



# REPORT WORKSHOP ON ENGENDERING LEADERSHIP IN ORGANISATIONS

PRIA & MARTHA FARRELL FOUNDATION

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## BACKGROUND

Recent studies have demonstrated that India can improve its GDP growth by more than 2 per cent per annum if gender equality in the country increases. How is this going to be possible given the conditions outlined below?

- Smaller and poorer countries have better gender equality score on UNDP Gender Index than India.
- Women's labour force participation, especially in urban India, is declining as per 2011 Census.
- Talented and educated young women in India are constrained to reduce (or drop out from) their workforce participation due to fear of harassment in public spheres.
- Hostile work environment which systematically demeans women's contribution continues in most Indian organisations.

In the past two decades, national and state governments in India have formulated a large number of public policies, laws and institutions promoting women's empowerment and targeting gender discrimination and harassment at the workplace. Yet, there is mounting evidence about gender inequality which continues to affect a wide variety of socio-economic indicators – female foeticide, maternal and child malnutrition, school drop-out rates, and declining labour force participation.

Experiences around the world have begun to focus attention on the way women's participation and contributions are regularly discriminated against in various organisations; such constraints and restrictions are caused by the way institutions are designed and function. In India, gender discrimination and restrictions in organisations is widespread – girl students and teachers in schools and colleges; women artists and actors in cultural institutions (including Bollywood); nurses and women doctors in hospitals; women political leaders in political parties; lawyers and judges in courts; women sports-persons in sports associations; journalists in media; women in the police, paramilitary and armed forces. Various government and non-government organisations are no different.

While a large number of public policies and interventions focus on women's empowerment by improving their access to education and employment, very little attention has been paid to the systemic nature of exclusion they face inside an organisation. Systems and practices in organisations tend to make the assumption that women are primarily responsible for reproductive and care-giving roles in family; only a few organisations offer women workers some flexibility to fulfil this role. Women's productive, economic and professional contributions are overlooked. And male employees are expected to ignore their own responsibilities of care-giving in the hope their wives, mothers and sisters will take care of the same. Such cultural practices, norms and mores are prevalent in all types of organisations in India – private business, NGOs, government departments, police, judiciary, educational institutions, media, political parties, etc.

Engendering organisations requires a new kind of leadership. Organisational leadership not only provides policies and procedures, but also defines its culture. Stories and anecdotes of successful and effective engendered leadership are occasionally heard from all types of organisations. Yet, very little systematic understanding of how institutional culture and leadership can enhance gender equality is largely absent in India. There are hardly any efforts at collectively promoting 'engendered leadership' in organisations. How can leadership in organisations create a balanced approach that values and supports women's participation and contributions? How can we understand and promote such 'engendered leadership' in all kinds of organisations in the country?

In this backdrop Martha Farrell Foundation (MFF) and Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) organised an engaging workshop on "**Engendering Leadership in Organisations**" on **10-11 March 2016** at PRIA. The workshop was attended by 58 participants drawn from a variety of organisations – civil society, private business, public sector undertaking, Indian Navy, police, educational institutions, and many more. This document captures the key points discussed in the workshop.

## WELCOME, OVERVIEW AND SETTING THE CONTEXT

Ms. Rita Sarin, Founder Trustee, Martha Farrell Foundation; and Global Vice President and Country Director, The Hunger Project, New Delhi welcome the participants. She remembered Dr. Martha Farrell in a personal note and described her as a wonderful person and professional. Dr. Farrell was associated with the civil society sector and worked on the issues related to gender mainstreaming systemically and systematically. Ms. Sarin invited the participants to keep a moment of silence in the honour of Dr. Farrell.

Ms. Sarin invited Dr. Rajesh Tandon, Founder President, PRIA, New Delhi to provide a context of the workshop and to set the stage for discussion. Dr. Tandon shared that the Martha Farrell Foundation (MFF) has been created by the friends, relatives and well-wishers of Dr. Farrell with an objective to carry forward her passion and vision of a gender just society. Since its inception, the Foundation has been taking forward the youth-led campaign on violence against women and girls called Kadam Badhate Chalo (KBC) in 14 locations in India. The Foundation has celebrated International Women's Day (8 March) in several locations and many more events are being planned. A second area of the Foundation's work is on Preventing Sexual Harassment at Work Place. It has made efforts to raise awareness and train Third Party Facilitators for serving various Internal Complaint Committees which needed to be constituted according to the law. Such training workshops have been organised in Lucknow, Bhopal, Ahmedabad, Gangtok, and Siliguri. In future, several such workshops will be organised by the Foundation in other cities as well. A third area of the Foundation's work relates to making the institutions gender sensitive. This workshop is an opening conversation on how organisations are designed and function in ways to make them gender sensitive. It does not limit to making provision for maternity leaves, or leaves for attending parent-teacher meeting, but to critically examine that the gender stereotypes are not perpetuated in the institutions. It's also the way men and women relate to each other in the work places. Currently, it's not a popular area or work among the practitioners, academics and students of Organisational

Behaviour. The purpose of this dialogue is not to focus only on the problems but also to identify innovations in gender mainstreaming. Dr. Tandon reminded that the participants in this workshop came from a variety of organisations. Irrespective of organisations that the participants were associated with, he hoped that the sharing of innovations from various sectors would enrich the dialogue. He hoped that the dialogue would result in not only clarity of new ways addressing this issue but also possibilities to work with the Foundation in the coming period.



*Dr. Rajesh Tandon setting the context*

## SESSION I: MACRO PERSPECTIVE

**Moderator:** Ms. Rita Sarin, Founder Trustee, Martha Farrell Foundation and Global Vice President & Country Director, The Hunger Project, New Delhi

### **Speakers:**

- Dr. U. D. Choubey, Director General, Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE); and Former Chairman and Managing Director, GAIL (India) Ltd.
- Mr. Prithvi Haldea, Founder Chairman, PRIME Database, New Delhi

**Mr. Prithvi Haldea** made a presentation on the "Myth and Reality of Women Directors". As per the Indian Companies Act 2013, the Indian companies are now required as follows: every listed public company shall have at least one-third of the total number of directors as Independent Directors and such class or classes of

companies as may be prescribed, shall have at least one woman director (this, among others, includes all listed companies and several other public limited companies). He also shared the obligations on part of Indian companies listed under the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) as follows:

Where the chairperson of the board of directors is a non-executive director, at least one-third of the board of directors shall comprise of independent directors and where the listed entity does not have a regular non-executive chairperson, at least half of the board of directors shall comprise of independent directors: Provided that where the regular non-executive chairperson is a promoter of the listed entity or is related to any promoter or person occupying management positions at the level of board of director or at one level below the board of directors, at least half of the board of directors of the listed entity shall consist of independent directors.

The expression "related to any promoter" shall have the following meaning:

- (i) *if the promoter is a listed entity, its directors other than the independent directors, its employees or its nominees shall be deemed to be related to it;*
- (ii) *if the promoter is an unlisted entity, its directors, its employees or its nominees shall be deemed to be related to it.*

For the SEBI listed companies the Board of Directors shall have at least one woman director on the Board of the company. Although these are regulatory requirements, there have been very few companies in India which fully complied with the regulations in letter and spirit. Mr. Haldea exasperated that with such low level of accountability and high level of corrupt practices, do women want to join this sector? Despite the fact that women take many purchasing decisions at home or being the major consumers they are yet to get a place in corporate India. He narrated his experience as member of Drafting Committee of Indian Companies Act 2013. The Drafting Committee, when wanted to insert the phrase "independent woman director", faced a lot of resistance and pressure from various groups. The

Drafting Committee had to finally give up which in his opinion was a mockery and constraint to introduce a new paradigm in the corporate governance. He, however, emphatically argued that we should definitely encourage companies to include women on the Board.

Prime Database maintains a database of directors with profiles for each director. It also traces which director is joining and leaving. He said, many male directors run the companies like propriety at the expense of shareholders. If the promoters and management are to be given a fair deal, the companies need to make sure that the directors are really independent.



*Mr. Prithvi Haldea speaking at Session I*

Mr. Haldea narrated the recent history of compliance with regulation regarding Women Directors. SEBI prescribed this requirement in February 2014. The companies were required to appoint a woman director on their boards by 30th September, 2014 (In the case of NSE, there were already 442 companies which had a woman on their boards before the SEBI guideline was announced in February 2014). The compliance was very poor as they seemed to be hopeful that there would definitely be an extension of the deadline as there had been no warnings from SEBI. It proved that they were right. Faced with a very large number of representations from companies which had not met this condition (nearly half of NSE-listed companies), and believing that there were genuine difficulties, SEBI liberally extended this deadline to 31st March, 2015. In the next four months (October 2014 to January 2015) only 137 more companies became compliant. There was some rush in

February with as many as 72 more companies appointed woman director. However, when SEBI's stern warning came, the number shot up to 297 in March (of the 836 companies which complied with the requirement within the SEBI deadline, or 35 per cent) 297 complied in 31 days! 58 appointments were made between 1st and 22nd March. A huge 239 appointments between 23rd and 31st March of which 63 were on 30th March and 78 on 31st. One can imagine the seriousness on part of the companies where 141 board meetings were organised in just last two days for this purpose. On the 1st of April, 2015, there were still 206 non-compliant companies at NSE.

In April 2015, SEBI announced a three-stage penalty structure, wherein the fines would increase with the passage of time.

- Companies complying between 1st April and 30th June 2015 would have to pay Rs.50,000 each.
- Companies complying between 1st July and 30th September, 2015 would need to pay Rs.50,000 and an additional Rs.1000 per day of non-compliance, while
- Companies complying after 30th September will have to pay Rs.1.42 lakhs (Rs.50,000 + Rs.1000 per day x 92 days) plus Rs.5,000 per day till the date of compliance and there could be further action against promoters and directors of such companies.

In the subsequent 6-month period from 1st April 2015 until 30th September 2015, another 106 NSE-listed companies complied, leaving a balance of 100 non-compliant companies.

Since SEBI announced requirement for women directors, 969 women have been appointed to 1137 directorship positions in 1051 companies. Of these 1051 companies, 67 companies already had a woman on the board before the SEBI guideline was announced (and appointed a second woman director on their board), implying that 984 companies have since complied with the requirement. Within these 984 companies, 914 women have been appointed to 1062 directorship positions. At least 353 of these 1062 directorship positions (or 33 per cent) have been filled by non-independent women. On

an overall basis too, 721 of the 1670 directorship positions (or a huge 43 per cent) are occupied by non-independent women. Promoters have yet again made a mockery of law by bringing their wives, daughters and other female relatives on their boards. Typically, these women shall have the same voice as the promoter, defeating the very purpose of genuine (independent) gender diversity.

Mr. Haldea shared, some argued that there is nothing wrong in appointing relatives on the board (after all, male relatives have occupied board positions for years) in case they are competent. However, then such women should have found a place on the boards irrespective of the SEBI guidelines. In fact, even in the remaining cases where the woman has been classified as independent, most women would be either distant relatives or are wives, sisters of dear friends etc. Most of India Inc. still believes that compliance is enough in letter, not in spirit. Regrettably, no qualification or experience or other eligibility criteria mandated by law (like for any other director), making the non-compliance even more puzzling. Neither is there a requirement that such women should be independent.

After the recent appointments of women, there are currently 1,356 women presently occupying 1,668 directorship positions, representing 13 per cent of the total 12,370 directorship positions, up from 5 per cent in February 2014. Of these, more than half i.e. 658 women are holding 721 non-independent directorship positions. Only 36 companies have a woman chairperson/co-chairperson, of which nobody is an independent director.

Mr. Haldea also shared the situation in Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) and their Boards. According to WIPS (Forum on Women in Public Sector), out of 243 Central Public Sector undertakings with 21.08 lakhs employees, only 1.19 lakhs (or 5.6 per cent) are women and even out of that hardly 15,000 are in managerial and supervisory cadres. However, at the board level, the situation is even more grim - 658 individuals hold 697 directorship positions in 69 listed PSUs/PSBs. Of these 697 positions, 141 are independent. As far as the number of women directors is concerned, just 69 positions, or 9.90 per cent, in 49 companies occupied by 63 women. For Non-PSUs,



this percentage is 13.70 per cent. Of these 16 are independent and 52 are non-independent (status for 1 is unknown). 14 are executive, 54 are non-executive (status for 1 is unknown). 42 have been appointed subsequent to SEBI requirement.

As on 3rd February 2016, 58 companies out of a total 1486 companies (which had to comply with SEBI requirement) listed on NSE were still non-compliant with requirement of a women on their Boards. Of these 58 companies, 20 were PSUs (or 35 per cent). This includes high market cap companies like GAIL, IOC, ONGC, PFC, CCIL, REC and Syndicate Bank.

On a separate note, PSUs also rank extremely high on non-compliance in terms of the number of independent directors. 61 out of the 69 NSE-listed PSUs/PSBs (or 88 per cent) do not have the required number of independent directors. In fact, 22 PSUs/PSBs do not have even a single independent director. This too is only of listed companies. No data in public domain of unlisted companies which are non-compliant and no one is aware what action, if any, has been taken by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs against them for this non-compliance.

Although, penalty notices issued by SEBI for non-compliance with requirement for women on boards, however, no data is available yet on how many of the non-compliant companies actually paid up the amounts and in case they have not, what action has been taken by the regulators, especially against the directors and promoters. The PSUs have not been able to do much, as the appointment is not in the realm of the Boards but is in the respective Ministries.

Mr. Haldea opined that any kind of reservation on the boards is against the grains of sound business and only merit should count for the boards to deliver excellence. For example, in case of requirement for women directors, it has led to: (i) Qualified women not wanting to join boards as they do not wish to join only to fill a 'quota'; (ii) resentment from fellow male directors for a woman coming on board only to meet quota requirement; and (iii) reservation for women on board in PSUs, though, is not an entirely bad idea! At least, there

is no 'promoter' who shall misuse the law, and this can represent an opportunity for advancement of women.

He added, even on practical grounds, we strongly advocate inclusion of women on the boards as they provide diverse views, are more values-driven, bring decorum and discipline in the meetings, and most importantly, bring the perspective of the consumers; women account for more than half the purchasing action.

One sector where presence of women is very high is the Financial Sector (Banking, Mutual Funds, Insurance etc.). Of 233 companies in this space, there are 2309 individuals occupying 2744 directorship positions and of these, there are 238 women occupying 296 directorship positions.

Going forward, in order to achieve diversity, the mandate should at least require that the mandated woman director is independent. There is no shortage of competent women in the country. There are literally thousands of them in the financial, legal, HR and FMCG sectors; plus thousands in other useful sectors like research and academics.

**Mr. U D Choubey** started his presentation with a note that the independent directors are "dependable independent directors" as the company owners prefer known relationships. The PSUs have different structure all together. There are 290 PSUs in India –which are run through boards. The government nominates the directors from the concerned ministries. They are nominated from the rank of Joint Secretary and a class of civil servants which occupy the position of privileges. It gets influenced by the social and political agenda. These nominees need to carry the political agenda. The independent directors should not be biased. They should be the conscience keeper and should provide oversight to ensure that things are done ethically, transparently with integrity and without corruption. However, in reality, since these directors are related to the government it becomes difficult get independent judgement or understanding from them.



*Dr. U D Choubey speaking at Session I*

Of late, in the last few months there have been faster recruitments to fill in the backlogs. On a tongue in cheek note, Mr. Choubey said that the qualification of such independent directors ranged from defeated MLAs to Sanskrit teachers. However, given the diversity in such nominees, there is a need for capacity building in alignment with vision of the company. He anguished that there are very very women in the positions of functional directors. This is perhaps because of the difficulties in maintaining a balance between responsibilities at home and in work. Many a time the professional learning gets affected by the maternity and other family responsibilities. There are about 30 lakhs employees in the PSU with about 10 per cent women in the lowest rung. A board member requires to be served in the position of an executive director and many a time the women do not have such qualification. It, therefore, requires capacity building and succession planning for women in PSUs. SCOPE has started a lot of activities to support the women in senior management and has trained them how to become successful in organisation. For example, this year SCOPE will organise four programme on gender related issues – sexual harassment, and decent work, etc. WIPS – Women in Public Sector have four regional offices which also conducts similar programme.

### ***Discussion from the floor***

A number of issues were also raised from the floor:

- There should be a mechanism of measuring the voice of women on the board by way of evaluating the contribution of each member.
- Media should play a larger role in highlighting the issue; however, question should be asked that how many women members serve on the boards of media companies.
- In the absence of specified qualification, the quota for woman director on the board may not be much effective.

## **SESSION II: INNOVATIONS IN INSTITUTIONS**

***Moderator:*** Prof. L. David Brown, Former Senior Research Fellow, Hauser Centre for Non-profit Organisations, Harvard University, USA

### ***Speakers:***

- Ms. Indu Capoor, Founder Director, CHETNA, Ahmedabad
- Cdr. Pritika Sharma, Indian Navy, Kerala
- Ms. Lalita Ramdas, PRIA Governing Board Member

**Prof. L. David Brown** as the moderator, started the discussion by sharing his experiences on gender mainstreaming in institutions in the US. He drew on experiences of other colleagues from the US. There have been attempt to four ‘fixes’, as he called them, to make organisations engendered.

- ‘Fix the women’ – What are the skills needed for women to have equal opportunities in the organisations. One must have strategies that support women.
- Appreciate the differences. There may be different advantages that women can bring in the organisation. One of the studies done by Google on what makes teams effective basically highlights that someone who can facilitate in achieving the team goals by believing in the work that members are doing would have an impact; feeling of psychological safety, dependable and also believes in the work that they are doing. He opined that some of the skills may be widely distributed in women e.g. facilitation skills. He related this to ‘fix the men’ argument.

- ‘Fix the structures’ – we need to fix the structures / policies that systematically segregate women e.g. equal pay for equal work is a very big debate that has been currently going on in the US. He cited the example of a women executive (in a very senior position) who was offered a signing bonus which was ten times less than her male predecessor. He shared that sometimes change in laws do help in dealing with structural issues.
- ‘Fix the culture’ – he opined that this is particularly very challenging to change the culture that may give invisible advantages to some over others. It may not happen systematically, but it does happen. He expressed that coming in to work early and leaving late is an issue in organisations that may be fine till women don’t have dual responsibilities.

Prof. Brown emphasised that while choosing where to intervene first, two things must be kept in mind:

- It has to improve gender mainstreaming in organisations
- It has to advance major work of the organisation.



*Prof. L David Brown chairing Session II*

**Ms. Indu Kapoor**, in her presentation highlighted success story of CHETNA in its journey for engendering the organisation. She spoke about the culture, values and approaches that CHETNA fosters for empowerment of women. She emphasised that ‘gender’ is at the core of all the issues. She pointed out that CHETNA works on all the four fixes as highlighted by Prof. Brown. Creating conditions in organisations, where women can thrive and not try to be men. It is important that we focus on

natural processes/rhythm of a woman’s life. When women and men come to work with organisations, women come with low self-esteem. This is largely due to socialisation process of women. She emphasised that women and men negotiate differently too in their work spaces. Leadership has to be careful and sensitive to this fact and have to create structures accordingly. She shared that CHETNA tried to inculcate the practice of compassionate men and confident women.

She reiterated that organisations need to create structures which facilitate women’s working as they bring in values, empathy, and culture of accountability to the organisations. It is important that we must go extra mile if we must to build capacities of women and at the same time encouraging them to take on leadership positions. She concluded by saying that women need to remain unique and not try to be like men.

**Ms. Lalita Ramdas** while narrating her experience shared that, even before Vishakha Guidelines came into being, she was already talking about gender in the Indian Navy. It was early 90s when women’s movements in the country were taking shape and struggles against injustice existing in the society was being talked about. Through the efforts of Ms. Ramdas and some of her colleagues, Directorate of Naval Officers, Delhi issued a guide titled ‘Behavioural Science – Men, Women and Society – for Sailors’. She highlighted that Dr. Martha Farrell was among those who were part of this exercise which talked about gender.

She narrated that her personal trajectory of being a senior naval officer’s wife led her to look closely at some of the very formal and closed structures of services. These structures pushed her to look into the area of women’s rights and education etc. She took the gathering through a very important historical incident that happened in the US which was instrumental in induction of women in services. This incident is known as Tail hook incident. She emphasised on the point that it is very important that we need accountability and sensitivity at highest levels to make organisations gender equitable.



**Cdr. Pritika Sharma**, who is part of the education branch in Indian Navy, stated that she takes classes on gender mainstreaming and strongly believes that women are leaders. She feels that women are leaders for their children and families. She shared that there are very few women in Navy; around 500 to a many thousands men. She shared some other statistics from the Navy which has been breaking the ceiling since 1992 by inducting women in air traffic control, construction (building of ships), etc. There is also a proposal of women joining the combat positions.

She shared that despite many progressive changes, men, especially lower rank sailors, don't like taking orders from women officers. She shared that measures have been taken to create gender neutral environment in the Navy and making people aware about gender bias is one of the steps. While speaking about the committee to deal with cases of sexual harassment at workplace (SHW), she shared that Navy doesn't have an Internal Complaints Committee but they do have a Board and also naval laws that talk about issue of SHW. While closing her sharing, she stated that she always tells new women joiners never to let women in them die.

### ***Discussion from the floor***

Mr. Binoy Acharya stated that men and women come from different strata of society and this difference guides how they express themselves in the organisations. He opined that those coming from higher strata may make a noise in organisations. Middle strata would confirm but lower strata people don't say anything.

A question from the floor was related to implication of using the term 'gender neutral' in case of Navy and at the same time women are being told to retain the essence of being women. It was questioned how to make men in Indian Navy sensitive to gender mainstreaming.

Another concern from the floor was related to new hires. It was expressed that they may not be able to voice their concerns. So what are the channels to address this?

Taking cue from Prof. Brown's point on improving the outcome of organisational goals, it was emphasised that

gender mainstreaming would improve the outcomes that are important for the organisation. It was also stated that it is essential for organisations to be gender sensitive to grow and achieve more at the same time.

A very valid concern related to number of women in the organisation brought to the attention of the floor that saying 50:50 is not enough. We also need to closely look at the positions here. Are women holding important positions of decision making or they are only at the lower levels and make up for the numbers.

Cdr. Pritika while responding to some of the concerns highlighted that women have to contribute as individuals and not focus on as gender. She also emphasised on the point that related to socialisation of men. She stated that men, in her space of work, mostly come from all boys Sainik Schools. More often than not they can neither talk to women colleagues nor are comfortable with having women supervisors/ bosses. This isolation during initial years of socialisation also leads to their being sensitive to the biases that exist in society.

It was expressed that men come to workforce with expectations that they would still be nurtured and pampered whereas women come with low self esteem. Therefore, it is imperative to strike a balance in such situations. It was also suggested that women tend to give priorities to their families and it is impractical to assume that by just putting them in leadership positions would result in greater output.

Ms. Ramdas while responding to 'strata issue' pointed out that it is a very important issue. However, due to strict and very clear hierarchy in Indian Navy, and services for that matter, officers do not necessarily mix with persons from lower ranks. Each group leads its life differently. She hoped that over a period of time, it may evolve but as of now the structures are very rigid. Many of our systems are still based on caste/ class etc. While summing up it was emphasised that we need to chose an issue and work with it to achieve better results. Even in today's context it is very difficult to deal with issues of class/ caste, racism etc. but we need to start with whatever is feasible. She cited the case of having women in services in places like Iraq. She highlighted that

women are needed in such places to talk to half of the population. So such opportunities also support bringing in more women in different roles in services.



*Discussion from the floor*

Some of the key take aways as highlighted included:

- *Respecting the differences is very important* – women bring in their own strengths and energies to organisations. We must ensure that their capacities/ skills are build for them to take on different roles.
- *Fixing structures and culture* – the invisible advantages available to some should not pose as hindrance to women taking on leadership roles in the organisations. It could be ensured through gender sensitive laws and policies at the state as well as organisation level.
- *Capacity building for women* – organisations need to go extra mile to build skills and capacities of women for them to take on higher roles.
- *Women should not become men* – it was emphasised by speakers that women should not lose the essence of being women. We must understand that we are not aiming for them to behave like men do but continue to work with values, integrity and honesty that they bring in to organisations.

### SESSION III: INNOVATIONS IN POLICE SYSTEMS

**Moderator:** *Mr. Satinder Singh Sahni, IAS, Former Principal Resident Commissioner, Jammu & Kashmir Govt. & PRIA Governing Board Member, New Delhi*

**Speakers:**

- *Ms. Vimla Mehra, IPS, Special CP, Delhi Police, New Delhi*

- *Ms. S Ajeetha Begum, Principal, Police Training College, Kerala*
- *Ms. Maja Daruwala, Director, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Delhi*

**Mr. Satinder Singh Sahni**, as the moderator introduced the panel and set the stage for discussion by comparing police to a black box, which is difficult to unpack and understand, just like gender. He further went on to question if the police force perceived gender inequalities in our society. He stressed on the Nirbhaya case which was one of the turning points. This incident set the ball rolling for the importance of institutions and society at large to address the issue of violence against women. How far has the police, as an institution acknowledged the changes required in their system and what are the steps taken towards implementing these changes. It is important to understand the kind of changes which are needed for the police to be gender sensitive as a force itself.



*Mr. Satinder Singh Sahni chairing Session III*

**Ms. Maja Daruwala** in her opening statement clearly stated that there has been no innovation in engendering the police force. She accepted that change is difficult but we have to keep persevering. She laid emphasis on understanding institutional and individual biases. Institutional bias can be of manifolds. Bias can be for and against something. It comes out in operational procedures, policies, laws, attitudes and culture of the organisation. This stereotyping has a consequence on the way police responds.

There are two ways of looking at involvement of women in policing.

- How does a bias demonstrate itself for women who are in police? Women who face issues find it difficult to admit. She will not be in a position to articulate the same to someone within the institution. Within the organisation, she has to have another face because she has to get on with her work. She is overburdened to behave like a police man.
- This bias is a way of fashioning women into the culture that exists, assuming that the culture that exists is okay and she must fit in. The culture also fashions her response to the client group which is public at large, particularly the women. To further elaborate the same, she gave the example of Dalits. One hears how they are responded to by the police, judiciary and criminal justice system. It is vital to understand how this institutional bias actually creates the response to women.

She shared some eye opening statistics. According to the existing policy, women in police should be 30 per cent. But different states show different statistics. According to the NCRB figures, the entire police force has only 6 per cent police force. Proving that the glass ceiling syndrome is still very much prevalent in the system, she shared that out of these 6 per cent women police, 81 per cent and over is at constabulary level, 1 per cent at Officer Cadre - Inspector level and above, sub inspectors, assistant inspectors. Another 1 per cent is in the ranks of ASP, AIGs, DSP, DIG, IS, DGP and a mere 0.2 per cent is at DG rank. These statistics share a story. The women are intimidated, harassed, feared and looking for coping mechanism. The coping mechanisms can be:

- Staying below the radar: accepting the subordination
- Become part of the boys
- Become utterly aggressive

She shared that this approach has been creating either slave or superior and not looking at the problem with view to equality. The men in higher hierarchy who are responsible to change policing system often say that policing is a dangerous job for women as they are weak

and are at the needing end. Hence, to prove power, these women end up being aggressive.

She emphasised that having women in policing is not to have men with breasts. We have to change the entire culture, attitude, policies of the police to accommodate women as equals. It should be recognised that there is a need for women in policing. It is not women who need policing; it is the police that need women. She reiterated that it is important to have women in leadership roles in the police at all different levels as it will not only to change the culture of the police but create within police, the kind of police that we want, the police that the democracy deserves rather than the police we have at present. For the police to follow its duty, it is important that we need policing that community can trust. For that there has to be diversity in the police. Diversity by itself is a value which must be demonstrated within the police. She ended by saying that if you break down policing today, law and order is not a big part of policing, investigation, empathy with community, beat policing, going to court, knowing offense, dealing with public. Most of the responsibilities need brains, rather than muscles which goes on to show that women can play equal role as men in the police force.

**Ms. Vimla Mehra** shared her experience of being one of the first women in higher rank in the police force in the late 70s. She said that male colleagues were inquisitive and unsure how she will react. Subordinate were more receptive to her. She got more respect from subordinates than colleagues or senior officers. One of the biggest challenges she faced was being constantly under a microscope. Supervisors were suspicious about the quality of work. The women had to be careful in of their behaviours. She experienced a culture where talking to men openly and working was not acceptable. Though now things are changing but not so encouraging.

Stating that gender mainstreaming is a difficult task, she shared that in 2015, central government came with order for Delhi and NCR which stated that 33 per cent of the new recruitments should be women. Mainstreaming on women in policing required the support of senior officers but they were resisting entry of women on police force. When cases of rape/molestation are filed, there is

tremendous shortage of women officers. Pressure and burden is tremendous on them which results in poor performance. She gave a striking example of how women also do not take up challenging roles in police because of the lack of support within the system and from their families. Delhi police has a policy of taking interview of the candidates before posting them as SHOs. In these interviews, women respond differently. They shared that taking up this post would be difficult as this would mean staying away from home for seven days at a stretch and also cited health issues. She blamed this attitude on the fact that women are not trained to take up roles and responsibilities. Only 40 per cent said that they would take up the post of SHO, while the others said no stating reasons as health, family and children's issues. She has put pressure on the senior staff to hire women to drive PCR vans as this will encourage other women but this was discouraged as they feared molestation. Currently 400 women are put on PCR vans. She emphasised on the point that until we don't put women in such roles, they will never be comfortable and will not accompany their colleagues. There is a need for women to reach the commando stage.



*Ms. Vimla Mehra, IPS, speaking at Session III*

These instances call for an inclusive policy. She reiterated that it is not the job of only women to work for women's empowerment but of both men and women. She gave an example of all women's police station. Having an exclusive women police station does not mean openness. It has to be inclusive policing.

She ended her session by sharing that it is important for women to come in a platform collectively and address issues and demand their rights. Due to the perseverance of women in policing; we have national police women's conference in India which happened every two years. Another initiative is a WhatsApp group of around 50 IPS women officers in Delhi. On regular basis, they communicate information in professional and personal matters.

**Ms. S Ajeetha Begum** shared that in current situation, her fellow male police officers are encouraging and don't expect the women to prove themselves. The main problem lies in the lower ranks for which she blames lack of inclusive training for men and women. She gave the example of J&K where both men and women train together while in Kerala, there are separate cadres for men and women.

She further agreed with Ms. Mehra on the need to appoint women in senior positions. She shared her experience of appointing a women police officer as SHO of a police station in Kerala. During her tenure there was a decrease in crime rate and recovery rate was also good. But initiatives like these are challenging as they are not supported by the politicians who are the policy makers. They find it difficult to deal with women as it is not easy to ask for illegal or unholy favours from women hence men retain stations for many years.

Sharing the example of Kerala, currently there are 10 per cent women officers as compared to 2.5 per cent women four years back. The ultimate goal is to reach 30 per cent. The government has planned fund allocation for police which includes gender training for constables. But the syllabus talks about laws pertaining to crime against women and children which they already know. What is missing is how to work with women. Having a two-day gender workshop is not the solution for the same nor is celebrating International Women's Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March, every year. What is required in building leadership qualities and feminism in everyday life, especially the women.



### *Discussion from the floor*

Dr. Ravi Verma reflected on how police is dealing with masculinity. Any attempt to bring out a discourse within the police is faced with stiff resistance from the core character of the institution. He questioned the panel on whether there are any specific drives towards working with police to question their manliness. He further suggested that it should be done by challenging the idea of what it is like to be a man. It should not mean at the cost of diluting the toughness part what we need to give a police man.

Ms. Mehra shared that masculinity has nothing to do with policing. It is important that one is fit and alert. Police has to be more inclusive to both sexes. More women should be brought into the police force. He also shared that sexual harassment committees exist but the hierarchy is such that no woman comes forward.

Ms. Lalita Ramdas shared that it is the police force and related forces who come directly in touch with public. We tend to glorify militarism, masculinity and macho behaviour. We have to demystify and unpack these terms. It is important that each one tries and understand what it's doing. We have to keep up with time and have reforms as per the need of the hour.

Mr. Ashok Singh questioned the significance of all women's police stations. The panel as a whole shared that they were against all women's police stations as they do not support inclusivity. Ms. Ajeetha shared about a study done by an NGO in Tamil Nadu which covered 197 all women police stations. The study showed that women felt more free and comfortable to go to normal police stations rather than all women's police stations as they felt it was difficult to share only with women. She also shared on the initiatives of Kerala Government which is undertaking self-defense for women and girls. But along with this, from next year onwards, men will be sensitised about various laws pertaining to women such as under section 294 section, if someone looks at you in an inappropriate manner, he can be punished with up to three months of imprisonment.

## **SESSION IV: INNOVATIONS IN PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS**

**Moderator:** *Dr. Punam Sahgal, Vice President, National Institute for Smart Governance*

### **Speakers:**

- *Ms. Vidya Santhanam (MindTree)*
- *Prof. Arjya Chakravarty, Programme Chair, School of Inspired Leadership (SOIL), Gurgaon*

Dr. Punam Sahgal's through her presentation drew attention to the issue of sexual harassment at the workplace. Having completed a research study on Sexual Harassment in Corporate India, she concluded that "corporate India is experiencing a problem as far as SHW is concerned". The objective of her research was to gather data from women employees in order to understand the scale and depth of its existence within the private sector. While reiterating her point that "it is difficult to get people to acknowledge that sexual harassment at workplace exists", she recounted that only 200 women responded out of 800 whom she sent the questionnaire.

The study findings indicated that while 42 per cent women had not heard of Sexual Harassment at Workplace, 15 per cent reported the experience of being harassed. 15 in every hundred women she alerted was a big number and that too when it is widely known that women often do not even acknowledge that they have been harassed.

30 per cent of these 15 per cent women who acknowledged of being harassed participated further in depth interviews. The study indicated that women experience various kinds of harassment in the workplace; it happens at all levels irrespective of the levels of education, background, age or marital status. Divorced and separated women were more likely to be sexually harassed and three out of five divorced women reported having been sexually harassed. It also indicated that while seniors were also harassed, it was the freshers who were more likely to be harassed. The perpetrators of sexual harassment experienced by these women were senior, married men who were often very high



performers. When women asked their harassers why they were behaving this way with them, the response was, “remember it is me who is doing your performance appraisal”.



*Dr. Punam Sahgal moderating Session IV*

These men were under the impression that women who were friendly, smoked, who were outgoing and wore western attire gave the impression that she might be willing to accept a man’s advances.

“Women tend to underplay their grievances” according to Dr. Sahgal. Women deal with sexual harassment in several different ways. Either they start discounting their experiences and do not label it as harassment until much later. One woman shared that a male colleague had showed her lewd pictures. When things like these start happening, women start giving concessions to men to behave in this way. The first woman was quick to add that it was only for a minute or that he only did it under the influence of alcohol. Many of the respondents were grappling with the gnawing feeling of guilt trying to understand what they did to get harassed in this manner. They asked themselves repeatedly if they instigated it, or if they should have been more vigilant. One woman shared that her colleague had misbehaved with her while giving her a lift one day on her way back from work. And she cannot shake off the feeling that perhaps she had invited it by sitting in his car. But this could also be seen she said to be one of the ways that women safeguard themselves. While the study discovered that women prefer not getting into legal hassles and hassles of registering a complaint with their

own Internal Committees; 7 out of the 15 women described how they went to the complaints committee and made sure that the perpetrators were brought under justice.

SHW is not an event, Dr. Sahgal opined, it is the everydayness of the incident that a woman has to grapple with that is difficult for her. Women do look for support and it is often from their fathers, brothers and male colleagues. Often, it was the mothers and female colleagues who expressed caution at times like this; female colleagues were uncaring and were doubtful of the experiences of the women. The advice given was that they should not complain if it is not physical.

The study also included a discussion with 12 HR heads and 12 heads of various private organisations. All the HR heads were females. The alarming findings of this discussion indicate that there was a tendency among these senior HR women to think that the law actually gave women an undue advantage. They were of the opinion that they were losing out on very high performers because of this law. They also felt that as SHW is difficult to prove and as there is no way to know if the incident actually happened, “the poor man has to be transferred or dismissed”. One of these organisations was a PSU. The head of this organisation ensured that all the posters on sexual harassment were removed from his workplace as he did not want women to get the wrong impression.

**Ms. Vidya Santhanam** is the head of Organisational and Leadership Development in Mind Tree. Mind Tree Limited, founded in 1999, is an Indian multinational information technology and outsourcing company headquartered in Bengaluru, India and New Jersey.

At the beginning of her session, Ms. Santhanam explained that gender mainstreaming is a priority for Mind Tree. She explained that the practices are a combination of 25 years of the learnings of Mind Tree. For Mind Tree, gender diversity in the workplace has been more than policies or programmes, but rather about shaping mind sets. It’s focus on gender diversity began in 1999 and gender became a priority issue in 2004. The focus on gender mainstreaming has been

viewed by the organisation as an investment. The investments have been around making policy, infrastructure and leadership management. The policies have a strong focus on the health and safety of women. The company has invested in cabs to make sure that women are provided safe services to go back home when working late. The organisational policy allows staff to bring their children to work. Though this service is available for both male and female, it is widely used by the female staff. Some thoughtful investments of infrastructure have been the addition of transparent walls in meeting rooms. Nurturing and mentoring leadership in women has strongly focused upon by the organisation. Gender audit of the organisation is a regular feature and is carried out periodically.

**Prof. Arjya Chakravarty** has been an HR professional in the corporate sector, is a researcher on gender and is a member of School of Inspired Leadership (SOIL). SOIL is a break through innovation in “Higher Education” that aims to build leaders with character, competence and enthusiasm. It was co-created by a team of thoughtful business leaders and companies that believed that ‘conscience’ businesses can contribute to making our world better.<sup>1</sup>

Impressing on the same, Prof. Chakravarty reiterated that business schools therefore have an important role in shaping this way of thinking in the students so that over a period of time, the pipeline of leaders in organisations is staffed with people who think, relate and act in ways that make the world better.

“I believe in equality” and “equality in society is the only way to lead equality in the workplace”, she opined. She shared two stories with the audience, one of her childhood and the other of herself as a young management student. In the first, she recounted how she had always been exposed to a gender equal family life and therefore believed in equality. In the other story she recounted how she and her classmate (both females) were selected by Hindustan Motors through a campus recruitment drive. The company took a long time in getting back to the two of them and finally when they

were called, they were surprised to hear loud construction noises from the direction of their newly appointed offices. They learned that they were the first female employees and the organisation was now building separate washrooms for the two female entrants. It was a pleasant experience for both of them and made the organisational stand on gender clear for them.

However, she added, the experience of interactions with the other colleagues was not the same. The aim for gender equality is not winning the battle of the sexes she said, rather, it is a matter of not feeling disempowered and of being treated equal to the men. One of the things that strikes her today, she added is that when one is a fresher at their first job, it is difficult to comprehend what is happening to her, because she is just about having to get used to functioning in a formal workplace. What happens she asks when there are no policies and forums to complain.

Recounting her early days of working in her first job and after it, she remembered how she used to work till past midnight and because there were no policies that considered the safety and security of female staff, her husband would spend most of these nights waiting for her on the couch of the reception area.

Prof. Chakravarty stated that according to McKinsey’s Global Institute Report, September 2015:

- Gender equality is not only the right thing to do but also the smart thing. That’s why more CEOs, heads of state, and university leaders, across the world, are committing themselves to gender-equality goals for the institutions they lead.
- McKinsey Global Institute’s report (Sept. 2015) on ‘The power of parity’ which establishes that advancing women’s equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth.
- As per this report, India has a larger relative economic value at stake from advancing gender equality than any of the ten regions analysed. It states that India could add \$700 billion of additional GDP in 2025, upping the country’s annual GDP growth by 1.4 percentage points.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.soilindia.net/>

She added that the United Nations Human Development Report (HDR) 2015 ranks India at 130 out of 155 countries in the Gender Inequality Index (GII). India trails behind most Asian countries, including lesser developed Bangladesh and Pakistan which rank 111 and 121 respectively, and fares not much ahead of war-ravaged Afghanistan at 152. The GII reflected gender-based inequalities on three vital parameters: reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity.

Global Gender Gap Index seeks to measure the relative gaps between women and men across four key areas: health, education, economy and politics. According to the Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum) of 145 countries, no country in the world has fully closed the gender gap, but four out of the five Nordic countries and Ireland have closed more than 80 per cent of it. Yemen, the lowest ranking country has closed over 48 per cent of the gender gap. The Index points also to potential role models by naming those countries that – within their region or income group – are leaders distributing resources more equitably between women and men, regardless of the overall level of available resources.

Prof. Chakravarty opined that there should be gender equality in the workplace even before gender neutrality. According to her, the root cause of gender inequality is fear in both women and men; curbing of financial independence and Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace. She added that according to a FICCI-EY November 2015 report, 36 per cent of Indian companies and 25 per cent among MNCs are not compliant with the Sexual Harassment Act, 2013.

She went onto reiterate that gender equality can be achieved by:

- Ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life (United Nations).
- Adopting and strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality (United Nations).
- CEOs, heads of state, and institutional leaders need to commit themselves and their organisations

to specific gender equality goals for the institutions they lead and be persistent in their efforts.

- Removing the obstacles that hold women back at work. Speaking about hurdles should not be a taboo.
- Making gender equality a part of mission statements in organisation.
- Constituting committees to address sexual harassment at workplace. The committee must also look at inequality cases.
- Education system must be made more accountable.
- Media has to play a more responsible role.
- Both men and women should take responsibility.

## SESSION V: INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

*Moderator: Dr. Ravi Verma, Regional Director-Asia, International Centre for Research on Women, New Delhi*

### *Speakers:*

- *Ms. Rittika Chanda Parruck, Deputy Director, Education and Society, British Council, New Delhi*
- *Dr. Jayshree Oza, Team Leader, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, MHRD, Gol, New Delhi*
- *Fr. Joseph Manipadam, Secretary to Education and Culture, Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, New Delhi*

**Dr. Ravi Verma** as the moderator started the discussion by saying that masculinity has been an integral part of gender construct but it has not been discussed in the manner it should have been. He further added that we were always busy in raising voices for women because the men already had their own space in the society, therefore, the main aim was to create and negotiate spaces for women. Thus the debate went down to men vs women.

His discussion was followed by a video clip. The idea behind the video was to question men's mind set where they introspect their own sense of entitlement and begin to dismantle the power they think have inherited which actually does not naturally belong to them. He further said that as compared to other sectors, the educational setting is far more complex because the gender

pedagogy is not in sync with the educational institutes' pedagogy which is very hierarchal and top down.



*Dr. Ravi Verma moderating Session V*

**Ms. Rittika Chanda Parruck** started her presentation by sharing the findings of a policy dialogue which was conducted by British Council in January 2015 titled *“Women in higher education leadership in South Asia.”* The dialogue was based on a research study, the purpose of which was to generate debate and discussion on this issue and to construct recommendations for future actions and interventions within the higher education sector to encourage women to take up leadership positions. This research explored the situation of women in higher education by reviewing literature, policies and change interventions in six different countries. Some of the findings she shared were:

- There is a very poor record on gender quality in educational institutions. These institutions are much more worried about the quality and the statistics that rank universities rather than gender equality.
- There are powerful leaders at the school level, but when one gets to higher education, there is a dramatic drop in the number of these leaders.
- The perception of leadership is that it requires more time, focus and dedication but women who aspire to be leaders are often in conflict with their other social demands such as household and children's responsibilities. They often put these societal demands first rather than pursuing leadership roles.

She gave recommendations on how to get around with these barriers so that women take up leadership roles as follows:

- By making and implementing institutional policies which have affirmative actions.
- Women needs spaces where they can relax and can think beyond the competition with men and peers.
- The institutions should focus on family friendly interventions and mentorship, both informal and formal, which plays a huge role in developing leadership.

Lastly she added her personal anecdote to this session. She got CSIR fellowship in 1996 but she could not complete her research. The fellowship required overseas research but she was unable to leave her husband and baby behind to pursue her career. She concluded the session by saying that this situation is faced by many women but what can be done about it?

**Dr. Jayshree Oza** initiated her session by putting up a question:

*“When did you realise in childhood that you are a girl/boy therefore can do this and that?”*

The various responses came from the audience:

- Dr. Rajesh Tandon said that he realised this difference during his annual function in school when he was in grade 5<sup>th</sup>. The girls and boys were involved in different set of activities. The activities that were chosen for girls were different from that of boys.
- Dr. Sudharshana Kundu's, realization took place much later when she was 18. She used to do knitting, stitching, cooking, etc. which her brother never did.
- Dr. Sakshi Saini's realisation of disparity happened much early at the age of 4. When her teacher did not allow her to wear trousers in the playschool as she was a girl.

Summing up these responses, she shared that gender stereotype starts from a very young age and educational institutions also play a major role in it. From here she moved her focus on women leadership in secondary educations systems. She said the schools are the first institutional set up where a child goes and learns. Along with the educational curriculum, there exists a hidden

curriculum which in a subtle manner effects one's behaviour, mind set and decision making.

Women leadership in public domain is often seen as the proxy to the number of women empowered in the society. In schools, largely the Science, Mathematic and Physical Training teachers are males which clearly indicate gender disparity within the system. She also pointed out that 70 per cent of the principals are males and there is an unwritten practice which is being followed where a woman can become a principal in girl's school rather than in co-education school. She also went on to share an example. Since the head of the Cluster Resource Centre (CRC) need to visit field on regular basis, it is presumed that it will be difficult for women hence men are preferred for this role. She further added that the young girls themselves have said that it is not aspirational to become a teacher but is practical thing to do.

**Fr. Joseph Manipadam** shared some of the major points in the CBCI (Catholic Bishops' Conference of India) Education Policy:

- It states that the catholic educational institutions are to provide inclusive and holistic education, especially to marginalised and girls and enabling them to live their life.
- Provide education to the girl child, especially to those belonging to socially backward class. It also emphasises on providing administrative and financial accountability to them.

The main learning from this policy is to appreciate the differences (colour, race and gender). He further taught us to accept and celebrate the differences in the society.

### **Discussions from the floor**

- There is a need to create a pedagogy which can educate gender equality within the education system. This pedagogy should be action-oriented rather than cerebral oriented.
- It is not just men who are pushing the women down. Society is actually conditioning them for a particular profession and lifestyle.

- Sometimes women, who do not have power push, themselves push young women/ girls into perpetuating gender disparity.

### **SESSION: WAYS FORWARD**

**Moderator:** *Ms. Sheela Patel, Founder Director, Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centre (SPARC), Mumbai; and Chairperson, PRIA*

#### **Reflections:**

- *Dr. Sudarshana Kundu, Country Director, Gender at Work India, Hyderabad*
- *Ms. Pramila Agarwal, Professor, George Brown College, Canada*
- *Dr. Brian Pratt, Founder Director, INTRAC, UK*

**Ms. Sheela Patel**, as the moderator asked the question that in light of two days' discussion what the participants would want the Martha Farrell Foundation to do? She also encouraged everyone to volunteer to be a champion for this work and support the Foundation to carry out some of these works.

**Dr. Sudarshana** referred to Prof. Brown's "fixing framework", and said this is the kind of work what they do at Gender at Work. She also provided a framework for future action, as follows:

Access to resources and opportunities that many of the private sector talks about giving women benefits. There is lot less focus on consciousness and capability and social cultural practices. There have been many initiatives on formal changes – creating policies, infrastructure, maternity leave, women's leadership programme, but discussions on the cultural domain is a gap. The discussion on power, patriarchy and privilege is missing from organisational change. Discussions are about men and women from a particular class – upper class urban women and the discussions stop here. Rarely do we talk about the privileges and situations of women across the board. We really do not hold organisations accountable for the extended supply chain. For example, the issues of time based worker and unorganised sector are not brought into the discussions and debates.





*Ms. Sheela Patel moderating the Session on Ways Forward*

For the corporate sector, their discussions are around IT – rarely about factory and shop floors. Corporate understanding on gender equality is missing, they tend to look at it in binary – can we retain women – is the main agenda. CSOs are very happy doing gender equality for their partners, but for themselves there is a pushback – they do not look at gender mainstreaming for their own organisations. Most CSOs in India don't have a gender policy – we don't do gender audit for our own organisations. How are we going to hold CSOs accountable for these things?

We are missing the voices of younger men and women – older feminists have become gate keepers for opinions. Workplaces are changing dramatically, the aspirations that the younger generations are experiencing and expressing gender equality differently. At 24, they are looking at work life balance, something that we thought about only much later. They are asking the question: how do you engender the workplace for us – instead of us saying we will engender your workplaces for you. In a study that we had conducted earlier, we found that 50 per cent organisation had less than 30 per cent women in their workforce; 62 per cent had no child care facilities – if they had, then it was only at the head quarter level - rarely did they have at the lower levels. She also suggested some levers for intervention:

- As a collective we have to learn how to use data much better;
- Use of spaces for reflection, learning (this dialogue was one of them) and dialogues within and outside own institutions;
- How to create groups of women?

- Supporting the “warriors from within” – how to reach out to and connect to them.

Senior leadership is often blocking us from making those changes: How to work with senior leadership across sectors. Many people are doing research – we are doing one part of it. Let's join hands to do research. MFF could be the secretariat or the clearing house for such researches and it can disseminate the research findings and publications. We should form groups of diversity heads and bring them here for discussions and reflections; this would be for people who want to bring change but don't know how to. For corporates, we are outsiders and us telling them what to do – it won't fly! Apex organisations have to be involved and take the lead. We could bring sets of CSO together to look at their own experiences.

**Ms. Pramila Agarwal** reflected on what is to be done about SHW, VAW, Masculinities, in the face of capitals – the kind of economic structures which values competition against cooperation – can they coexist? We need to question how we want to use research? She added the following points:

- Affirmation of the experiences of men and women
- How to identify forms of violence (what is the impact of good research – it affirms the experiences of many women)
- Case based research needs to continue – has good intention and can be extended.
- Temporary agency workers are biggest ways of getting employment for women in Canada. One in four jobs are temporary and are done through temporary agencies so that the actual employer doesn't have to put any of these practices.

We need to create spaces where people can speak out. I saw in Najafgarh in a project supported by MFF. Seven girls have been trained between 17 and 20 years of age. A young girl said, instead of keeping an eye on us – our parents should keep an eye on their boys. Why are you watching us? Let us study, let us move ahead. Trust us, why don't you trust us? She was crying. Her pain was painful but her courage was even more moving. One girl

wants to be a police officer – she was there with her grandfather who was very supportive of her.

In Sonepat we saw the importance of social learning – how youth have developed these self-advocacy skills – to go to a bureaucrat to fill an application and go ahead. This is rights based understanding - understanding rights and understanding how to get them. Understanding how to work in a larger environment not meant to advance you. Coalition building as opposed to a single individual – build coalitions on issues is a key.

**Dr. Brian Pratt** reflected that he has managed organisations for most of his life in senior positions. He asked for a consistency between the private and the public. It has to start with education. In most of Europe girls have started doing better than boys in schools. However, higher education and skill education is largely dominated by boys. Lot of working women in Russia are involved care giving jobs. After the collapse of Soviet Union, men moved into being managers of private sectors from being managers of public sectors. There was no space for the women. Men have generations of baggage – we just assume that we are going to rule the world – the assumption is as thick as stew. A Guardian study clearly pointed out the pay gap in the UK – between the incomes of men and women. 50 per cent women said they lacked the confidence for asking for more pay. Men push for more. Women would never do that. We need to build confidence in organisations among women. He added, many a time, women need to find the right allies – find the right male allies – find the battles you can fight. He joined in the fight with the other women in Oxfam to fight for a crèche and the first baby in the crèche just happened to be his daughter. He said that longer term human resource development has to be made. We need role models – celebrate the role models. We need more of women positive role models and celebrate them. We have the first Vice Chancellor in 800 years in Oxford University. There has to be a zero tolerance to bullying and sexual harassment and there is a need for grievance redressal procedures that works and a commitment. We must have spaces to celebrate our differences, and find areas of traction – where one can find an open door.

**Mr. Jagadananda** raised the point of disconnection among CSOs and lack of clarity. He was of the view that the Foundation should work towards a collective agenda where it could look at vision, mission and operational deficiencies on this issue. He also opined that it was important to build critical mass of change agents who have necessary understanding and tools to take it forward. He also spoke about missing pieces in the discussions during this meeting which is women working in the agriculture. He felt that there is a need to ally with institutions who have been working on this issue. He cited examples of local governance institutions. He concluded by raising the point of building strong coalitions of institutions where these changes are based.

**Dr. Yogesh Kumar** questioned as to how do we want to shape up MFF? He was of the opinion that we should not peg MFF only on gender issues but rather larger issues of how do we democratise this issue. He also raised the issue of CASH (Committee Against Sexual Harassment) and that there is a need to promote CASH in corporates. He also raised the issue of building capacities of women who were competent enough to take on leadership roles in the organisations. The institutional audit, from gender lens, could be an annual feature which could look into issues related to gaps in pay among others and he highlighted this point by citing hospitals as an example. He also spoke about overlapping of functions between PRIA and MFF. For example, who would take lead in programmes such as leadership of women in PRIs and who would follow?

**Prof. L. David Brown** spoke about fifth fix here. Fix the alliances. He said that there could be internal alliances with top leaders within the institutions. Also, alliances with other groups who work with marginalised. External alliances could be like Tail Hook kind of examples. Although it happened in the US but brought about certain changes in the Indian Navy. He opined that we need to look at more such examples from around the world. He was of the opinion that alliances have the capability.

Ms. Ramdas cautioned the audience by stating that our laundry list should not be so long that it becomes impossible to meet the expectations. She was of the

view that all the suggestions received during deliberations were very valid but we need to prioritise. This should be done by looking at our strengths, personnel etc. She was of the opinion that we now need to sit down and do a realistic analysis of our competencies and what all we can take on. First of all, there is a need to collate information on what is happening around the country on this issue. With regard to alliances she opined if we can just analyse the content of gender training being done by others. She also suggested of material being translated into local languages since most of it, currently, is in English. She also suggested that we should focus our energies on smaller town since metros are already overloaded. She was of the opinion that real changes may come from smaller towns. She also spoke about reviving of ToTs.

**Mr. Binoy Acharya** said that we are good at preparing learning material. We need to make the balance between use of tools and knowledge.

**Ms. Sheela Patel** opined that MFF has a lot of well wishers. One of the biggest challenges would be how to harness it. There are amazing possibilities but start with efforts which are modest and robust. Make them strong and steady and it will work.

The workshop ended with thanking note from Dr. Rajesh Tandon.

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Dr. U D Choubey  
Director General  
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