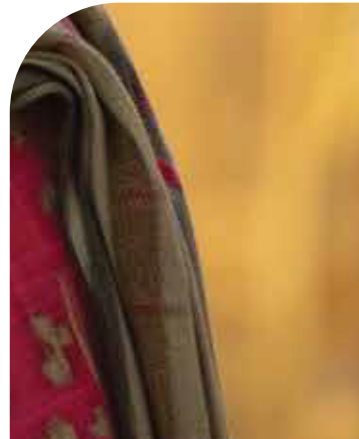
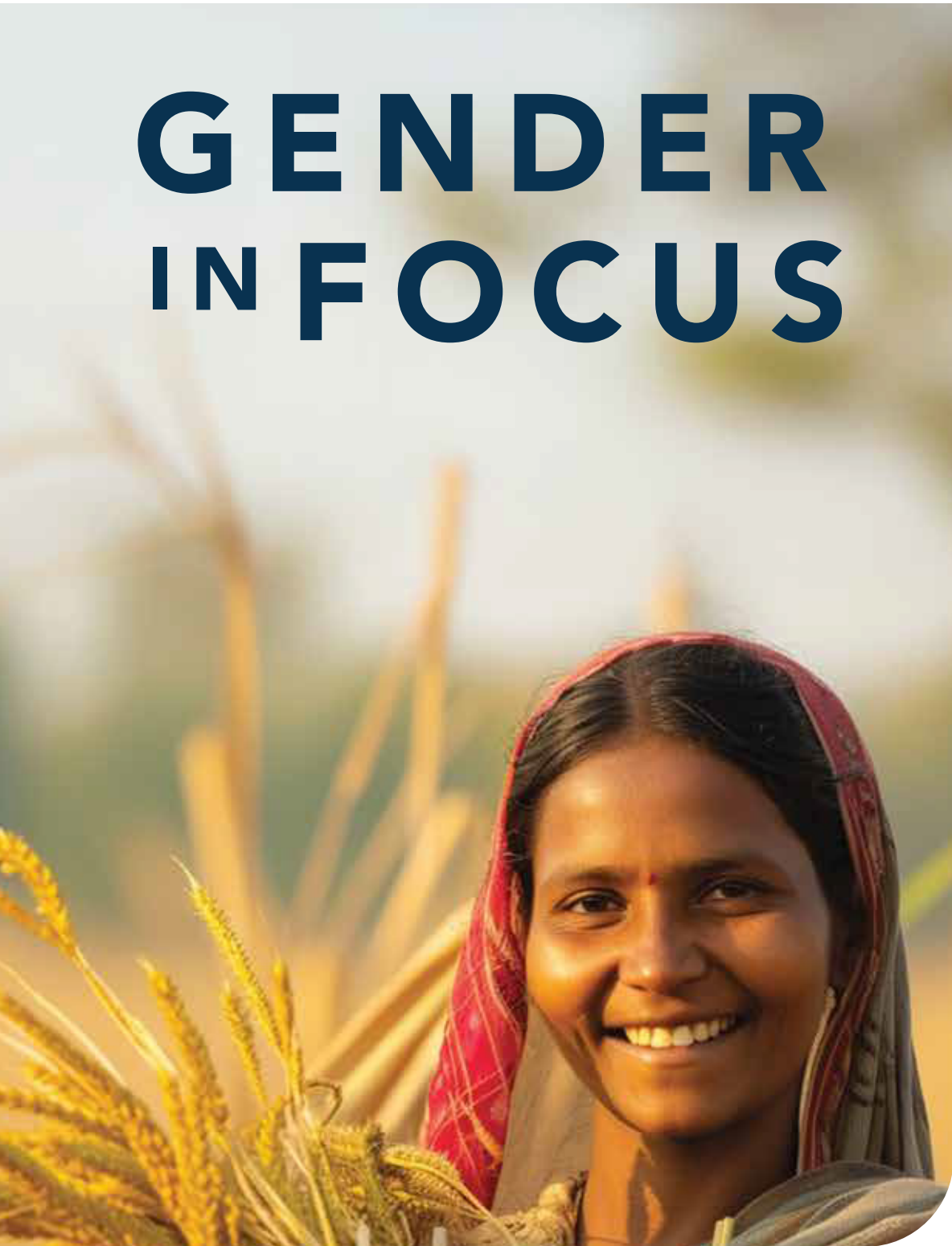


# GENDER IN FOCUS



**JANUARY 2025**  
VOLUME 9



**Dear Colleagues,**

Greetings from IWWAGE

Welcome to the ninth edition of Gender in Focus, which highlights recent milestones and insights that reflect Institute for What Works to Advance Gender Equality (IWWAGE)'s continued commitment to advancing gender equality.

The past six months have been a very fruitful period for IWWAGE. We were recognized as the "Asia-Pacific Care Champion 2024" by UNESCAP and UN Women, acknowledging our work in fostering partnerships and promoting inclusive care solutions. This recognition is an encouragement for IWWAGE to continue working on strengthening care systems and amplifying the role of women in societal progress.

IWWAGE also received the SAHIT Award for Excellence in Research, recognising our collaborative work with the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) and The Quantum Hub (TQH) on women's entrepreneurship and its transformative potential for economic freedom and agency.

The IWWAGE Steering Committee also approved the Mission, Vision and Strategy of IWWAGE for 2024-29 which provides crucial direction and road-map for next five years.

IWWAGE continued to work closely with the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY - NRLM) on gender mainstreaming. The National Conclave on Gender Mainstreaming, brought together experts, National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) and State Rural Livelihoods Mission (SRLM), CSO partners among others to dialogue on effective integration of gender within various verticals of the Ministry of Rural Development. The Fifth Gender Samvaad, and the launch of Nayi Chetna 3.0 (Gender Campaign) events underscored the critical need for collective action to address gender inequalities.

As we look ahead, IWWAGE remains steadfast in its mission to create a more equitable society. We extend our deepest gratitude to our partners, stakeholders, and supporters for joining us on this transformative journey.

We hope you find this edition of the newsletter enjoyable and informative. We welcome your comments and feedback. You can reach out to us at: [communications-iwwage@ifmr.ac.in](mailto:communications-iwwage@ifmr.ac.in)

Warm regards,

**Radha Chellappa**

Executive Director, IWWAGE

# Accolades

## IWWAGE Recognized as a Global Care Champion

IWWAGE champions evidence-based policies to strengthen care systems and empower women. We are honoured to be recognized as a Care Champion, 2024 by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and UN Women. This award highlights our work in building partnerships and advancing gender inclusive care solutions.

Women in India, who shoulder a disproportionate care burden, can be empowered by reducing unpaid care responsibilities through household redistribution and institutional support.

To create an equitable system, we advocate for policies supporting flexible work, accessible childcare, and paid caregiving leave. Investing in the care economy can create decent jobs for women and address the growing demand for quality care services.

**Watch Now**

Watch our team members talk about care work in this insightful video!



## IWWAGE Honored for Research Excellence on Women's Entrepreneurship

IWWAGE has been awarded the prestigious SAHIT Award for Excellence in Research. This recognition highlights our collaborative efforts with the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) and The Quantum Hub (TQH), and underscores our commitment to advancing women's workforce participation.

Our research, conducted for FICCI's Women in Workforce Report, delved into the transformative impact of women's entrepreneurship. Key findings revealed challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, including informal operations and limited access to resources.

To address these challenges, we recommend expanding skill training, encouraging participation in non-traditional sectors, bridging the digital divide, and improving financial literacy.

By empowering women in the labor market, India can unlock significant economic potential and contribute to its journey towards a prosperous future.





## Gender Equality Initiatives Take 'Center Stage'

### National Conclave on Gender Mainstreaming

In the last few years, the DAY-NRLM, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, has gained significant momentum in mainstreaming gender within its programme. In this regard, more than 3,500 Gender Resource Centres (GRCs) have been established across India. Platforms such as the "Nayi Chetna" Campaign and "Gender Samvaad" facilitated widespread awareness and open discussion on Gender Based Violence (GBV), and the need for community action.

The National Conclave on Gender Mainstreaming was designed to deliberate upon enablers and barriers, and the probable strategies to effectively take forward the gender interventions. The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) organised The National Conclave on Gender Mainstreaming under the DAY-NRLM, in collaboration with IWWAGE on September 20, 2024 in New Delhi.

This landmark event underscored the imperative of creating gender-responsive community institutions and fostering strategies for gender integration within the DAY-NRLM framework. The discussions revolved around empowering women's collectives, addressing structural inequalities, and advancing context-specific solutions for Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and its federated structures across India.

The National Conclave focused on empowering women through capacity building of SHGs, Village Organizations (VO), and Cluster Level Federations (CLF). It emphasized addressing specific challenges relating to establishing functional institutional mechanisms premised on the principles of gender equality, capacity of institutions and cadres, enabling ecosystem between demand and supply side, unpaid care work and engaging youth and adolescents to promote gender equality.

[Learn More](#)



## Nayi Chetna Campaign Launch: A Step Towards Ending Gender Based Violence

Union Ministers Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, along with Smt. Annpurna Devi in presence of Dr. Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani, Minister of State for Rural Development and Communications and Shri Kamlesh Paswan, Minister of State for Rural Development, launched Nayi Chetna 3.0 – “Pahal Badlaav Ki” (Initiative for Change) a National Campaign against Gender-based violence, on November 25, 2024 in New Delhi.

The campaign, spearheaded by the DAY-NRLM under the aegis of the Ministry of Rural Development, represents a month-long grassroots movement involving extensive participation from SHGs and nine government ministries. This year’s slogan, “Ek Saath, Ek Awaaz, Hinsa Ke Khilaaf” (Together, One Voice, Against Violence), captures the spirit of collective action through convergence efforts, by adopting a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach.

In collaboration with the campaign, IWWAGE played a key role in shaping the campaign, from developing the concept note and designing the IEC materials to creating engaging social media content. Additionally, IWWAGE developed the Campaign Management Information System (MIS) and conducted a qualitative study to assess the campaign’s impact, ensuring its effectiveness and reach.

Building on the successes of its previous editions, which mobilised millions across the country, Nayi Chetna 3.0 aims to foster a society free from all forms of Gender-Based Violence encouraging communities to speak out and demand action, provide timely access to support systems for redress, and strengthen local institutions to identify, act and combat violence effectively.



# Evidence in Focus

## Capturing Women's Work to Measure Better: Insights from an IWWAGE Study

Explore how redefining work and enhancing measurement frameworks can better capture the economic contributions of women.

Despite their significant contributions to the economy, women's work continues to be underestimated in conventional labour force surveys. This stems from biases in data collection methods, narrow definitions of work, and societal perceptions that blur the lines between economic and non-economic activities like domestic and unpaid care work.

To address these challenges, IWWAGE undertook a pioneering study in Karnataka and Jharkhand, surveying 4,000 women and 800 men using innovative methodologies. The research employed broader definitions of employment, captured time-use data across diverse activities, and measured perception bias through parallel



male surveys. The findings revealed a higher proportion of women engaged in employment compared to traditional surveys and underscored the impact of biases in proxy reporting.

The results were shared during the workshop "Capturing Women's Work to Measure Better" organized on July 24, 2024. Moderated by Radha Chellappa, Executive Director, IWWAGE and Santanu Pramanik, Research Director, LEAD and the session provided actionable insights for policymakers and stakeholders aiming to advance gender equality. These included:

[Read the Report!](#)

1.

**Improving Measurement Tools:** Regular updates of Time Use Surveys and the inclusion of data on seasonality and migration are crucial for accurately capturing the evolving nature of women's work.

2.

**Valuation of Care Work:** There's a pressing need to evaluate and assign value to unpaid care work, as highlighted in the satellite account of the System of National Accounts.

3.

**Defining Employment and Work:** There remains a need to align and expand the definitions of work following the 19th ICLS

4.

**Addressing Perception Bias:** urgent need to tackle respondent biases that may impact data estimates of women's workforce participation.

[Discover event highlights](#)

## Exploring Sustainable Models for Quality Childcare in India

The report “Financing Quality Childcare Facilities in India” based on a study done in collaboration with Mobile Creches examines the financial requirements for establishing and sustaining quality childcare services, focusing on urban slums, construction sites, and government premises. It analyses Early Childhood Development (ECD) budgets across four states, identifying key expenditure areas for creches and highlighting the need for targeted investments in underserved regions.

The report provides recommendations to enhance ECD funding and infrastructure, emphasising the alignment of financial resources with operational needs. It advocates for increased institutional and financial support to strengthen India’s childcare system and improve child development outcomes.

[Access Full Report](#)

[Access More Publications by IWWAGE](#)

The dissemination workshop on “Financing Quality Childcare Facilities in India”, held on August 22, 2024 in New Delhi, brought together experts and policymakers to discuss sustainable childcare solutions for urban slums, construction sites, and government premises. The event featured a Keynote address by Sunil Kumar Yadav (NULM, MoHUA) and a Special Address by Ritu Dewan (ISLE). Discussions focused on financial provisions for creche models, underpinned by findings from a study on ECD budgets across four states. Few key takeaways are:

These recommendations will inform future policies prioritising quality child care in India

1. Strengthen financial provisions for various childcare models
2. Increase investment in Early Childhood Development (ECD) initiatives
3. Encourage collaboration between governments, NGOs, and local communities
4. Focus on scaling up and sustaining childcare facilities
5. Leverage data-driven approaches to improve ECD funding and infrastructure



# Events and Webinars

## Women's Work and Energy Transition in India – Gaps and Opportunities

At the National Consultation on Gender and Just Transition, organised by ASAR on November 28, 2024, Radha Chellappa discussed how women and girls are differently impacted by climate change. With the ongoing climate crisis, the urgent challenge is to equip women with the right skills for a smooth transition. However, the exclusion of women and their needs from decision-making processes in mitigation and adaptation strategies further complicates this challenge. Unpaid care responsibilities, including childcare and the care of elderly, sick, or disabled family members, alongside outside work, place a heavy burden on women. This often results in women and girls dropping out of education, skill training, or livelihood activities. Therefore, care work becomes a critical pillar of just transition and requires investment in strengthening care infrastructure and ensuring its accessibility to all women.

[Visit our events page](#)



## IWWAGE Bi-monthly Seminar

### Seminar on Gender Transformative Evaluations

On July 11, 2024, Jahnvi Andharia and Alpaxee Kashyap from the Institute for Social Studies Trust presented a seminar on Gender Transformative Evaluations.

They explored the evolution of evaluation from a government-driven function to a more inclusive process involving diverse stakeholders. The seminar focused on the difference between change—incremental and external—and transformation, which involves deeper shifts in beliefs.

The speakers outlined five levels of gender inclusion in evaluation:

- 1. Gender Discriminatory:** Reinforces inequality.
- 2. Gender Blind:** Ignores gender norms.
- 3. Gender Sensitive:** Acknowledges norms but doesn't address inequality.
- 4. Gender Responsive:** Responds to gender-specific needs.
- 5. Gender Transformative:** Challenges power structures and promotes equality.

The session emphasised the importance of focusing on outcomes over outputs and discussed challenges such as budget constraints and the need for intersectionality, equity, and human rights in evaluations.

### Seminar on Employment Trends and Returns to Work in the Indian Labour Market

On November 28, 2024, Dr. Mrinalini Jha, Assistant Professor at Jindal School of Government and Public Policy, presented on Employment Trends and Returns to Work in the Indian Labour Market.

Dr. Jha discussed three phases of workforce participation:

- 1. 1993–94 to 2004–05:** Employment grew alongside the population, maintaining the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) at 65%.



- 2. 2004–05 to 2017–18:** Employment stagnated, and the LFPR dropped to 52%.
- 3. 2017–18 onwards:** Employment grew faster than population, raising LFPR to 58% by 2021-22.

She highlighted the decline in job quality, with a rise in self-employment, stagnant wages, and increased unpaid work, particularly among women. Dr. Jha noted that household incomes have risen due to more family members, especially women, taking low-paying jobs, rather than wage growth.

The seminar concluded with a discussion on the inadequacy of unemployment as the sole measure of labour market health and the need for improving job quality.

### Gender Samvaad: Raising Awareness on Gender Interventions

The Fifth Gender Samvaad, co-organised by the DAY-NRLM and IWWAGE on the September 6, 2024, convened over approx. 3 lakh viewers to discuss strategies adopted by the institutional mechanisms to address Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

The experiences of the second year Campaign were jointly shared by IWWAGE and PRADAN highlighting the opportunities to focus during the upcoming Campaign planning process. The presentation highlighted exploring strategies to challenge societal normalisation of GBV, enhance women's agency through self-help groups (SHGs), and foster intergenerational dialogues to shift gender norms. Initiatives like Prerna Kendras and Gender Resource Centres showcased the power of community-driven, localised solutions, alongside calls for inter-ministerial collaboration. Participants from 32 State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs), policymakers, and community leaders shared

best practices to advance gender equality. The event ended with a moderated panel discussion participated by the senior officer from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, senior legal expert and development expert emphasising the strengthening of the community institutions on various legal topics and an organic linkage with Panchayats. In addition to this, there have to be more preventive measures to be adopted to address GBV.

### Empowering Women in Care: Key Insights from IWWAGE's Roundtable on Elderly Care Models

IWWAGE and The Quantum Hub hosted a roundtable to explore emerging elderly care models in India. The discussion emphasised the need for a skilled workforce, affordable technology, and equitable access to care. There was a call for formalising home-based care, training care workers, and addressing the specific needs of vulnerable elderly women. The Kerala model of home-based care was highlighted as a potential solution for providing accessible and dignified elder care.

### Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment: IWWAGE at the Second Gender Dialogue

On September 14, 2024, Sona Mitra participated in the Second Gender Dialogue, organised by UN Women and the Norwegian Embassy in New Delhi, to discuss the crucial issue of shaping policy actions for building a comprehensive care ecosystem.

IWWAGE is dedicated to advancing Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE). By collaborating with diverse stakeholders, IWWAGE strives to contribute to the development of an enabling care ecosystem that not only empowers women but also drives inclusive economic growth and development.

Watch Now



## **Insightful Conversations at “Building Resilient Communities: Women and Sustainable Ecosystem”**

Moumita Sarkar, Co-Lead of SWAYAM at IWWAGE, participated in a multi-stakeholder event focused on social protection and gender-based violence on July 30, 2024 at the Sushma Swaraj Bhawan in New Delhi. The event, organised by the National Commission for Women, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and UN Women, highlighted the role of the Day-NRLM in creating a supportive environment for women. Moumita discussed the importance of gender-intentional design and shared insights from gender-transformative pilots, emphasizing the need for convergence and standardized training resources to empower women and strengthen community institutions.

## **Asia-Pacific Care Forum: Shaping the Future of Care in the Region**

On October 22-24, 2024, the Second Asia Pacific Care Forum was held in Bangkok brought together stakeholders to reshape economies with care at the core. Sruthi Kutty, Senior Policy Manager, IWWAGE, co-facilitated a session focusing on transforming care systems in Asia-Pacific. Key insights from the session were presented in a plenary discussion, highlighting opportunities and challenges in strengthening the care economy and empowering women.

## **Shaping Women’s Employment: Key Insights from IWWAGE at the National Seminar**

The National Seminar on Women and Employment in India, held in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, from September 3 to 5, 2024, brought together experts to discuss the challenges faced by women in the Indian workforce. Bidisha Mondal, Senior Research Fellow at IWWAGE, presented research highlighting the need to consider factors beyond unemployment when understanding women’s labour underutilisation. The seminar also delved into the limitations of official surveys and the persistence of gender discrimination in the workplace.

## **Empowering Women Through Care Economy: Insights from IWWAGE and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) India’s Policy Consultation**

IWWAGE and Centre for Women’s Development Studies (CWDS) authored a care brief titled “Care Economy as a Driver of Inclusive Growth and Women’s Empowerment: Recommended Pathways” as part of a short-term consultation between IWWAGE and FES India. Sruthi Kutty, Senior Policy Manager, IWWAGE presented the brief at the “Increasing Women’s Participation in the Economy: Policy Consultation on Care Work” event, held in Bengaluru from September 29 to October 1, 2024, organised by FES and Women’s Voice.

## **Indian Gender Report, 2024**

The Feminist Policy Collective recently launched the India Gender Report 2024, which examines the essential aspects of the gendered economic, extra-economic and non-economic status perceived from the prism of transformative feminist finance. IWWAGE, an initiative of LEAD at Krea University, contributed significantly to the report. Sona Mitra and Mridusmita Bordoloi co-authored a chapter titled Trends in Women’s Workforce Participation in India. This chapter delves into the factors behind the persistently low female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) in India and presents the nature of employment in rural and urban areas. It highlights issues such as the disproportionate amount of time women dedicate to domestic and care responsibilities, restrictive gender norms around mobility, educational choices, post-marriage responsibilities, and discriminatory recruitment practices by employers.

In addition, Radha Chellappa chaired a session titled “How can budgets promote increase in diverse women’s employment” as part of the Feminist Policy Collective Fifth Pre-Budget Consultation, on the theme “Women in Indian Economy: Wins, Woes and Ways Forward”

[Read the Report](#)

# Partnership Showcase



## AWE Network

Women's Economic Empowerment is a key strategic focus for IWWAGE. Through its involvement in the AWE Network, IWWAGE actively supports women entrepreneurs and their networks, fostering their equitable participation in leadership and development opportunities.



## WomenLead India Alliance

The partnership with the "WomenLead India Alliance" offers a valuable opportunity to collectively promote women's leadership in business, philanthropy, and development, advancing gender equality.



## BRAC

Under the partnership with BRAC, IWWAGE will mainstream gender by executing strategies that ensure the integration of gender into every facet of the project component of the poorest of the poor.



## MacArthur

With the financial support from MacArthur Foundation, we are undertaking a study to understand how the platform participation is enhancing women's economic empowerment and their overall agency.



## Policy Development Advisory Group (PDAG)

IWWAGE and PDAG will focus on advancing knowledge, shaping policy, and driving communication initiatives on climate change, migration, and women's economic empowerment.



## UNDP

IWWAGE and UNDP are partnering to advocate and generate evidence on the care economy. As part of consultations, IWWAGE provides technical inputs for UNDP's project with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on "Boosting Female Labor Force Participation through a Strengthened Urban Care Ecosystem."

If you are unable to access any document,  
please visit our resource section at:

<https://iwwage.org/resources-publications>



IWWAGE is an initiative of LEAD at Krea University, an action-oriented research centre housed at the Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR), a not-for-profit society which is also the Sponsoring Body of Krea University

M-6, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016, India

