

INVITATION



UNLOCKING INDIA'S WOMEN DIVIDEND

Accelerating the Journey from Education
to Economic Empowerment

10.00 AM TO 01.00 PM
FRIDAY, 6 TH MARCH 2026
MMA MANAGEMENT CENTER

THE PLATFORM

India has witnessed a significant rise in women's enrolment in higher education over the past decade. In several disciplines, women now constitute nearly half—or more—of graduating cohorts. Yet, this educational progress has not translated proportionately into workforce participation, sustained employment, or leadership representation.

A critical but under-recognised constraint in this transition from education to employment is access to safe, affordable, and enabling urban accommodation—particularly for women migrating from Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns and rural areas.

For many first-generation urban migrants, the decision to accept a job offer is shaped not only by salary or role, but by the availability of secure housing, proximity to workplace, affordability of rent, and social support systems. High rental costs, safety concerns, restrictive private accommodation practices, and lack of institutional housing options often deter or delay women's entry into formal employment. In some cases, these barriers lead to early career discontinuation.

Recognising housing as economic infrastructure—rather than merely a welfare provision—is essential to unlocking India's women dividend.

BACKGROUND

The conclave seeks to examine the structural link between women's urban migration, accommodation access, and economic mobility. Drawing upon a research study on Working Women's Hostels in Tamil Nadu, including the Thozhi Hostel model operating under a Public-Private Partnership framework, the discussions aim to:

- Understand housing as a determinant of women's workforce participation
- Examine institutional models that support safe and affordable accommodation
- Assess the impact of hostel infrastructure on autonomy, retention, productivity, and career progression
- Identify policy gaps and opportunities for scaling such models nationally

The report includes insights from online surveys, resident profiles, qualitative interviews, and a deep dive into the Chennai metropolitan context, culminating in policy recommendations.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- India stands at a demographic crossroads. Enhancing female labour force participation is not only a social imperative but an economic necessity. Even modest increases in women's workforce participation can significantly boost GDP, household incomes, and intergenerational mobility.
- For women from Tier 2 and Tier 3 geographies, urban migration represents aspiration, independence, and economic transformation. However, without enabling infrastructure, particularly safe accommodation, this aspiration often encounters structural friction.
- This conclave positions working women's hostels and urban housing policy as catalytic enablers of economic empowerment.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The conclave aims to generate actionable recommendations for:

- State and Central Government Ministries
- Urban Development and Housing Authorities
- Corporates and Industry Bodies
- CSR and ESG Frameworks
- Higher Education Institutions

A summary of recommendations emerging from the deliberations will be compiled and shared with relevant government departments as a way forward for strengthening policy frameworks around working women's accommodation

PANEL DISCUSSION

“Who Earns, Who Cares, Who Migrates? And How Policy Can Influence”

As India advances toward becoming a \$5 trillion economy, the question is not just how many women are educated—but how many are enabled to work, migrate, and thrive. This panel will explore the intersection of gender norms, unpaid care responsibilities, migration decisions, and economic participation. It will examine how structural constraints—particularly access to safe and affordable urban accommodation—shape who earns, who stays back, and who drops out.

The discussion will unpack how policy can move beyond welfare to economic infrastructure, addressing housing, transport, childcare, and workplace flexibility as interconnected enablers. By bringing together voices from government, industry, urban planning, and civil society, the panel aims to identify practical policy levers that can accelerate women's transition from education to sustained economic empowerment.

Programme

9:00 AM

Registration, Tea & Networking

10:00 AM

Welcome Address

Dr Debashis Sanyal

Director, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai

Introductory Remarks

Mr Lakshminarayanan D

President, MMA & Managing Director, Sundaram Home Finance Ltd

Overview of White Papers

“Young Adults at Work in India: Intense work for some, Insufficient jobs for many”

“Unlocking Women’s Employment Through Safe Housing: Lessons from
Tamil Nadu’s Thozhi Hostels”

Professor Vidya Mahambare

Union Bank Chair Professor of Economics, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai

Launch of White Papers & Address by the Chief Guest

Ms Gangapriya Chakraverti

India Site Head & Managing Director, Ford Motor Company

Presentation of Mementos & Vote of Thanks

Gp Capt R Vijayakumar (Retd), VSM

Executive Director, MMA

Q&A

11.05 AM

Tea/Coffee & Networking

11.30 AM

Panel Discussion

“Who Earns, Who Cares, Who Migrates? And How Policy Can Influence”

Panelists

Ms Sharanya Ari, IAS

Additional Director, Social Welfare & Women Empowerment Department,
Ex-officio Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostels Corporation Ltd

Professor Poonam Munjal

National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi

Mr Arul Prabhu

Managing Director, Salcomp Manufacturing India Pvt Ltd

Mr Mahesh V

Executive Director, NCR Atleos, Mahindra World City

Ms Aswini Ravikumar

Manager, Thozhi Hostel, St Thomas Mount

Moderator

Dr Arti Srivastava

Assistant Professor - Marketing, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai

12.55 PM

Concluding Remarks and Vote of Thanks

Mr Yash Merchant

Director, Brand Marketing, Great Lakes Institute of Management

01.00 PM

Lunch

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS

(CLICK ON THE PICTURE TO VIEW THE PROFILE)

Chief Guest



Ms Gangapriya Chakraverti
India Site Head & Managing Director
Ford Motor Company



Ms Sharanya Ari, IAS

Additional Director, Social Welfare &
Women Empowerment Department,
Ex-officio Managing Director, Tamil Nadu
Working Women's Hostels Corporation Ltd



Professor Poonam Munjal

National Council of
Applied Economic
Research, New Delhi



Mr Arul Prabhu

Managing Director
Salcomp Manufacturing
India Pvt Ltd



Mr Mahesh V

Executive Director, NCR
Atleos, Mahindra World
City



Ms Aswini Ravikumar

Manager, Thozhi
Hostel, St Thomas
Mount



Dr Arti Srivastava

Assistant Professor -
Marketing, Great Lakes
Institute of
Management, Chennai



**Professor Vidya
Mahambare**

Union Bank Chair
Professor of Economics,
Great Lakes Institute of
Management, Chennai



Dr Debashis Sanyal

Director, Great Lakes
Institute of
Management, Chennai



Mr Yash Merchant

Director, Brand Marketing
Great Lakes Institute of
Management



Mr Lakshminarayanan D

President, MMA &
Managing Director,
Sundaram Home
Finance Ltd



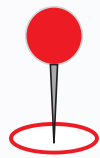
**Gp Capt R Vijayakumar
(Retd), VSM**

Executive Director,
MMA

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