

**Recommendations toward the Inclusion of Women and Other Excluded Groups in  
Vocational Training  
Submitted to the Task Force on Skill Development and Vocational Training  
February 28, 2007**

**Context**

India's economic boom has left behind the vast majority of Indians, especially women. No growth can be inclusive that does not include women and growth cannot reach its greatest heights if half of the nation's potential workforce is ignored. One bottleneck inhibiting both inclusiveness and growth is the low number of women being trained to enter the workforce. According to DGE&T, women occupy only 6.5% of seats in the ITIs, therefore it is not surprising that they have not enjoyed their fair share of benefits of the current economic boom. The Planning Commission has identified vocational training as a priority to capitalize on India's youth to feed the HR requirements of the growing economy. If it takes the further step of focusing the expansion of vocational training on women and other traditionally excluded populations, it can simultaneously bridge the economic divide.

**Policy Statement**

The 11<sup>th</sup> Plan could include a National Action Plan to Integrate Women & Marginal Groups in Skills Training. This Action Plan's aim would be to achieve gender parity of vocational training seats with the ultimate goal of achieving gender parity in industry, across sectors and vertically within sectors. The National Action Plan could set the target to achieve a *minimum* of 25% female enrollment by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan term. This Action Plan could simultaneously commit to the goal of inclusive growth for all, addressing the needs of all marginalized communities such as SC/STs, OBCs, minorities, and the disabled. All training would be imparted with the ultimate goal of employment, so training must be driven by the demands of industry. To prevent the ghettoization of women into low paid exploitative fields, simultaneously efforts to ensure upward mobility and open up new opportunities for women in traditionally male-dominated areas are necessary.

**Recommendations<sup>1</sup>**

1. We recommend that the necessary resources be committed to ensure that any woman who wants to join technical training should be able to through scholarships or loans.
2. We recommend that outreach to women be an essential component of all vocational training programs.
3. We recommend that efforts are made to create an enabling environment to ensure attitudinal changes on all fronts, including families, industry, and training providers, so women are encouraged and supported to pursue training and employment. Gender sensitization of various stakeholders is also recommended to address the root attitudes that manifest themselves in various forms of discrimination against women.
4. We recommend that the planned expansion of vocational training be women-centered and inclusive of all marginalized populations (SC/STs, OBCs, minorities, and the disabled).
5. We recommend that training toward self-employment be made a focal point because the formal sector is only a small percentage of the total economy.

---

<sup>1</sup> Based on Annexures 1 and 2, attached.