

National Consultation

Platform Work as an Enabler for Women's Economic Empowerment



Concept Note

The platform economy is rapidly transforming India's labour landscape, offering new employment opportunities across diverse sectors such as ride-sharing, delivery, domestic work, beauty services, and caregiving. The sector's growth is driven by technological advancements, urbanisation, and the expanding digital ecosystem. A variety of actors shape this evolving ecosystem, including digital platforms that orchestrate work through algorithmic task assignment and performance monitoring; workers who undertake tasks; unions and worker collectives that advocate for labour rights and protections; think tanks and advocacy groups that provide research, policy analysis, and promote workers' interests; and policymakers who navigate the regulatory challenges of balancing innovation with social security and fair labour practices. Each of these stakeholders holds a distinct, yet interconnected, role in influencing the conditions under which platform work is performed and regulated.

Women's participation in the platform economy is particularly significant given longstanding gender disparities in workforce engagement. The sector's promise of flexible work schedules holds potential to address some barriers women face in balancing paid employment with domestic and caregiving responsibilities. At the same time, women are often at risk of being clustered in gendered roles, which tend to be informal, low-paid, and precarious, exposing them to challenges such as inconsistent earnings, lack of social protection, safety risks, and limited opportunities for career advancement.

Recognising these complexities, this consultation brings together experts from labour organisations, think tanks, policymakers, platforms, and worker collectives to deepen understanding of women's economic empowerment in the platform economy. It aims to explore how platform work affects women's labour transitions, job experiences, and access to protections. Our study complements this by examining digital mediation, care responsibilities, and collective organising. Together, the consultation and study seek to generate actionable insights to inform policies that support inclusive growth and empowerment for women in India's platform economy.

The consultation will explore how digital platforms and key stakeholders shape women's access to platform work, employment opportunities, working conditions, and social protections. It will assess whether platform work truly offers meaningful flexibility, income stability, and pathways for career advancement, while identifying persistent gaps and challenges. Furthermore, the discussion aims to identify critical policy and institutional measures necessary to ensure that platform work promotes women's economic empowerment and safeguards their labour rights effectively.

We look forward to expert perspectives that will not only validate the findings of our study but also contribute to shaping effective strategies for advancing gender-equitable work in India's platform economy.

National Consultation on Platform Work as an Enabler for Women's Economic Empowerment

Agenda

Date: September 3, 2025 | **Venue:** The Dome, Ambassador, New Delhi

Time	Session Title	Speaker/s	Moderator
10:00 am – 10:15 am	Registration and Tea		
10:15 am – 10:20 am	Welcome Address	Radha Chellappa Executive Director, IWWAGE	
10:20 am – 10:40 am	Findings and Insights from the IWWAGE Study: ‘The Changing World of Women’s Work: Navigating the Possibilities and Precarities within Platform Work’	Dr. Bidisha Mondal Senior Research Fellow, IWWAGE	Dr. Dipa Sinha Independent Researcher
10:40 am – 11:30 am	<i>Panel Discussion 1</i> Women in Platform Economy: Complexities and Pathways to Empowerment	Prof. Balaji Parthasarathy Professor, IIIT-B Dr. Anweshaa Ghosh Research Fellow and Program Lead, ISST	
11:30 am – 11:45 am	Tea Break		
11:45 am – 12:30 noon	Special Address	Prof. Farzana Afridi Professor, ISI	Dr. Sona Mitra Director – Policy and Research, IWWAGE
12:30 pm – 01:15 pm	<i>Panel Discussion 2</i> Collaborative Solutions: Stakeholders’ Perspectives on Empowering Women in Platform Work	Vaibhav Raaj National Project Officer, ILO Decent Work Team for South Asia and Country Office for India Dr. Kalpana Viswanath Co-founder & CEO, Safetipin Vandana Narang Organiser, GIGWa Priya Anant Director, Life Circle Dr. Valentina Brailovskaya Senior Economist, IDinsight	Yamini Mishra India Country Director, MacArthur Foundation
1:15 pm - 1:20 pm	Vote of thanks	Prakriti Sharma Research Manager, IWWAGE	
1:20 pm – 2:00 pm	Lunch		