

# charcha



20-22 Aug 2024

India Habitat Centre, Delhi

20th Aug 2024

*India Habitat Centre, Delhi*

charcha

# Roadmap to a 'Viksit & Inclusive' India@100



Moderator- Shekhar Gupta

Panelists- Arti Ahuja, Amitabh Kant - IAS, Dr. R S Sharma

## key takeaways

- India must focus on populous states like UP, Bihar, MP, and Jharkhand to leverage its demographic dividend while addressing nutrition, health, and inclusivity challenges
- Agility in the job market is crucial for improving women's employment and including persons with disabilities (PWD) by matching skills with job opportunities
- Young people's media consumption reflects a lack of engagement options, serving as a distraction due to the availability of free data
- Empowering women and PWD through skilling programs can help overcome barriers and enhance professional advancement



# Inclusive Value Chains



Keynote Speaker- Amit Yadav

Moderator- Akshay Soni

Panelists- Anish Malpani, Gayatri Divecha, Indumathi, Vishal Chowla

## key takeaways

- Value chains significantly affect social, environmental, and economic sectors, and must focus on sustainability and social impact
- Inclusive value chains ensure that all stakeholders are seen, heard, and actively engaged in the change process
- A key challenge is addressing the root problem of citizen disengagement from their basic responsibilities



# Climate and Equity: Pathways for Building Community Resilience



Keynote Speaker- Faiz Ahmed Kidwai - IAS  
 Report Launch - Aloka Majumdar  
 Moderator- Anant Bhagwati  
 Panelists- Romit Sen, Shivani Gupta, Arindom Datta, Dr. Sejal Worah, Aparna Dua

## key takeaways

- Integrating ESG and climate considerations is essential for business growth, yet climate-related programs for the base of the pyramid often still rely on a top-down approach
- The current system unfairly places the burden of transitioning to natural farming solely on farmers; philanthropists and impact investors can aid this shift by providing funding, inputs, and capacity building
- Sustaining economic and livelihood development requires addressing and preserving natural systems that support farming, but the lack of measurable outcomes often leads to inadequate funding



# Solving the Skills Conundrum: Can Technology & Processes unlock for the Scale with Quality?



Moderator- Ankur Batra  
 Panelists- Arunesh Singh, Lohit Bhatia, Sunil Dahiya, Dr. Rishikesh Patankar

## key takeaways

- Real-time data capture and eKYC ensure accurate, reliable, and standardized candidate information across platforms
- Mobile apps, job platforms, and auto-scaling servers streamline candidate registration and manage high data volumes efficiently
- Partnerships and addressing connectivity challenges in remote areas improve access to skill development opportunities
- Focused strategies support and integrate women into the workforce, driving productivity and diversity



# Capital with Purpose: Navigating Fundraising Landscape



Moderator- V Sriram

Panelists- Alok Majumdar, Deepali Khanna, Kurush Irani, Prabhakar L

## key takeaways

- Philanthropy must support organizations in adapting and reinventing their approaches to meet evolving challenges
- Solutions should address the interconnectedness of problems, requiring a convergent flow of philanthropic efforts
- Open dialogue between donors and grassroots organizations is essential to align priorities and ensure that donor strategies reflect actual needs on the ground



# Future of Women in Work: Improving Female LFPR by 2030



*Keynote Speaker- Renu Sud Karnad  
Moderator- Deepa Nagraj  
Panelists- Varun Khaitan, Ajaita Shah, Sharon Buteau, Pooja Sharma Goyal*

## key takeaways

- The employability gender gap in India is 51%, with only 19.2% of women in the labor force compared to 70.1% of men, indicating urgent action is needed
- Diverse data sources are crucial for tracking progress, with local women entrepreneurs as key data gatherers in rural and urban areas
- Higher-paying jobs attract more women, while low-income jobs lack sufficient incentive amid family and social barriers
- Women experience multiple career breaks, requiring redesigned pathways and effective return-to-work programs



# Economically Empowering Women in the Age of AI: From Glass Ceilings to Open Doors



*Moderator- Aditi Jha*

*Panelists- Aparajita Bharti, Archana Vyas, Kanta Singh, Nidhi Bhasin*

## key takeaways

- AI empowers women, with many women-owned businesses adopting AI tools and training programs enhancing their participation in tech
- Gender-intentional policies are essential for AI development to prevent biases, requiring collaboration between government and industry for inclusivity
- Clean, unbiased, and regionally relevant data is vital for effective AI development in India, promoting understanding across diverse communities
- Bridging the digital divide and enhancing digital literacy among women and underserved populations is crucial for equitable access to AI opportunities



# Navigating an AI-driven Workplace: from Challenges to Opportunities



Keynote Speaker- Manish Sabharwal

Moderator- Ruchee Anand

Panelists- Manu Chopra, Meg Garlinghouse, Puneet Chandok, Shankar Maruwada

## key takeaways

- India's labor market shows imbalances, with agriculture employing 44% of the workforce but contributing only 14% to GDP, highlighting the issue of "employed poverty"
- AI presents opportunities to democratize resources and enhance economic prospects, especially for marginalized groups, necessitating upskilling in AI and digital literacy
- AI can support roles in healthcare and agriculture without displacing jobs, with skills-first programs essential for improving social mobility among women and rural communities
- Effective integration of AI in India requires clean, unbiased data and AI fluency tailored to local contexts to foster understanding across diverse populations



# From Policy to Execution : Vocational Education, Internship and School to Work Transition under NEP 2020



*Moderator- Raj Gilda*

*Panelists- Pratiksha Mishra, Shagun Sabarwal, Amrita Mishra, Neeti Sharma, Vandana Bahri*

## key takeaways

- Integrating fine arts with STEM subjects is crucial, as both soft and hard skills are important, requiring schools to possess the right expertise for effective execution
- Internships should include local employers, such as beauty salons and garages, to incorporate entrepreneurial elements into the curriculum alongside large corporations
- Mandatory vocational training and public-private initiatives are essential for evolving the secondary education system to achieve broader outcomes



# Power of Evidence: How Impact can be the Catalyst in Skills



*Moderator- Vivek Pandit*

*Panelists- Shriya Sethi, Priyanka Yalamanchili, Jayant Rastogi, Gabriel Bordado*

## key takeaways

- Tracking income growth, career progression, and employer success assesses the lasting impact of skilling programs
- Continuous evaluation and a global skills taxonomy drive data-driven decisions, adaptability, transparency, and evidence-based policies
- Addressing systemic livelihood challenges, especially for women, is key to empowering them through skills to overcome barriers
- Skilling programs must adapt to the evolving needs of learners and the job market to create lasting impact



# Scaling Green Entrepreneurship



Moderator- Anjum Khalidi

Panelists- Arpit Sharma, Madam Lynett, Sam Owilly, Shivi Sheeraan, Venkat Kotamaraju

## key takeaways

- Engaging youth is crucial for effective climate action, as their involvement is vital for environmental sustainability
- Many green entrepreneurs are tech-savvy young individuals seeking better lives for themselves and their communities, highlighting a trend in scalability
- Long-term livelihood improvements require training and upskilling to be complemented by solutions that address both supply and demand sides
- Empowering youth as change catalysts requires a blended approach that develops skills and provides capital for green enterprises



# Empowering Leadership through AI for Good: Gen AI Masterclass



*Suchit Puri, Dr. Amruta Joshi*

## key takeaways

- AI influences all sectors, including energy, healthcare, and agriculture, creating opportunities to enhance work across various functions
- Responsible AI encompasses fairness, accountability, explainability, and transparency
- Developing AI inclusively and responsibly is crucial for engaging audiences in a personalized and meaningful manner
- Trust in AI systems is a significant barrier for enterprises, but applying responsible AI principles and utilizing diverse, continually improving data can mitigate this challenge



# Artisanal Renaissance: India & Traditional Crafts



Moderator- *Dr. Dimple Bahl*  
Panelists- *Purnima Rai, Padma Shri Laila Tyabji*

## key takeaways

- Artisans are using digital tools to market their crafts directly, improving financial sustainability and adapting to consumer trends
- The demand for handmade and sustainable products supports long-term growth in the craft sector
- Artisans must balance business scaling with preserving the unique identity of traditional crafts
- To build resilience, it's essential to diversify markets, maintain personal design connections, and address export dependencies



# Women Breaking Barriers for Women: Livelihood, Equity, and Social Justice



*Moderator- Nishtha Gautam*

*Panelists- Sampat Devi, Surabhi Yadav, Pooja Pande*

## key takeaways

- Empowerment is claimed, not given; women must actively assert their power and engage with challenges persistently
- Women face fewer opportunities to fail than men and failure should be viewed as part of innovation; funders need to support women's failures
- The workplace lacks trust rather than innovation or funding, with a crisis of imagination preventing rural girls and women from being seen as leaders
- Diversity and inclusion require "patience capital," emphasizing a long-term commitment to growth and career development for women



**Women Empowerment**

21st Aug 2024

*India Habitat Centre, Delhi*

charcha



Moderator- Parikshit Luthra  
Panelists- Padma Bhushan Ajai Chowdhry, Pramod Bhasin, Sairee Chahal

## key takeaways

- India's job creation potential lies in combining manufacturing with engineering and design, aiming for high-quality employment
- Shifting from job-seeking to job creation is essential, as small and medium businesses can significantly multiply job opportunities
- Strategic focus on AI development in areas where India excels can drive substantial economic growth
- Empowering individuals to become job creators can enhance overall employment and economic resilience



# AI for Societal Transformation



Keynote Speaker- Hon'ble MoS (IC) Jayant Chaudhary  
Moderator- Ram Papatla  
Panelists- Thampy Koshy, Ireena Vittal, Dr. Chintan Vaishnav,  
Shankar Maruwada

## key takeaways

- Inclusion goes beyond access to services; unbiased technology can inspire and motivate by eliminating judgment
- To empower local entrepreneurs, we need technology for better seed infusion, along with capital and investments to support their growth and risk-taking
- Transformation happens when existing connections are disrupted and reformed, leading to new value chains and opportunities
- Transformation is inevitable, with technology serving as the primary catalyst for change



# Navigating effective data management in Social Impact Landscape



Moderator- Dr. Manju Menon  
 Panelists- Dr. Sarayu Natarajan, Aditi Namdeo, Rahul Kulkarni

## key takeaways

- Privacy laws like the DPDP Act and informed consent promote responsible data use through effective data lifecycle management
- AI and open-source tools enhance data collection and analysis, while training is vital for accurate data handling and social impact
- Collaboration among organizations is essential to improve data sharing, reduce redundancies, and maximize social impact



# Unleashing Potential: Empowering All Abilities in Livelihoods



Keynote Speaker- Rajesh Aggarwal, IAS  
 Moderator- Mallikarjuna lytha  
 Panelists- Sunil Pahilajani, Alina Alam, Meenu Bhambhani

## key takeaways

- India's disability population of over 10 crore represents a significant talent pool, making it essential for businesses to engage this sector to achieve a developed India
- True accessibility requires more than ramps; implementing Section 40 of the RPWD Act is crucial for integrating the disabled population, whom form a substantial consumer base
- The main issue lies not in the number of people with disabilities but in limiting perceptions that hinder recognition of their potential and abilities



# Narrative Shapers: Media Mavericks & Stories of Impact



Moderator- Sanjoy Roy

Panelists- Amish Tripathi, Nandita Das, Rajshri Deshpande, Zainab Patel

## key takeaways

- Violence is so normalized and glamorized in mainstream films that it takes extreme portrayals to elicit any reaction, reducing real-life tragedies to mere statistics
- Cinema can humanize characters, fostering empathy through shared emotions like fear instead of glorifying violence
- Films should explore the aftermath of violence—hopelessness, anger, and loneliness—rather than depicting the act itself
- Stories subtly shape perceptions and responses to societal issues, reflecting their significant yet often unconscious influence on audiences



# Leadership as the Lever for Catalytic Social Impact



*Lightning Talk- Vishal Kumar  
Moderator- Archana Ramachandran  
Panelists- Ishmeet Singh, Gayathri Nair Lobo, Ruchee Anand,  
Surabhi Bikhchandani, Anu Prasad*

## key takeaways

- Ethical data management, privacy, and lifecycle understanding are essential for informed social impact decisions
- Nation-building requires changing society, imagination, and collective values, which begins with changing individual mindsets and adopting a selfless service attitude
- For personal and organizational growth in the social sector, self-awareness, feedback, learning from mistakes, and balancing empathy with critical thinking are key
- The use of both qualitative and quantitative data is crucial for informed decision-making in the social impact space



# Leveraging Collaboration for Bold-Bet Philanthropic Action



Moderator- Pritha Venkatachalam  
Panelists- Dr. Vanita Sharma, Pooja Nanda, Kurush Irani,  
Karthik Srinivasan

## key takeaways

- India's ecosystem comprises multi-stakeholder collaborations involving funders, nonprofits, government departments, CSR initiatives and other entities working together
- India is reaping the benefits of collaborative initiatives, but it has yet to fully institutionalize these efforts, particularly in terms of securing adequate funding
- Collaboration presents challenges that require significant effort at each stage to be effective
- Long-term social change depends on diverse partners contributing various human, financial, and network resources rather than focus on individual initiatives



# To Save a Song



Moderator- Sarthak Kaushik

Panelists- Aneesh Pradhan, Padma Shri Shubha Mudgal

## key takeaways

- Preserving traditional music requires teamwork, reinterpretation, and adaptability to stay culturally relevant
- Music education should focus on technical skills, empathy, ethics, and respect for original work to prepare students for real-world challenges
- Independent artists must empower themselves and innovate distribution methods while balancing authenticity with technology
- Artists play a vital role in advocating for ethical practices and societal change, using their platforms to address injustices in the music community



# AI in Governance: Promise, Practicalities & Path Forward



Moderator- Rahul Kulkarni  
 Panelists- Metesh Bhati, Pragya Misra, Jayesh Ranjan - IAS,  
 Abhishek Singh

## key takeaways

- A major challenge in implementing new technology is ensuring data quality and standardization
- AI tools can expedite government decision-making for routine tasks like loan and grant approvals, reducing delays and discrepancies
- The primary objective is to develop AI in India, tailored for India, while also benefiting the global community



# Direct Cash Transfers in India- Landscape and Enablers to Scale



*Moderator- Pankhuri Shah  
Panelists- Murugan Vasudevan, L K Atheeq - IAS, Padma Shri  
Renana Jhabvala*

## key takeaways

- DCTs effectively alleviate poverty, foster economic stability, and empower individuals through unconditional financial support
- Digital innovations enhance the reach and efficiency of DCTs in marginalized communities, improving access to government programs
- Partnerships between governments and philanthropists ensure successful DCT implementation, sustainability, and long-term impact
- Experimentation and studies are essential to evaluate the fiscal sustainability and socio-economic effects of large-scale cash transfer programs



# Digital inclusion for Viksit Bharat@100



*Moderator- Megna Sankaranarayanan*

*Panelists- Deep Kalra, Dr. Kalpana Viswanath, Manish Thakkar, Osama Manzar, Vivek Pandit*

## key takeaways

- Government-created public goods have significantly advanced financial inclusion, as seen in increased transaction volumes and supporting infrastructure
- The digital divide between urban and rural poor remains, with an even wider gap in access and usage among women, especially in digital payments
- Achieving inclusion through technology necessitates strong collaboration as a critical success factor
- Addressing digital policy and public infrastructure from a feminist perspective is vital, as studies indicate that digital interventions in rural India have a multifaceted impact when women are the primary beneficiaries



# Adopting AI for Social Good: Challenges & Opportunities



Moderator- Mandira K Kalaan  
 Panelists- Alpan Raval, Dr. Sarayu Natarajan, Arpita Kanjilal,  
 Apar Gupta

## key takeaways

- Regulatory bodies set ethical standards for AI development, ensuring alignment with societal values and addressing issues like privacy and fairness
- Policymakers enforce AI laws to mitigate risks, assess data security, and ensure systems operate legally
- Developing contact tracing apps requires prioritizing data privacy through anonymization techniques to build public trust
- Community participation empowers individuals by giving them a voice in the AI development process and enabling ongoing feedback for refinement



# Powering Together: Shaping Systems and Approaches to Work for Communities, by Communities



*Moderator- Pritha Venkatachalam*

*Panelists- Upmanyu Patil, Murugan Vasudevan, Mangesh Wange, Pradeep Sharma, Anantika Singh*

## key takeaways

- Educating women is invaluable, as even those with limited education gain legal knowledge and feel empowered to demand their rights
- Community-driven change empowers people to speak their thoughts, creating more leaders and a sense of ownership
- Community participation is crucial for program scalability, as ownership leads to greater engagement and effective implementation
- Building trust by addressing urgent needs demonstrates commitment and enables deeper collaborations through partnerships



# Weaving Legacies: Indian Handlooms with Industry Pioneers



Moderator- Sanjoy Roy

Panelists- David Abraham, Meera Goradia, Pavithra Muddaya, Sooraj Bhat

## key takeaways

- Garments embody unique stories tied to personal and familial histories, enhancing appreciation for textiles beyond aesthetics
- A risk-free environment with advanced payments and buyback options provides security, allowing individuals to focus on creativity and innovation
- As consumers prioritize modern trends over identity markers, adapting design approaches becomes essential
- Ongoing exploration in design is crucial to meet the evolving needs of users effectively



# Scaling Impact through Tech



*Fireside Conversation: Kruti Bharucha and Kailash Nadh*

## key takeaways

- From a technologist's perspective, most social problems do not have purely technological solutions
- The social sector does not lack tech capacity; it has minimal-to-no tech capacity
- Recent advancements in low-code and no-code open-source technologies have empowered organizations, including those in the social sector, to develop solutions without extensive programming expertise



# Bridging the Gap : Digital Pathways for Young Women



*Moderator- Yasmin Riaz*

*Panelists- Ishvinder Singh, Natasha Jog, Shruti Das, Arundhuti Gupta, Ian McBride*

## key takeaways

- Including women in the workforce could boost India's GDP by 27%
- Mentoring is vital for young women in technology, as seeing successful role models ignites their ambition
- The main barrier for young women in tech is a lack of advocacy and support, not ability; they need encouragement to pursue their aspirations
- Meaningful digital use can help women overcome social barriers, especially when tied to economic independence



**Women Empowerment**

22nd Aug 2024

*India Habitat Centre, Delhi*

charcha

# Viksit Gaon, Viksit Desh



*Keynote Speaker- Atul Kumar Tiwari*

*Moderator- Atul Satija*

*Panelists- Arun Maira, Padma Shri Renana Jhabvala, Vijay Mahajan*

## key takeaways

- Addressing global issues requires an integrated approach, harnessing rural India's economic potential beyond a poverty-centric view
- Collective ownership and decentralized models are vital for resilient rural economies, driven by empowered local governance
- Elevating rural productivity depends on comprehensive skilling, entrepreneurship, government coordination, and financial access
- Strengthening microenterprises, especially women's entrepreneurship, is essential for economic resilience through focused support and regulatory reforms



# Clearer Vision, Brighter Futures: Addressing the Presbyopia Gap



*Keynote Speaker- Dr. Indu Bhushan - IAS*

*Moderator- Amit Gupta*

*Panelists- Abigail Steinberg, Ella Gudwin, Narasimha Narayanan, Peyush Bansal*

## key takeaways

- Accessing affordable eyeglasses in rural areas is challenging, often requiring travel to urban centers, incurring additional costs and lost wages
- Task sharing in primary care allows health workers to conduct vision screenings and dispense reading glasses, enhancing maternal health services
- Eyeglasses serve as a livelihoods and road safety intervention, essential for effective learning, work productivity, and safe navigation
- Integrating eyeglasses into community touchpoints, like crop input stores, can significantly improve access for farmers and drivers needing clear vision



# Imagining Tomorrow: Scaling Regenerative Agriculture for a Sustainable India



Moderator- Prachur Goel  
 Panelists- Jasmer Dhingra, Sridhar Easwaran, Namita Singh, Dr. GV Ramanjaneyulu

## key takeaways

- Farming is high-risk, requiring affordable capital and better access to effective insurance, including parametric options, to address inadequate climate-related protections
- Farmers are increasingly using digital tools like Google, YouTube, weather apps and pest identification apps, showing a growing reliance on technology to tackle climate challenges
- Certification should evolve into an integrated data management system that includes extension services, credit access and carbon financing, with the Government of India actively developing a platform



# Language as the First Step for the Last Mile



*Moderator- Jiren Topno*

*Panelists- Shiv Shankar Kandeyong, Bangwang Losu, Amabel Susngi*

## key takeaways

- The shift to modern technology has led young mothers to favour digital content over traditional oral practices, risking cultural erosion
- Language connects marginalized communities to opportunities and identity but can also create exclusion, hindering innovation from those outside mainstream conversations
- Understanding local languages improves learning outcomes for children and highlights the economic disadvantages faced by individuals who struggle with language barriers, leading to potential financial losses



# Sunsetting Extreme Vulnerability: Institutionalising Economic Inclusion for the Rural Poor



Moderator- Anjani K Singh  
 Panelists- John Paul, Madam Lynett, Sam O'willy, Shobhini Mukerji, Shweta Banerjee

## key takeaways

- Simplifying design enhances operational excellence by reducing cognitive load on field staff, enabling better focus on coaching and support
- Continuous process monitoring provides valuable insights, helping stakeholders identify gaps and make real-time adjustments for improved outcomes
- Unbundling interventions leads to more adaptable and cost-effective poverty alleviation strategies tailored to specific contexts and needs



# Is Enterprise the Entire Prize?



*Moderator- Smita Verma*

*Panelists- Malti Singh, Deepantri Sardar, Dwipanita Rabha*

## key takeaways

- Economic independence alone cannot effectively tackle deeper societal challenges like domestic violence, even for working women
- While money and enterprise enhance lives, their impact on society, communities, and traditions must be considered for true equality beyond just financial aspects
- Women's market participation inspires them to revive traditional crafts using local materials, creating valuable products while preserving cultural identity



# Farming the Future: What will it take to Secure Livelihoods & Drive Inclusion for Smallholder Farmers?



Moderator- Krishnan Hariharan  
 Panelists- Aparna Bijapurkar, Chetna Gala Sinha, Dipanwita Chakraborty, Nishant Kumar

## key takeaways

- The development sector often struggles to listen, approaching communities with predetermined solutions in a top-down manner rather than understanding their needs
- Technology solutions struggles to gain farmers' acceptance but becomes more relatable when presented by trusted individuals
- Experimenting with technology for smallholder farmers poses high risk. Strong support from FPOs and programs is essential for effectiveness and adoption



# Voices from the Ground: Scaling EIP across States



Moderator- Sreya Mozumdar  
 Panelists- Subrata Singh, Saroj Mahapatra, Sushant Verma, Dr. Marcella D'Souza

## key takeaways

- Transformational change occurs at three levels: being, knowing, and doing, which build confidence and capabilities over time
- Scaling Economic Inclusion Programs (EIP) for marginalized communities requires understanding their needs through coordinated interventions to increase incomes and assets
- Tools like participatory wealth ranking and poverty assessments help identify community disparities and target physical and financial capital effectively
- Recognizing the importance of commons is essential for ecological restoration, creating economic opportunities for the poor, and promoting social justice



# Water Security and Livelihoods: Collaborative Strategies for Sustainable Futures



*Moderator- Gayathri Nair Lobo*

*Panelists- Prasanna Khemariya, Sunil Chavan - IAS, Vinod Kulkarni*

## key takeaways

- Community engagement is essential for revitalizing water bodies, integrating local knowledge and needs into management strategies
- Technological innovations enhance water management by offering tools for monitoring quality and availability, promoting efficient resource use
- Rehabilitation of local water bodies improves agricultural productivity through better irrigation systems, boosting crop yields and food security
- Sustainable solutions to rural distress must enhance water access and contribute to the socio-economic well-being of communities facing water scarcity



# AI: Friend or Foe?



Moderator- Guru Bhat  
 Panelists- Anjali Bansal, Neelam Dhawan, Sharad Sharma,  
 Umakant Soni

## key takeaways

- The rise of AI automation raises concerns about job losses, prompting discussions on the future of work and obsolete employment
- AI can enhance human abilities by providing insights and analytics, improving decision-making in fields like healthcare
- AI systems may introduce biases and discrimination, along with data privacy concerns, emphasizing the need for ethical guidelines
- AI technologies can tackle complex global challenges, such as climate change and resource management, through data-driven solutions for efficiency and sustainability



# Unplugged - Malini Awasthi & Kutle Khan Project



# Co-hosts & Partners

charcha



BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation



TATA STEEL FOUNDATION



H&M FOUNDATION



Thank you for being a part of **chQrcha**



We look forward to seeing you again from **12-14 Nov 2025**