



## Women Leaders as Changemakers

### Gender Equality for Good Governance

*Side Event at the 74th UN General Assembly*

30 September 2019 at 13:15-14:40 hours

#### 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.



### 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 74<sup>th</sup> 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:

Time	Session Details
13:15-14:30	<p>Presentation and discussion on the Panchayati Raj Institutions (The Indian Rural Local Governance system) with focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• inclusive planning and decision making</li><li>• Institutional mechanisms to establish responsive governance</li><li>• innovative mechanism for convergence, empowerment and decision making</li></ul>