

# Institute for Social and Economic Change



***National Seminar on  
Women Leadership in Decentralised Government  
on November 3-4, 2022 at ISEC Bengaluru.***

***Organised by***

<b>Centre for Decentralisation and Development, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru,</b>	<b>RC 10-Gender Studies of Indian Sociological Society</b>	<b>Centre for Women's Studies, Bangalore University</b>
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***Concept note***

Background 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts are landmark legislations that have formally and firmly established the decentralised government in both rural and urban India. Hailed as important landmarks for their radical approach towards decentralisation, these legislations devolved powers to sub-state level governments and sought to ensure the participation of the disadvantaged groups. These legislations sought to bring a new political system at the grassroots level by giving priority to decentralised political institutions, and people's participation in local governance and planning. In rural areas, Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) with democratically elected governments at the village, block/ taluk and district levels were established. In urban areas, a legislative framework for the establishment and strengthening of urban local bodies was provided.

An important component of the legislation is the provision of reservations to disadvantaged groups of women and those belonging to Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). Historically, these groups were not participating in the decentralised government because of the prevailing social and economic structure. In order to improve their representation and participation in the local self-government, one-third of seats and executive positions are reserved for women and for persons belonging to SC/ST categories the reservation was according their population.

Reservation of seats in the decentralised government improves the access of disadvantaged groups to political decision making significantly, and this is very much true in India. The policy of reservation contributed to impressive representation of these groups in the local government. As per the statistics provided by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, there were 2.56 lakh PRIs in the country in 2017; the proportions of Grama Panchayats (GPs), Taluk Panchayats and Zilla Panchayats in the total number of PRIs were 97.2, 2.6 and 0.2, respectively. The total number of elected representatives in PRIs at three levels was 29.50 lakhs in 2014. The proportions of SC/ST representatives and women in the total PRI elected representatives were 30.4 and 45.9, respectively.

It is nearly 30 years since the policy of reservations has been introduced in PRIs. The representation of women in Panchayats has substantially improved with as many as 20 states increasing the proportion of reservations to 50 per cent. Currently, there are a total of 14,53,973 elected women representatives in PRIs, which amounts to nearly 45% of the total number of seats.

It is against this background that this national seminar aims to examine the issues pertaining women leaders in Panchayats, their participation in the decentralised governance and impact of their leadership on service delivery and local development. The seminar aims to examine the contribution of women leaders to the decentralised governance and development, successful models, experiences of women leaders from different parts in India (especially from the north-east) and challenges faced by them. The following are the sub-themes of this national seminar.

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### Sub-themes to be covered in the seminar

1. Quality of women leadership in rural and urban local government
2. Identification and prioritisation of development issues by women leaders in rural and urban local government
3. Impact of women leadership on service delivery and local development
4. Women leaders in rural and urban local government, and their empowerment through SHGs
5. Political Empowerment of Women leaders in the decentralised government in the Sixth Schedule areas.
6. Women leaders as change makers: Successful cases
7. Proxy leadership in rural and urban local government
8. Barriers faced by women leaders in the decentralised governance and development

### Process for research papers selection and publication

- a. The papers are to be based on primary data and critical analysis of the same.
- b. Step-1: The author/s should submit an abstract of 500 words, indicating paper title, details of author (s), critical issues focused, methodology to be adopted, key findings based on their analysis and citations of relevant books/ papers. Please indicate the number and title of the sub-theme under which the abstract is submitted. Each submitted abstract will go through double-blind review process.
- c. Step-2. The full length paper of about 8,000 words is to be submitted and this will undergo double-blind review process and plagiarism check.
- d. Step-3. The selected papers will be presented by the authors during the seminar, which will be discussed by a set of expert discussants. Then authors will be requested to revise the papers based on the suggestions received in the conference and submit the revised version.
- e. e) The revised papers will be published as a volume from a leading international publisher.

### Timelines

- **Submission of abstract** of about 500 words: **15th July 2022**. Abstracts are to be sent to Dr R Manjula at [cddseminars@gmail.com](mailto:cddseminars@gmail.com); [manjula@isec.ac.in](mailto:manjula@isec.ac.in)
- **Communication of selection of abstract** for preparing full-length paper: **29th July 2022**.
- **Submission of full paper** of about 8,000 words: **15th September 2022**.
- **Communication of decision on the selection of papers** for presentation in the seminar: **15th October 2022**.

### Organising Partners

- a. Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru (**Prof D Rajasekhar and Dr R. Manjula**)
- b. Gender Studies (RC-10), Indian Sociological Society (ISS), New Delhi (**Prof Indira Ramarao, Prof. Ajailiu Niumai and Dr. Rajni Bala**)
- c. Centre for Women's Studies (CWS), Bangalore University, Bengaluru (**Dr. Sudeshna Mukerjee**)

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