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We4Her Foundation event reimagines Indian cities with a gender-equity lens



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The We4Her Foundation's Flagship Event, held in collaboration with Primus Partners, brought together policymakers, corporates, NGOs, and grassroots leaders to reimagine Indian cities through a gender-equity lens.

Hosted at the India Habitat Centre, the event focused on building a safe and inclusive India for women a vital step toward realizing the vision of Viksit Bharat.

A recurring theme across discussions was the power of collaboration among women. One shared study found that nearly 90% of women engaged in partnerships experienced professional or entrepreneurial growth.

One speaker, said, "Women collaborations are the key to unlocking progress," : a sentiment echoed by many throughout the day.

The event began with a fireside chat with Smt. Preeti Sudan, Member, UPSC and former Union Health Secretary, who emphasized the need for empathetic leadership and inclusive decision-making in city planning.

The first panel, “Safe Cities, Stronger Workforce,” moderated by Pratibha Jain, Head of Strategy & Group General Counsel at Everstone Group and Founding Trustee of We4Her Foundation, explored how gender-sensitive infrastructure and policy can increase women’s workforce participation.

“Safe, inclusive cities empower women to grow and contribute meaningfully to the economy,” she noted.

Himani Pande, Additional Secretary, DPIIT, shared the government’s approach to creating enabling environments for women professionals, while Anna Roy, Principal Economic Adviser, NITI Aayog, advocated for gender-disaggregated indicators in urban programs and greater inter-ministerial coordination.

The second panel, “Bridging the Gender Finance Gap,” moderated by Charu Malhotra, Co-founder and MD, Primus Partners, focused on unlocking access to credit and opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

“We must actively enable women’s economic participation — from credit access to property rights. Real progress demands equity,” Malhotra added.

Delivering the keynote and launching two reports, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, Former Union Minister and Founder of the Alliance for Global Good, Gender Equity and Equality, highlighted the need for long-term ecosystem building said, “To future-proof us, we need to put women at the centre. Make them independent enough to lead voices, to shape gender narratives. Don’t just amplify a voice — build it, believe in it, back it.”

Two landmark reports were launched:

The first examined the impact of gendered urban infrastructure on women’s workforce participation, with field research across Delhi, Mumbai, and Bhopal. It critiques gender-neutral planning and outlines how access to transit, sanitation, and safety directly affects economic participation.

The second, developed under the UnPollute 2024 initiative by STEP, profiled women-led green startups, capturing their capacity-building journeys and recommending steps to strengthen women’s leadership in India’s sustainability ecosystem.

The event closed with a vote of thanks by Reema Arora, Co-Trustee, We4Her Foundation, said, “What we saw today was the power of convergence — across sectors and perspectives. Collaboration, not silos, will drive the change that women in India truly deserve.”

As these dialogues move from event spaces into boardrooms, ministries, and municipal corridors, the We4Her Flagship Event underscores that inclusive cities and equitable economies are not just possible — they are necessary.