At the heart of the 2030 Agenda: Role of Local Governments in Achieving the SDGs

While the SDGs are global, their achievement depend on our ability to make them a reality in our cities and regions. All SDGs have targets directly related to the responsibilities of local governments, particularly in ensuring delivery of basic services, in realizing the mandate of truly leaving no one behind.

Changemakers in Local Governments: Role of women in inclusive and responsive governance

- Women’s inclusion in public decision making not only realizes national commitments towards achieving gender equality (SDG 5) but also positively impacts other development indicators.
- Women’s representation in local governments can make a positive difference to the socio-economic, development and environmental conditions, as women leaders are likely to bring a more inclusive approach in delivery of public goods and services.
Gender Equality for Good Governance

The India model of Local Governance: Panchayati Raj Institutions

- The Government of India recognizes Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) as local self-governments.
- The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) in 1993; which also enabled affirmative action for women’s political participation by reserving one third of all elected seats in Local Governments for women.
- One of the most recent and critical initiatives is the devolution of funds directly to local governments and the accompanying requirement for local governments to formulate village level plans – the Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP).
- Targeting the most marginalized and development deficit districts through the aspirational district development strategy.

This has brought in transformation in the socio milieu in villages, especially those where the Chairperson of Gram Panchayat (Sarpanch) is woman. The transformation is perceptible in Gram Panchayats through:

- Increased Women Participation
- Increased sanitation coverage
- Improved Girl Child education
- Improved immunisation
- Improved Women-centric employment opportunities including skill development of women and girls
- Gram Panchayat obtained ISO Standard in management processes:
- Increased Own Source Revenue:
- Bridging the digital divide through mobile computer training institute:
- Motivating and orienting schoolgirls on their rights, campaign against Purdha/Ghunghat (veil) system, against prohibition
- Application of e-governance, digital literacy and deploying paperless office.
- Use of Right to Information (RTI) as a medium of social audit.
- Improved and increased coordination, collaboration and convergence of Gram Panchayat with women collectives – the Self-Help Groups.

The Panchayati Raj (Indian Rural Local Governance) system

- 70% of India’s population of 1.36 Billion resides in rural India
- 2.5 million Gram Panchayats (Village Councils) under the local governance mechanism
- 1.37 million women leaders driving the Panchayat system on the ground constituting 44.2% of total elected leaders in rural local governance; the largest globally

Devolution of funds:

- 228% increase in Central Commission funds to be released directly to Village Councils to the tune of INR 8.5 Million (USD 123,000) per council for five years.

Community participation in planning. Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Local Governance) launched Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP)- to be developed by the community at the village level for utilizing the Central funds.

An opportunity for community members especially the most marginalized to have a voice in effective and equitable delivery of public services.
Side Event at the 74th UN General Assembly

Organized by Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India and UN Women

30 September 2019 at 13:15 hours to 14:30 hours

UN Women and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Local Governance) of the Government of India are convening an event on the sidelines of the 74th UN General Assembly, to showcase the model of local governance in India, rooted in its constitution; and the affirmative action that has resulted in 1.37 million women leaders, the largest number globally, working towards the socio-economic betterment of rural India that will ultimately be key in achieving the SDGs nationally and globally.

The dialogue will discuss the role of women leaders in local governance as changemakers. It is a forum to share global best practices and cross-learning, will benefit its key stakeholders in adapting best practices to their national and sub-national policies.

The forum will demonstrate the Indian model of democratic local governance and results of affirmative action in promoting women in decision making.

It will also be a platform to identify innovative institutional mechanisms that have delivered on the objective inclusive and responsive local governance.

**Agenda:**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>13:15-14:30</td>
<td>Presentation and discussion on the Panchayati Raj Institutions (The Indian Rural Local Governance system) with focus on:</td>
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<td>• inclusive planning and decision making</td>
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<td>• Institutional mechanisms to establish responsive governance</td>
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<td>• innovative mechanism for convergence, empowerment and decision making</td>
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