

Women (STEP) scheme, which aims to provide skills that give employability to women.

The government has also taken decisive action to implement adequate social security benefits for women workers. The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2017 is a landmark measure that has increased the maximum period of paid maternity leaves to 26 weeks from the existing period of 12 weeks. In addition, the recently implemented Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 envisages employment of women in all establishments covering all types of works. Women are now entitled to work in the night, subject to their consent, with provisions of safety, holidays, working hours or any other condition as prescribed by appropriate government. It promotes gender equality in a big way.

In sum, the government's initiatives to promote women-led development have worked to strengthen women's agency and socio-economic capacities. Through increased access to basic facilities, targeted investment in employment and skill building, and progressive legislation, women have come to be empowered to become leaders and key contributors to New India's growth story. In this regard, the Prime Minister's vision is revolutionary, and has helped to make women the leading force of our development trajectory.

This blog is authored by Rai Sengupta.

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