

Research

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Building inclusive future

Empowering women in India's real estate transformation



Building inclusive future



The participation paradox: Current context

Indian women comprise up to 48.5% of the population (715 million). Yet in the construction sector—accounting for 9% of India’s GDP—women represent only 10% of the 71 million workforces, with merely 1-2% reaching managerial positions.¹

While the real estate industry actively targets women as buyers through marketing campaigns and stamp duty concessions, it invests less in supporting working women within the industry itself. This study addresses that gap by examining

women’s participation in real estate through profiles of industry pioneers and analysis of emerging roles. It explores the legal and financial frameworks supporting women’s contributions and documents the gradual but significant transformation occurring in recent years. Drawing evidence from legislative history, market data, industry reports and assessing several profiles of the women pioneers in the industry, the women’s participation in the real estate dialogue is in two shared dimensions of

Leadership roles	Professionals and entrepreneur
Policy benefactors	Schemes and loan concessions



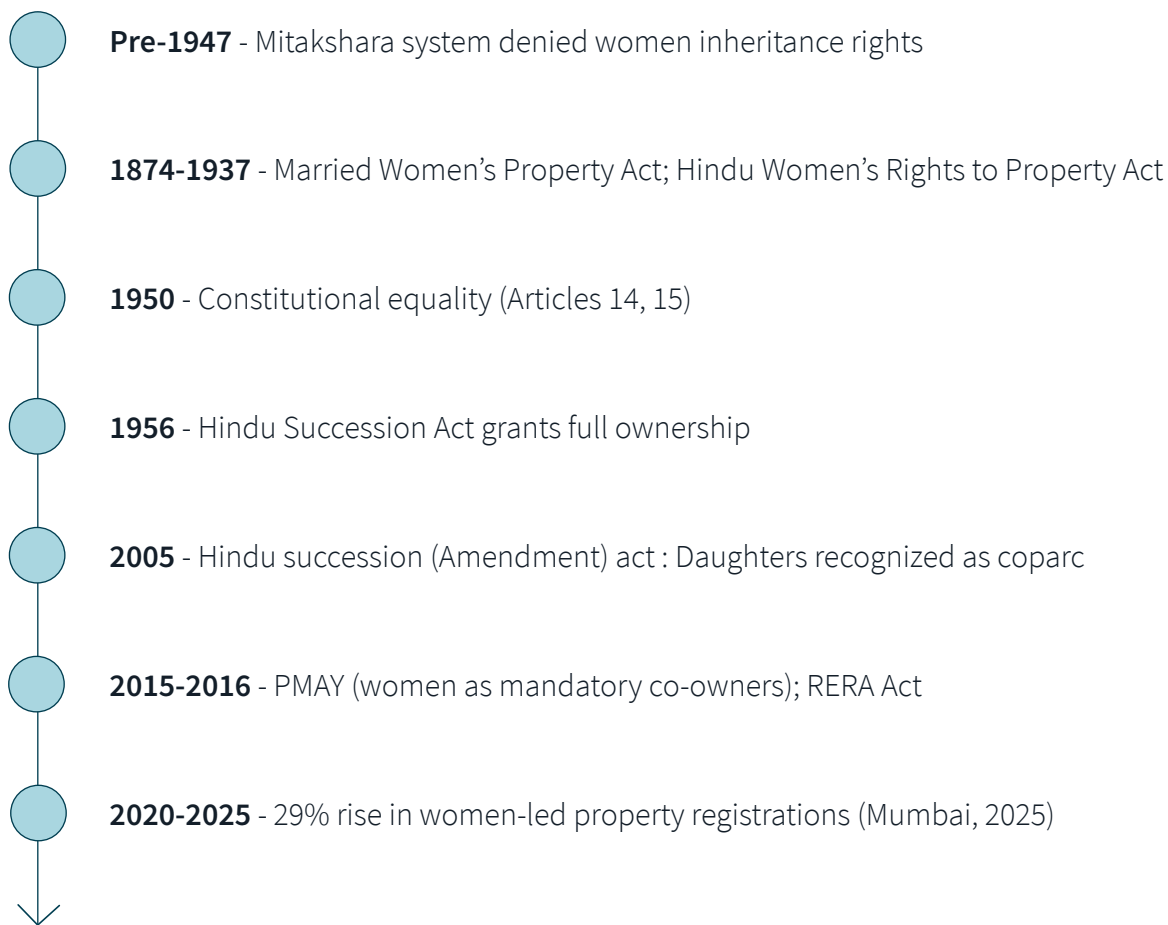
¹ Creating Opportunities for women in construction in India: A call for action, International Labour Organisation

Towards inclusion: Historical evolution

Traditionally, real estate has been a male-dominated with business transactions conducted by predominantly by the men in Indian context² where women were more

dependent than owners. We can classify this timeline of change by into two factors, by ownership and professional participations.

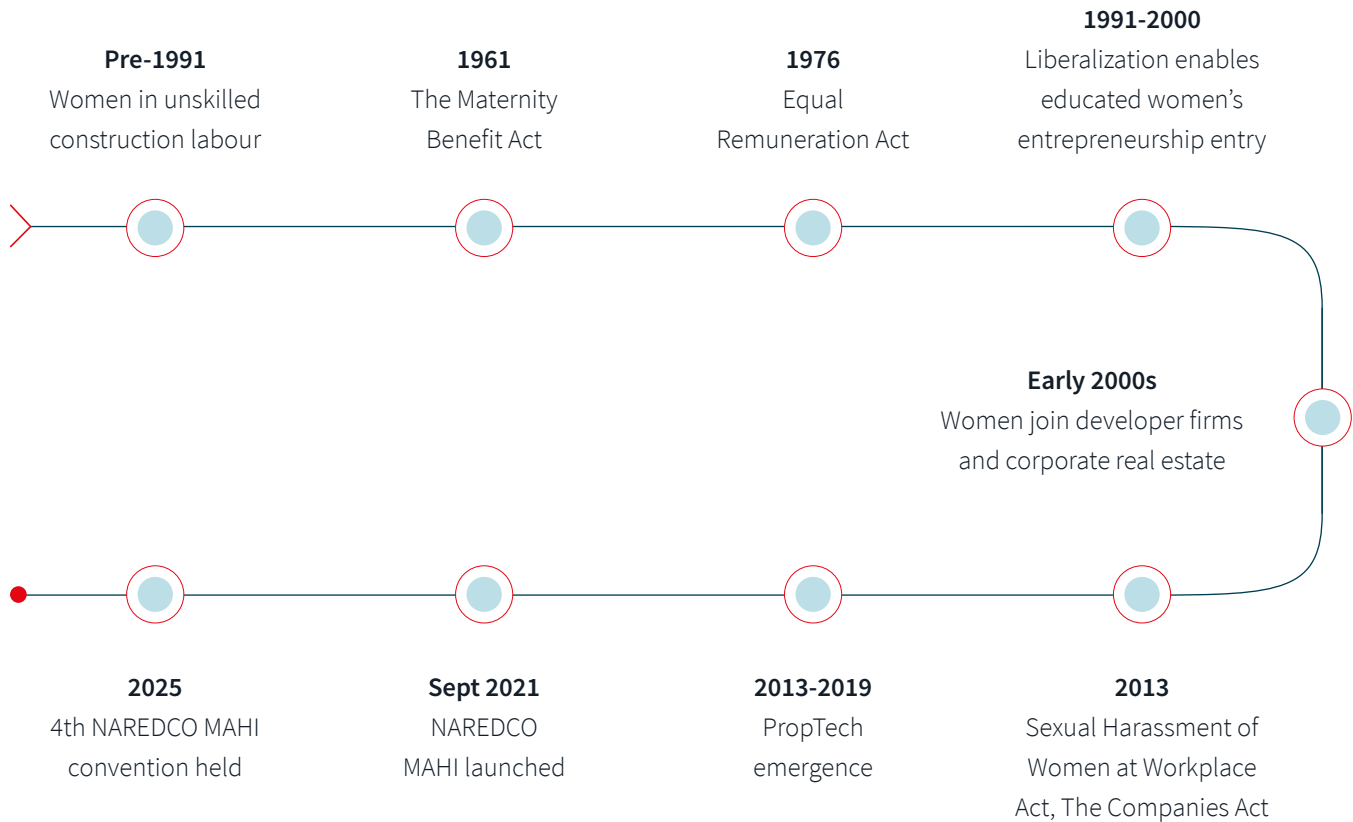
Property Ownership Timeline



² <https://cjp.org.in/the-evolution-of-womens-property-rights-under-the-hindu-succession-act/>

The participation of women in the industry has evolved over time to increasingly visible roles in development, brokerage and leadership roles. They can be studied under the timeline of:

Professional Participation Timeline



Government initiatives supporting women’s participation

The Indian government actively promotes women’s participation in real estate through various initiatives including stamp duty

concessions, specialized lending schemes, and financial literacy programs, making property ownership more accessible to women.

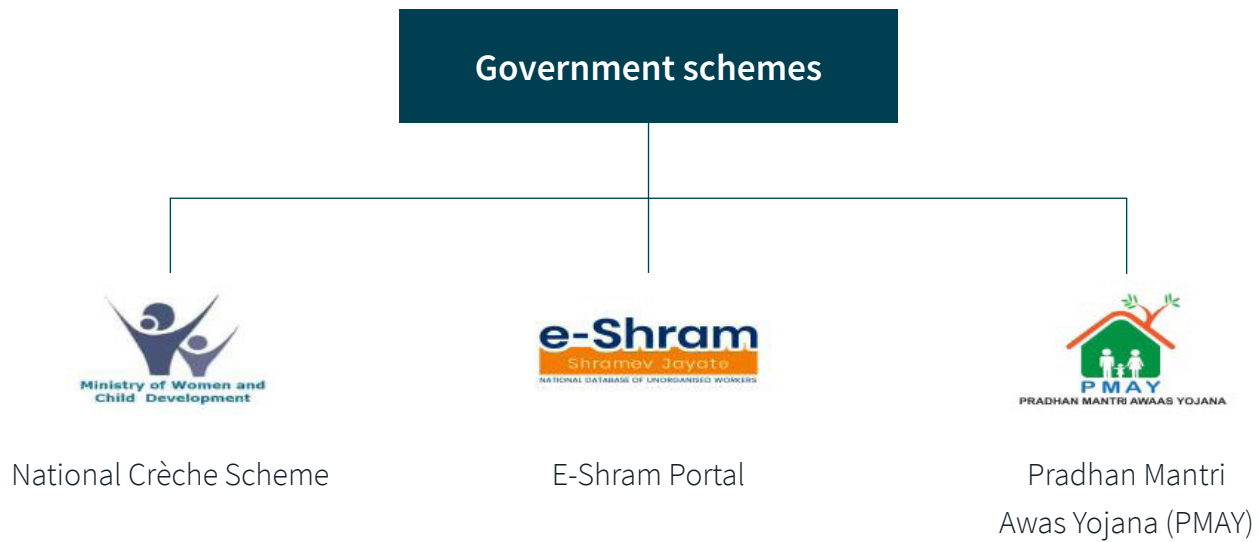
Stamp Duty Concessions

State	Stamp duty for men	Stamp duty for women
Delhi	6%	4%
Haryana	7%	5%
Punjab	6%	4%
Maharashtra	6% (Mumbai)	5% (Mumbai)
Uttar Pradesh	7%	Rebate of ₹10,000 on properties up to ₹10 lakh

Other Benefits for women

Registration fee benefits	Home Loan Benefits
<p>Tamil Nadu</p> <p>Reduced registration fee to 3% for properties valued up to ₹10 lakh for plots, houses and agricultural lands plots, houses and agricultural lands</p>	<p>0.05%–0.1% interest rate concessions</p> <p>Tax deductions: ₹2 lakh -Income Tax Act (Section 24b), ₹1.5 lakh - Income Tax Act (Section 80C)</p>
<p>April 2025</p>	

Existing measures to enable women's participation in real estate:



National Crèche Scheme: This centrally sponsored scheme provides daycare facilities for children of working mothers, particularly targeting women in the informal and organized sectors.

E-Shram Portal: Launched as a national database of unorganized workers, the E-Shram portal registers workers in the informal sector, which includes a substantial number of women engaged in construction and real estate activities.






Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY): This flagship affordable housing program has a specific focus on women's empowerment through property ownership. Under PMAY, preference is given to applications where women are sole or joint owners of the property.



₹ Financial benefits

Government of India have launched several schemes for women entrepreneurs of varying categories from which they can benefit from as

traditional lenders follow many strict criteria's that are at loss for the entrepreneurs to meet and hinder the ability start, sustain and scale business.

Feature	Goal	Business sector	Financial support
 Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana, 1993	Generate self-employment opportunities for educated unemployed youth	New ventures only (first-time entrepreneurs)	Up to ₹2 lakh (business/service); up to ₹5 lakh (industry) 15-25% subsidy on project cost.
 Stree Shakti Yojana, 2000	Support women entrepreneurs in small-scale industries with concessional finance	Existing small-scale industries or new ventures.	Loans up to ₹2 lakh with 0.50% interest rate concession
 Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana for Women, 2015	Support micro and small business units; encourage women entrepreneurship in small-scale businesses.	Existing or new micro-enterprises; suitable for early-stage businesses	Shishu: Up to ₹50,000 Kishore: ₹50,001 to ₹5 lakh Tarun: ₹5 lakh to ₹10 lakh Collateral-free
 Women Startup India Program, 2016	Foster innovative, technology-driven, and scalable business ideas among women	Scalable business models; can be existing companies up to 10 years old.	Access to ₹10,000 crore Fund of Funds; Tax exemptions for 3 years; 80% IPR cost rebate
 Standup India Scheme, 2016	Provide social and financial empowerment for first-time entrepreneurs from SC/ST and women categories	Must be the applicant's very first venture/project)	Direct bank loans ranging from ₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore

Up skilling women in the Real Estate sector

From **construction sites to C-suite**, Indian real estate markets have been witnessing the gradual wave of transformations with women entering the workforce redefining the leaderships highlighting the urgent need for targeted upskilling, support

and progressive mentorship. Organizations such as **NAREDCO MAHI** are actively enhancing women’s participation through targeted upskilling, mentorship, and financial literacy programs.

1. NAREDCO MAHI’s contribution to Upskilling Women³

Initiative Type	Program/Activity	Description
Workshops, Seminars, and Training Programs	Mahi Talks	Monthly expert sessions where professionals share expertise and experience to help women in their journey and growth in the sector
	Upskilling Series	Educational programs through newsletters, upskilling series, and mentorship opportunities designed to help women overcome obstacles and excel in the industry
	Empowering Knowledge Series	Knowledge-sharing sessions focused on professional development and Up skilling through Workforce Upskilling Program, Senior Leadership Counseling, NIREC launch and NIPUN skilling project
	Gender Integration Program	Mentoring, networking, and assistance for women in real estate and related industries
	Vietnam Study Tour	Business study tour covering market trends, gender equality, sustainable practices, and technology integration through meetings with VNREA, VWEC, Ministry of Construction, Vingroup, and key industry figures
	Singapore Study Tour	Professional learning program focused on construction, sustainability, and urban development with cultural enrichment Established foundation for India-Singapore collaboration in construction and sustainable practices

³<https://naredco.in/events?page=1>

	Bhutan Study Tour	Learning program that offered exposure to Bhutan’s governance systems, cultural heritage, community, development initiatives, and Bhutan’s commitment to sustainable and inclusive development.
NAREDCO MAHI Special Sessions	Mahi Conventions	Annual flagship events for the organization, presenting various women achievers awards, Sheroes awards, Networking and collaboration events across different cities
Green and Sustainable Initiative	Shashwat Nirman Initiative	A sustainability initiative that advances green building practices, energy efficiency, and environmentally responsible construction methods in alignment with India's national environmental objectives.
	Green Building Advocacy	Promoting integration of sustainability principles into the real estate sector
	Sustainability Meetings	Collaborative discussions on sustainable development held with Shri Tokhan Sahu, Union Minister of State for Housing & Urban Affairs
Startup Incubator	Dolphin Tank Initiative	Startup support and incubation program for women entrepreneurs to grow businesses sustainably
Water-Saving Initiative	Nirmal Jal Prayas	Dedicated water conservation initiative raising awareness about water management

Key Insight: These institutional initiatives provide critical infrastructure—training, mentorship, networking, and advocacy—essential for transforming women’s participation from tokenism to substantive leadership roles across construction sites to C-suites.



Sustainability – sustainable ways in the real estate sector

Globally, India holds the 2nd position for LEED Certified projects, recording over 16 million GSM of LEED-certified space across 611 projects in 2025.⁴ In the Indian green building landscape, GRIHA (Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment) is mandatory for all government projects in India and has established an impressive portfolio of 1,844 rated projects and 5,286 registered projects, totaling 36,562,566 sq. m of Built-Up Area. ⁵IGBC (Indian Green Building Council) wields significant influence over private real estate players and corporates, commanding more than 90% market share with 19,715+ projects with a green footprint exceeding 16.05 billion sq.ft., of which 8,100+ projects are certified and fully operational. ⁶These certified projects deliver substantial environmental and financial benefits, reducing carbon emissions by 35% and maintenance costs by 20%, making them highly desirable investment assets.

Women leaders are progressively reshaping India's human-centric sustainability landscape, shifting focus from merely developing aesthetically pleasing buildings to creating sustainable, Net Zero, ESG-driven developments that promote

social equity within workplaces and communities. Women constitute a significant workforce in the ESG sector, particularly contributing to GRIHA evaluation and IGBC certification processes. Their substantial presence in these critical certification bodies ensures rigorous assessment standards and drives the growth of India's green building movement, which is fundamental to the real estate sector's sustainability transformation.

Women leaders demonstrate that real estate sustainability driving transformative change across multiple dimensions including technological innovation, social equity, financial inclusion, and governance transparency.

Policy Innovation and Financial Incentives:

Advocating 1% stamp duty reductions for green building buyers in Maharashtra, making sustainable housing more financially accessible through NAREDCO MAHI

UN Sustainable Development Goals

Integration: Targeting 15 of 17 UN SDG goals in upcoming projects, with comprehensive approaches addressing all 17 standards.

⁴<https://www.usgbc.org/articles/us-green-building-council-and-green-business-certification-inc-announce-top-countries-and>

⁵<https://www.grihaindia.org/>

⁶<https://igbc.in/>

Global ESG Standards and Wellness: Senior executives advance global ESG standards and wellness-oriented office spaces that prioritize occupant health and environmental performance.

Sustainable Urban Communities: Leaders develop projects featuring forest elements to reduce urban heat island effects and co-lead sustainability-focused investment platforms that promote green infrastructure

Prop Tech and Smart Sustainability Innovations: Pioneering smart housing systems

with IoT-enabled monitoring and automated maintenance, integrated AI, VR, and FinTech solutions in smart mortgage ecosystems with data-driven analytics, advancing technological innovation and governance transparency in real estate

Through these multifaceted contributions, women leaders are driving India's transition toward environmentally responsible, socially equitable, and economically viable real estate development that benefits current and future generations.



Present and future: Women driving real estate transformation

Independence for women decision makers

Women's role of contribution to this industry has emerged as early as from 1900's as brokers and agents. Today women have carved their way into the business domain by excelling in corporate roles as agents, developers, architects, and marketing directors with equal opportunities for both the genders. JLL 's industry report states that **“only 1-2% of women hold positions in**

C-suite with managerial role in real estate industry”.⁷ But there are numerous barriers that limit women from reaching that managerial role. This includes a pay gap of 30-40% less professionally in the informal sector; construction workers earn INR 412/day average. Men earn 29.4% more (urban), 51.3% more (rural).⁸ The barriers include.



Pink-Collar: The invisible workforce

Despite the increasing number of women entering the leadership roles, there are many areas which need improvement with immediate interventions in the pink collared sector. While leadership roles see gradual improvement, **95-98% of women in**

construction work informally without labour protection, job security, insurance, or childcare support—highlighting the urgent need for policy interventions targeting the invisible workforce.

⁷ <https://www.jll.com/en-in/insights/skilling-upskilling-and-reskilling>

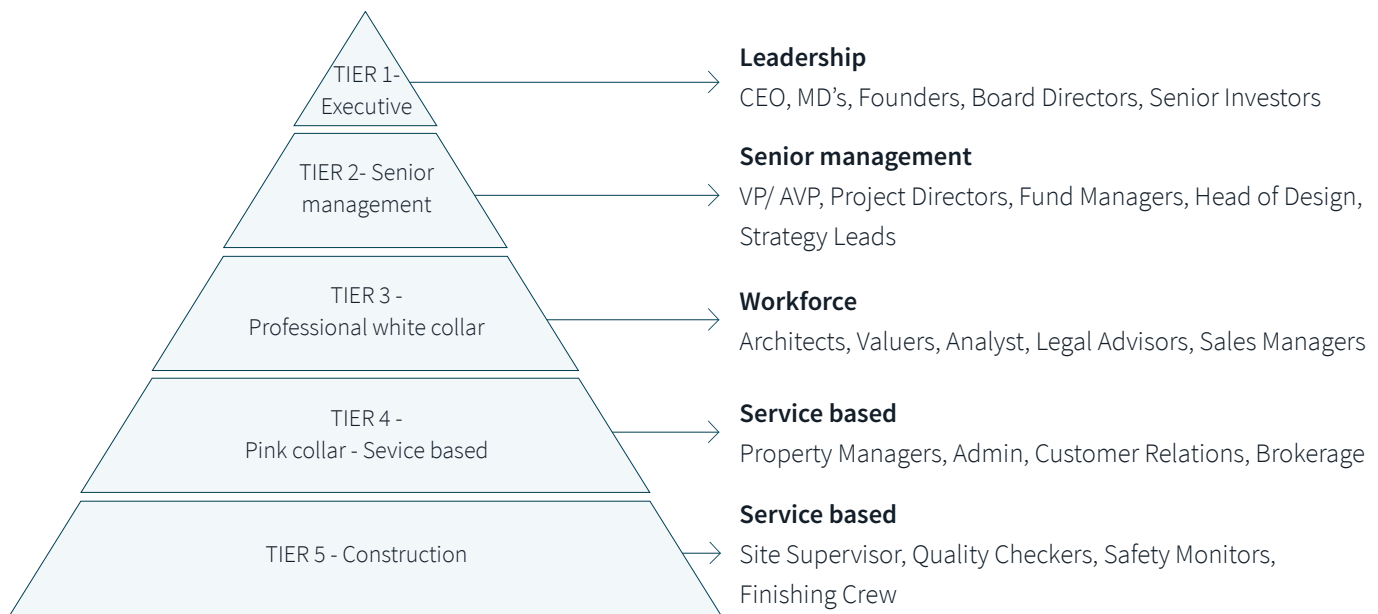
⁸ Creating Opportunities for women in construction in India : A call for action, International Labour Organisation

Mapping of the women participants across the real estate industry

The acceleration of women’s participation in the workforce can be categorised based on their levels of contribution to the industry. Women have been

contributing in a hierarchical manner by five broad tiers, reading apex (power) to base (volume) with the mapped friction women face at the levels.⁹

Hierarchical order of women in real estate



⁹Women leadership in Corporate India 2026- AIMA | Enhancing Women Leadership In India Inc. 2024 - CII



Latent pain-points identified within tiers

Mapping across the workforce tiers-role of women professionals from the executive boardroom to the majority of workforce at construction site, the pain points have been studied and presented below:

Tier	Pain points
Executive and Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legitimacy followed with constant credibility • Invisible pipeline deals • Penalised for maternity gap • Exclusion from power circles • Capital access gap • No peer community
Senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay Gap widens at seniority • Sidelined to “soft” Portfolios • Promotions are delayed • The glass ceiling at VP to CXO
Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site access barriers • Mentorship gap at later years • Post-maternity derailment • POSH implementation gap
Pink collar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terminal roles • No upskilling access • Prone more to harassment • Feminised wage gap • Lack of recognition in industry narratives
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open wage discrimination • Lack of safety and sanitation on site • No pathway for unskilled labour • BOCW benefits are denied¹⁰ • Migrant workers are vulnerable to displacement • Increased violence without reporting path

¹⁰ <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/7682/1/building-and-other-construction-workers-act-1996.pdf>

Recommended Interventions to Accelerate women in Real estate

While women are progressively participating towards bridging the equality gap within the workforce in Indian real estate, the barriers are also significant decelerating their visibility.

The following interventions attempt at minimising the existing challenges throughout different tier of workforce.

Level	Initiatives
Executive and ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding programs can help in minimizing the capital access gap • Mandating the quotient of women participations at the decision-making role • Return programs that facilitate a smooth transition for women re-entering their career gap after maternity • Active leadership and mentorship programs offered from the women executives within their organization
Senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership development and Executive training programs help train women for higher level of responsibilities and enabling their visibility within organization • Transparency of the pay policies within the organizations during promotions and job postings • Accessibility to sponsorship programs that initiate the visibility and strategic influence of women for CXO roles
Professional – White collar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access to Upskilling programs followed with training in the finance, technology domain • Active Measures to Bridge Pay-Wage Gaps. • Increased participation quotient of women on site. • Mandate of POSH at all levels of workplace to gain organization licence.
Pink collar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational and Industry Support Programs • Mandatory Gender Sensitization Programs at worksites • Childcare Support Systems within organizations
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory Gender Sensitization Programs at worksites • Childcare and welfare facilities to be provided on site • Active Measures to be taken towards mandating the anti-harassment policies with severe consequences with safe reporting mechanisms • Mandate upskilling labors on construction sites to encourage workforce participation and reduce layoffs. • Awareness towards BOCW benefits to be raised by having onsite registration camps

Building inclusive future

The participation of women in Indian real estate has been evolving steadily from entry-level positions toward leadership roles, though this transformation remains incomplete and depends on collective effort across the industry ecosystem—with leaders creating opportunities, organizations building supportive environments through mentorship and flexible arrangements, and policies addressing gaps in labor protections and financial access. Meaningful

progress emerges not from isolated gestures but through accumulated actions: comprehensive training programs, structured career pathways, pay equity transparency, childcare support, and workplace cultures that recognize diverse contributions. Enabling women's full participation transcends equity alone, representing a strategic pathway toward achieving the Viksit Bharat 2047 goals and India's aspiration of becoming a \$1 trillion economy



NAREDCO MAHI

A WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

MAHI INITIATIVES



ABOUT MAHI

Mahi, the Women Wing of NAREDCO, stands as a pivotal initiative aimed at fostering greater participation and integration of women within the real estate sector and allied fields. Established by NAREDCO, the National Real Estate Development Council in the year 2021, Mahi is dedicated to creating an inclusive environment where women professionals can converge to share their experiences, leverage their skills, and harness collective resources to drive impactful change. Mahi endeavours to empower women in the real estate sector by providing a platform for networking, collaboration, and mutual support. Through its initiatives, Mahi seeks to elevate the visibility and influence of women leaders, ensuring their voices are heard and their contributions recognized across the industry. Mahi's mission extends beyond mere representation; it aims to actively engage its members in initiatives that foster the development and growth of the real estate sector. By promoting leadership roles, advocating for gender equity, and championing diversity, Mahi strives to shape a future where women play pivotal roles in shaping policies, driving innovation, and steering sustainable development within the sector. Through its commitment to inclusivity and empowerment, Mahi envisions a landscape where women in real estate not only thrive individually but also collectively contribute to building vibrant, inclusive communities and driving economic growth. By nurturing talent, fostering collaboration, and advocating for gender parity, Mahi aims to bring about lasting transformation within the real estate industry, acknowledging and celebrating the invaluable contributions of women every step of the way.

MAHI LEADERSHIP



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About JLL

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