

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4746
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.03.2025

WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN WORKFORCE

4746. SHRI K SUDHAKARAN:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the declining participation of women in the country's workforce despite various gender empowerment schemes, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of the female workforce participation during the last three years; and
- (c) whether the Ministry has conducted any study to identify policy gaps, if so, the details thereof along with the corrective measures taken in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) to (c): The official data source on Employment and Unemployment is Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) which is conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) since 2017-18. The survey period is July to June every year. As per the latest available Annual PLFS reports, the estimated Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) on usual status for females of age 15 years and above during 2021-22 to 2023-24 are as follows:

Year	LFPR (in %)
2021-22	32.8
2022-23	37.0
2023-24	41.7

Source: PLFS, MoSPI

The PLFS data indicates an increasing trend of participation of Females in Labour Force over the years in the country.

There are a number of schemes and policy initiatives being implemented by various Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India across the country to promote women's participation in the paid workforce.

Recognizing the transformative potential of start-ups, the Government has introduced several initiatives to support and nurture entrepreneurship, including women's entrepreneurship. More than 73,000 start-ups, representing nearly half of the 1,57,066 start-ups supported by the government under the Start-up India Initiative, have at least one-woman director, underscoring the crucial role women play in driving innovation and economic growth.

The Government has made enabling provisions in the Companies Act, 2013, mandating companies to have at least one woman Director. As a result, today, nearly 11.6 Lakh Women Directors are associated with Public and Private companies.

Employment generation coupled with improving employability is the priority of the Government. Government implements various schemes to boost the FLFPR as well as the overall LFPR like Stand Up India, MUDRA Yojna, Start-up India, Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGMSE), Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), Rural Self Employment and Training Institutes (RSETIs), provides employment/ self-employment and credit facilities. The Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) which is a major credit-linked subsidy programme aimed at generating self-employment opportunities through establishment of micro-enterprises in the non-farm sector. Majority of the beneficiaries under these schemes are women.

Envisioning Self Help Groups (SHGs) as vehicles of change, today nearly 10 crore women associated with 90 lakh SHGs are transforming the rural landscape economically. The Government implements schemes like Namo Drone Didi and Lakhpati Didi specially aimed at enhancing the technical capabilities and financial stability for women, particularly in rural areas.

To enhance the employability of female workers, the Government, under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY), is providing training to them through a network of Women Industrial Training institutes, National Vocational Training Institutes and Regional Vocational Training Institutes. In addition, and Prime Minister's Internship Scheme also provides skill development and vocational training to women.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development implements 'Palna' component under Mission Shakti for all States/ UTs, under which providing day care facilities and protection to children is the main focus area. Under Palna, Ministry has extended free services of childcare through Anganwadi cum Crèches (AWCC). As on date, 11,395 AWCCs across 34 States/ UTs have been approved, as per proposals received from various States/ UTs. The Ministry also provides financial assistance to States and UTs for operation and maintenance Working Women's Hostels (WWH). The Government also provides capital grant to States for construction of WWH under the 'Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI)'.

A number of provisions have also been incorporated in the labour laws for congenial work environment for women workers, such as paid maternity leave, child care leave, equal wages etc.

In addition, Ministry of Labour and Employment in January, 2024 issued an “Advisory for Employers to Promote Women Workforce Participation”. This advisory inter-alia mentions the need for balance between employment and care responsibilities for both men and women including family friendly measures such as paternity leave, parental leave, family emergency leave and flexible working arrangements.
