent represents a significant demographic resource gap. By bridging the gender gap, the industry can access a broader pool of skilled professionals, addressing the persistent labour shortages and contributing to the sector's overall gender and ability-focused advancement.

Despite the compelling reasons for increased female representation, women in the construction industry face multifaceted challenges. Foremost among these challenges is the deeply entrenched gender stereotypes and biases prevalent in the sector. These stereotypes often limit women's access to opportunities, hampering their career progression and potential for leadership roles.

Safety concerns pose another obstacle for women entering the construction workforce. The lack of gender-sensitive facilities, makes it imperative to address safety measures comprehensively. Provision of adequate training and a secure work environment is essential to ensuring the well-being of women in construction roles. Furthermore, the presence of elaborate safety measures fosters a sense of comfort in the family members of female employees and even those who are keen to join the organization.

Through our survey and focus groups discussions with women employees of different organizations within the construction industry, we came across some adoptable good practices. We divided them into six main themes/heads such as good practices for—(i) recruitment. (ii) retention and development of women. (iii) flexible work, (iv) parental leaves and benefits, (v) child care, self care and elder care, and (vi) company culture and DEI accountability. Each of these are critical to increasing women's representation in an industry that still has a very marginal representation of women. As of 2021-22, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), the proportion of women workers in the construction industry is only 5.3% for rural women and 3.9% for urban women. This underscores the dire need for organizations to consider all that they can to attract more women to the sector.





potential of female talent, fostering a thriving and equitable construction sector for the future. Initiatives focused on breaking gender barriers, ensuring safety, and implementing supportive policies are essential steps towards realizing a more inclusive and robust construction industry in India. Below are good practices from some well-known organizations in the construction sector and allied sectors.



L&T Construction

The Company has a gender-neutral recruitment process. The recruitment process (Job posts, JD. interview process) and policies specifically addresses gender diversity in recruitment. The gender neutrality for Campus recruitment starts during the initial phase of inviting the colleges for our campus process, NIA (Notice Inviting Application) states out the number of students required to apply against each discipline but exempts the limit of female candidates who can apply subject to fulfilling all the eligibility criteria. During the Pre-Placement Talk, they specifically encourage female candidates to apply and achieve career in core engineering. Due to

which, they have been noticing a steady increase of female students who have applied over the past vears. L&T being an infrastructure company and the nature of work being predominantly in the sites. they have noticed an increase in the number of female students who are willing to change typical stereotype mindset of being wanting to work only in office premises and therefore applying and clearing rigid campus recruitment process. resulting in higher ratio of intake of female students going up significantly over last few years. As a result of 36% of all campus hires have been women.

The leadership hiring team has identified some critical business enabling roles like HR, Finance and

Legal, in order to increase the Gender diversity ratio in the organization. They engage in lateral hiring for mid to senior levels. There is no differentiation in Job posting/JD and they follow the usual selection process to maintain a level playing field for all applicants. In the last couple of years ~10% of leadership hiring has been diversity candidates.



Gainwell Commosales Pvt Ltd.

(Manufactures construction and mining machinery) - As an organizational goal, Gainwell set a target to achieve 10% as their percentage of women employees. They have clear guidelines for gender neutral recruitment. They also target exclusive women's colleges for hiring. Major hiring initiatives include hiring women trainees for their workshops and customer support divisions, an aggressive hiring initiative for hiring women talent for lateral positions. special top-up bonus for referring women employees where employees get rewards worth 1000 rupees in addition to the specified grade reward for referring women candidates through the Employee Referral Scheme 52% of all new hires in March 2022 were women. At present, they have already achieved 8.6%.



JC Bamford Excavators India

(a leading manufacturer of earthmoving and construction equipment in India) – Encouraging women's participation, JCB invites family members to visit the manufacturing facility to assess its safety and working conditions, fostering a sense of comfort in the recruitment of female employees. The focus is not only to hire women for the shop floor but also to create a stable career option for them. Initiatives include:

- The job advertisement is in neutral language (her/his).
- Flexibility with respect to interview venue (accommodated basis location of the women candidate) and mode (in-person / virtual).

- Empanelment of all women engineering colleges
- Diverse interview panel ensured.
- Support during the relocation of the new candidates with flexibility to have look and see visit before their joining JCB (Stay and Commute provided by JCB).

Results:

- Gender ratio amongst Graduate Engineering Trainees: 42% in 2021; 50% in 2022 and 62% in 2023.
- Overall Diversity: 14%
- Vadodara (the latest set-up)
 has 52% diversity, which is one
 of the best in the
 manufacturing set-up.



Schwing Stetter India

Diploma Engineers (women) are hired as Trainees through campus recruitment and their 5-year career path is charted underscoring a clear and specified course of development. This is done bev recruiting women trainees from different reputed polytechnics from across the country and deploy them on the shop floor. The company provides these women with training in different skill sets. such as assembly line production. welding, fitting, equipment testing of concreting and construction equipment, and other supervisory and managerial skills. After two years of training,

they undergo an entrance exam with VIT. Vellore (a premier technical institute in the country), and upon qualifying. they continue graduation in technology. The women get certified as engineers while simultaneously working with Schwing Stetter. Upon graduating, the women can join Schwing or a company of their choice. The initiative has resulted in a large pool of women resources becoming productive, skilled workers. As a result. women today make-up 30% on the shop floor of Schwing Stetter India.

VOLVO

Volvo Group

Volvo Group India

ExcelHer, a nine-month career restart program, focuses on women's professional development through industry training. mentorship, and firsthand job exposure via an efficient buddy system and discussion mechanism. Requirement Gathering and Job Posting for the program - The ExcelHer program window opens twice in a year, in the months of January and June. The business is required to share requirements along with the job description with the recruitment team. As a next step, the recruitment team post the vacancies on various platforms like social media, career website and Volvo website. To leverage referrals as a source of hiring, they conduct

virtual interactive sessions with the hiring managers to brief them about the program, timelines and share details on how they can continue to be an ambassador for the Volvo Group. The recruitment team shortlists the candidates and initiates the interview process with the hiring manager. The shortlisted candidates are offered internship for a period of nine months program offers an orientation program to introduce the women and help familiarize them with the Volvo Group vision and mission. values, and culture. There are also insightful sessions understanding mandatory policies that including Prevention of workplace sexual harassment, learning & development opportunities. Volvo

gathers feedback at every stage of their journey, like Day ONE onboarding, Month ONE Survey. Quarterly Surveys mechanism to ensure the participants are engaged in the 9 months of the program. They have been receiving a participant pulse score on an average of more than 90% across all these surveys. The program has received great response & have onboarded 25 women professionals so far. 81% of the inaugural batch were in the core engineering roles. They were successful in hiring all of them through social media and employee referral campaigns. These positions were primarily in R&D, and the others in Finance & HR. 90% of the first batch was converted into full-time midlevel positions.



RETENTION & DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN

While there is an increased in-flow of women in the construction sector, we are yet to see their equal presence in leadership roles and on the shop floor. What we also need to witness is the high retention rate of women representing the construction industry.

Retention and development of women in the construction sector is crucial to capitalizing on the diverse skill sets they bring to the workforce. Beyond initial recruitment, companies must actively

cultivate a culture that supports and values women's contributions. A workplace that acknowledges women's professional contributions can retain them for longer, creating an inclusive culture that inherently impacts the industry's outlook towards women as equal employees. Some good practices in retention and career development of women observed in leading construction companies are as follows.



Gainwell Commosales Pvt Ltd.

"Each one reach one" is a special mentoring program for women. A senior female mentor is assigned to each new female employee to identify their aspirations and provide tailored guidance on career advancement towards specific personal and professional goals. There is also an exclusive Women achievers award to celebrate extra-ordinary women performers. 8 exceptional women achievers were awarded.



JC Bamford Excavators India

They prepared and communicated an Ergonomics Manual for Vadodara Site followed by an Ergonomics Study in critical areas like Stab Leg. Carriage and Bending Area. The result of carrying out an Ergonomics study in critical areas led to a reduction in Carriage gauge weight by 76% i.e. from 15 kg to 5 kg because of which they could deploy females in that area successfully. Also, repetitive bending movements, excess travel. and handling of the parts in inappropriate posture were studied. Relevant measures in improving the work area ergonomics, the layout of the work cells, and better processes were evolved to improve these challenges. The study also helped us in developing heightened work platforms for welding to

compensate for the variation in the height from person to person. The JCB Jaipur plant has a gender diversity of 36%, and as of today, 17 employees are pregnant. As JCB believes in employee well-being. they started to plan workstations for pregnant women. It's important to prioritize health, comfort & safety. Here are some key points that were considered:

- Ergonomic workstations
- Avoid lifting
- Health & safety measures
- Supportive supervision
- Providing jackets for lactating mothers

Benefits of these initiatives:

- Better productivity
- · Improved inclusivity
- Smooth maternity transition
- Positive organizational culture



L&T Construction

While I &T construction has multiple programs like WINSPIRE (Women Inspire) and GROW (Get Ready to Own and Win) on promoting development of women leaders, they host an upskilling program specifically for women workers, L&T's CSTI (Construction Skills and Training Institute), which is one of the oldest in its kind of vocational training institute's, has been running upskilling program that has transformed the role of women worker from one limited to head-loading to that of skilled worker category, helping them to attain job security through increased employability along-with financial freedom. Women trainees are given in depth information about the training modules that feature both classroom sessions and on-the job training, and how this programme can benefit them.

The prime focus is on masonry skills with training in key aspects like taking measurements, identifying material, brick laving and different types of plastering, to name a few. Earlier, women construction workers were employed at the construction sites for head loading only but now with their improved skills and capabilities, they are ready for skilled work with the capability to operate and handle tools and equipment at sites just like their male counterparts. The CSTI training has been very effective for the women members. Along with skill development and capability upgradation, the training has made them confident and self-sufficient. Their monthly incomes have increased substantially and a few of the trainees have also repaired their homes themselves



L&T Construction and Mining Machinery

At L& T Construction & Mining Machinery, the engagement of women has now moved beyond the conventional roles of accounts, finance, administration and HRD. Today, the women are playing an important role in handling critical activities such as equipment maintenance and achieving higher uptime.

This is reflected in the engagement of the all-women teams who are executing important activities - on site as well as the shopfloor. The women form the first batch of ITIs (Industrial Training Institutes) who broke into the male bastion to take up the role of Heavy Earth Moving Machinery (HEMM) maintenance. Operating in shifts, the crew is paving the way for gender equality in the mining industry. Tough and

competent, the women exhibit holdness - climb on to the off highway large-size 100-ton dumpers to take up daily maintenance, including scheduled maintenance. scheduled overhauling, preventive maintenance checks, troubleshooting. documentation. housekeeping and service reporting. The women have also been able to exhibit tremendous confidence in handling HEMM and have been closely involved in assembling and commissioning the 100-ton mining dumpers.

VOLVO

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Volvo Group India

mPowHer is a program designed to inspire, enable and accelerate the leadership journey of women employees by making them more self-aware of their strengths through experiential learning platforms. They also offer Mentoring Program by women leaders - An initiative to help aspiring women to learn from the senior women leaders within Volvo group. Lean In Circle consists of small sets of women networks that comes together and benefits by personal and professional sharing. These are the testimonials of few women who have benefitted from these programs:

Reflections



Vanitha

Now I see a better version of myself every day, aand the main reason is because I was a part of this program....



Harini

If I see back myself before ASCENT and after, I can find of improvements in me "It boosted my confidence leval"....



Raiini

Though it was a first time initiative in Volvo, it went so well with very good plan ahead, I realized the importance of "Knowing Me" first than anything else...



Pallavi

This program brought in an immense insight on business and leadership many session like business Finance, Speaker series, Branding...



Vaidehi Deshpande Group Truck Technology



Chanchal Basu Volvo Construction Equipment

Paver program was a very good learing for me specially when I was planning for a next step in my career. With the continuous guidance & support from mentor, I was able to achieve it and moved to next level my career.

My mentor always encouraged me to have an introspection and be open about the thoughts.

Special Thanks to My Mentor



FLEXIBLE WORK

Flexible work arrangement is a pivotal strategy that supports the attraction, retention, and growth of talent. Flexible work options in the construction industry are critical in addressing numerous challenges, particularly for women employees who have care giving responsibilities. Offering flexibility in work hours, remote work possibilities, and adaptable schedules is instrumental in creating an environment that

accommodates various personal and professional needs.

Companies that champion flexible work options position themselves as industry leaders, attracting and retaining top talent while contributing to a more inclusive and adaptable construction sector in India. We look at some good practices from companies that have incorporated flexible work policies.



Cummins India

New mothers are eligible to opt for flexible work arrangement or part-time work beyond the provision of the Maternity Act.



Gainwell India

Gainwell India motivates new mothers to openly communicate their changing needs with their managers and the human resources team to enable the adoption of work methods fit for them.

TATA HITACHI

Reliable solutions

Tata Hitachi

Employees are eligible for leaves in case of their participation in sports at national or international levels, army, court witness, family planning, blood donation, and more.



Volvo Group

Volvo Group India

Depending on the place of work, employees may benefit from flexible working hours, parental, sabbatical or study leaves, get paid time off for specific occasions, or get special training or support to complete a certain job.



PARENTAL LEAVE & BENEFITS

Women have made incredible progress in joining the workforce, fighting for equal pay, and rising to the top of their careers. However, the world is still seeing a leaking pipeline when it comes to women talent. Here are a few good practices some of the organizations are following to build a diverse and robust talent pipeline.



JCB India

The company grants one month of leave for women employees who undergo sickness due to pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, etc.



L&T Construction

The company has special considerations for the performance appraisals of women who are on maternity leave to ensure equal assessment.



L&T Construction & Mining Machinery

Female trainees who are not covered under the ESI scheme are eligible for the same maternity leaves and benefits applicable to other employees.

TATA HITACHI

Reliable solutions

Tata Hitachi

In case on tubectomy operation, women employees are granted two week's leave.



Volvo Group

Volvo Group India

Both male and female employees are eligible for counselling support to help deal with personal and professional challenges that might impact them while becoming parents.



CHILD CARE, ELDER CARE, AND SELF CARE

Every organization's work culture and environment should ensure that there are ample opportunities for its diverse employees to grow and succeed at the firm. Among the enabling initiatives, the most important ones are the caregiving policies and facilities that the organization offers. Many companies with a range of good practices have implemented caregiving policies as per the requirements of the employees, as they understand that a happy employee is a productive employee. These include child-care support, elder-care support, and self-care support. Here are a few examples.



JCB India

The company offers scholarships for employees and their children who wish to pursue higher education.



Gainwell India

Gainwell India offers scholarships of up to 50,000 rupees per semester for the children of employees. If the student scores above 80 per cent throughout the course, they are awarded a sum of 100,000 rupees at the end of the program. Employees, spouses, and dependents are also eligible for the Employees Medical Benefits Trust to cover treatment of critical or terminal diseases.



L&T Construction

Under its Mediclaim and insurance policies, the company ensures each employee has access to care facilities for mental and physical well-being. Utilizing feedback mechanisms, the company aims to identify employee needs focused on self-care and implements them. The arrangements extend to accommodation being made in office and onsite.

TATA HITACHI

Reliable solutions

Tata Hitachi

The company provides its own crèche facilities on worksites, and parents who opt for non-site crèche facilities are eligible for a reimbursement of 8,000 rupees per child per month.



COMPANY CULTURE AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI) ACCOUNTABILITY

Numerous studies have established, time and again, that DEI principles are the core of successful, sustainable organizations. To break gender stereotypes, stigma and biases and ensure inclusive growth, organizations need to come up with efficient strategies or follow the good practices which are already in place in

leading organizations. Prevalence of cultural habits and practices play a huge part in determining an individual's perspective. Here are a few examples of companies initiating good practices in terms of fostering an inclusive and diverse culture.



Case Construction

Case has equal opportunity and non-discrimination policies in the workplace and promotes an inclusive culture. As part of D&I commitments, they have mandatory leadership training programs that incorporate 'D&I Awareness Training' and 'Unconscious Bias Training'.



Cummins India

Women hold over 33 per cent of the STFM roles at Cummins and are encouraged to grow. Cummins India has 40% of IT roles and 35.59% of all professional engineering roles held by women. They have a program called #WomenPowerCummins that aims to inspire women and girls to pursue careers in STEM (Science. Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) is a fundamental value at Cummins India which has driven their success. They safe work environment, equal opportunities for development and growth, and most importantly valuing our diverse and uniquely talented people. Women also hold senior

leadership positions (42% of senior leadership team is women) and act as role models and mentors for women who are paving their way in the industry.

Dana TM4 India – Dana TM4 set up an Inclusion & Diversity Committee in 2020 to improve the ratio of Female Workforce- both at Shop Floor and in the White-Collar category. As a result, the diversity ratio improved from 24 per cent in 2020 to 38 per cent in 2023. Almost 50 per cent are diversity employees in plants across all operations. Managers are sensitized on "Overcoming Unconscious Bias". All JDs, policies and guidelines are gender neutral.

Initiatives championed by the Committee, in detail are given below:

- 1. Ensuring women receive equitable rewards to recognize their contributions, promoting financial inclusivity. Rewards and recognition Programs such as Pat on the Back/ Star of Quarter ensure adequate representation of women.
- 2. Women's voices and equality are enhanced when they are involved in decision-making.

 Dana TM4 has two interventions, Positivi-Tea and From ME to WE, wherein Focus Group Discussions for women were held frequently to address grievances.
- 3. Eliminating favoritism fosters a level playing field where merit triumphs over bias.
 They have several Business Resource Groups to cater to DEI. An example is the Dana Women Network, which promotes professional networking and career development for women.
- 4. Tailored benefits acknowledge the diverse needs of women, supporting their holistic well-being. Flexible Working Hours and Hybrid mode of working provide for the work-life balance. Women also get extended Maternity benefits with facilities such as creche and lactation rooms.
- 5. Equitable compensation and promotions provide equal growth opportunities, empowering women employees to advance in their careers. Equal Pay audits conducted every year pose as a metric for measurement. The leadership team, specifically, discusses and ensures the representation of women employees in the Succession Pipeline.
- 6. Banishing workplace politics cultivates a collaborative, supportive atmosphere, allowing women to thrive without undue hurdles.

In 2020, Dana implemented the Day of Understanding initiative as part of its commitment to the pledge.

Some other initiatives include:

- Ergonomic studies for workstations and automation wherever lifting of heavy loads is required.
- Hostel arrangements for shop floor females/ trainees/apprentices and ensuring safety and security arrangements during travel.
- Sakhi helpline, a 24/7 mechanism to report any emergency.

- Round-the-clock health care services inside plant.
- Provision of comfort and assurance to family members of girls from outside the state by inviting them to the office.
- Inclusion and diversity part of leadership and plant KPIs
- Leaders conduct 30 minutes of group discussion with ten employees on DEI



FACILITIES FOR SHOP FLOOR WORKERS

Shop floor workers have access to an around-the-clock medical center, restroom, Emergency Vehicle, Creche facility, and security / Escorts for night shifts for Door-step pickup & drop. Above all, very supportive management to ensure the women workforce is working safely at their plant.

HANSA/FLEX

Hansa Flex India

Hansa Flex ensures pay parity, equal opportunities, and uniform rewards and recognition for all employees. At corporate level, diversity and inclusion is promoted through leadership development workshops and networking events, encouraging women to take on leadership positions and contribute to the decision-making process.

VOLVO

Volvo Group

Volvo Group India

Each manager at Volvo actively participates in building a healthy work environment physically and mentally resulting in the company winning the "Best Workplace for Women" award. Policy, investment, technology, and intent are all crucial in including employees with different backgrounds, lived experiences, and abilities in the workforce. They bring their unique strengths and foster better innovation and problem solving. Ensuring DEI sensitivity training and DEI intentional hiring and retention practices will go a long way in building an inclusive culture where women and other minority groups can thrive and reach their full potential.





The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India. partnering Industry, Government and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes.

For more than 125 years, CII has been engaged in shaping India's development journey and works proactively on transforming Indian Industry's engagement in national development. With its extensive network across the country and the world, CII serves as a reference point for Indian industry and the international business community.

As India strategizes for the next 25 years to India@100, Indian industry must scale the competitiveness ladder to drive growth. CII, with the Theme for 2023-24 as 'Towards a Competitive and Sustainable India@100: Growth, Livelihood, Globalisation, Building Trust' has prioritized 6 action themes that will catalyze the journey of the country towards the vision of India@100.

The CII Centre for Women Leadership aims at co-creating ecosystems to enable women to achieve their full economic potential. Through this center, CII aims at to address the barriers to the entry, retention, and growth of women as leaders in the economy, both within the formal and informal sector. This will be achieved through catalysing innovative ideas and solutions amongst all stakeholders, in India, and globally, to enable women to participate, grow, and lead within the Economy.

CII has been focussed on Women Empowerment since early 2000s. In 2013, with the formation of the CII Indian Women Network, these efforts have taken the form of advocacy, capacity building and ground interventions with Industry and Women.

Confederation of Indian Industry

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