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WEE Connect 2026

AWE India Network Convening

collaboration • momentum • impact

Convening Proceedings

March 17, 2026

Le Meridien, New Delhi



Introduction

Women's economic empowerment continues to be a critical driver of inclusive and sustainable growth, with women-led enterprises emerging as key engines of livelihood generation, collective resilience, and community transformation. In this context, on March 17 2026, the AWE India Network convened **WEE Connect 2026** at Le Meridien, New Delhi in collaboration with SEWA Bharat, as a multi-stakeholder platform bringing together practitioners, policymakers, financial institutions, researchers, and ecosystem enablers to deliberate on scalable pathways for women's enterprise growth.

Advancing Women's Enterprises (AWE) India Network – an initiative to advance women's entrepreneurship across the country was launched on March 14, 2024. This network aims to create a supportive ecosystem that brings together diverse stakeholders to foster the growth and success of women-led businesses, and currently has 120+ network members representing diverse ecosystem players.

The convening brought together over **200+ delegates** from across government, civil society, financial institutions, philanthropy, and grassroots enterprise ecosystems to discuss structural barriers, market opportunities, and collaborative solutions for women-led, collective enterprises.

The primary objective of WEE Connect 2026 was to reconvene AWE India Network members to deliberate on enabling structure for **women entrepreneurs to markets at scale**, with a specific focus on collective enterprises, financing, inclusive procurement systems, nano entrepreneurship, and ecosystem collaboration.

The convening aimed to:

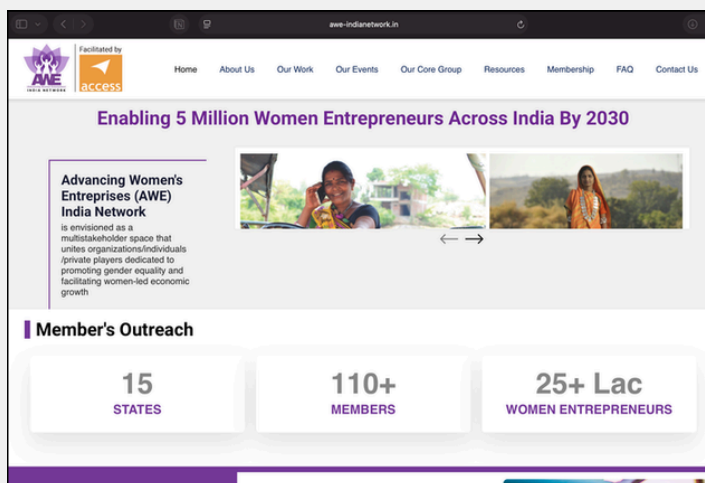
- Identify critical ecosystem gaps in finance, policy, market linkages & capacity building initiatives
- Present evidence-based recommendations around women-led nano enterprises
- Align policy discourse around definitions and support structures around nano enterprises
- Create AWE India Network's strategic roadmap 2026
- Strengthen institutional partnerships and collective action pathways

These objectives framed the day's sessions around moving **from dialogue to practical solutions and collective action**.

INAUGURAL SESSION

The convening commenced with opening remarks by Ms. Meenakshi Rathore, Vice President – Gender & Diversity, ACCESS Development Services. She reflected on the progress made by the AWE India Network over the last two years. She also highlighted the network's evolution as a platform for ecosystem partnerships, knowledge exchange, and action-oriented collaboration for advancing women's entrepreneurship.

A key highlight of the inaugural session was the release of 'Mai Bhi Lakhpati' Compendium, launch of the AWE India Network website, and release of second edition of the AWE India Network Newsletter by distinguished chief guest, Mr. K Moses Chalai, IAS, Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, and Mr. Vipin Sharma, CEO, ACCESS Development Services along with AWE Core Group Members. 'Mai Bhi Lakhpati' compendium is a knowledge product that highlights the stories of triumphs of women entrepreneurs supported by various civil society organisations in different capacities across the country. The AWE India Network website is envisioned as a dynamic platform for ecosystem engagement, knowledge dissemination, and ongoing collaboration within the network. The second edition of the newsletter highlights current developments in the network, alongside new supportive measures for women entrepreneurs by the government and other stakeholders.



The inaugural session featured a keynote address by Mr. K. Moses Chalai, who highlighted the strategic importance of building enabling systems that allow women-led enterprises to transition from subsistence to sustainable growth and scale. Situating women's entrepreneurship within the broader national development agenda, he emphasized that women's economic empowerment lies at the core of India's development trajectory. Advancing women's economic agency, he noted, is not merely a matter of equity but a strategic imperative for achieving inclusive and sustainable growth.



As India progresses toward ambitious economic milestones, he underscored the critical role of public institutions and policy frameworks in enabling women's participation in the economy. In this context, he drew attention to the scale and influence of government-linked enterprises—their significant contributions to GDP, employment, and public revenues position them as powerful vehicles for mainstreaming gender inclusion within economic systems.

A key priority identified was the use of public procurement as a transformative tool to support women entrepreneurs. Government mandates promoting procurement from micro and small enterprises, alongside dedicated targets for women-led businesses, signal a shift toward embedding gender inclusion within formal market systems. These efforts are further complemented by public spending initiatives, including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which are increasingly being leveraged to invest in women and children. Together, such measures aim to expand market access, strengthen enterprise growth, and foster enabling ecosystems for women entrepreneurs—advancing a vision where women are not just beneficiaries, but active drivers of economic activity.

At the same time, he highlighted persistent structural gaps, particularly the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles across public institutions. Bridging this gap is essential to fully realize the potential of women-led development and ensure that decision-making spaces reflect diverse perspectives. As India moves towards becoming a multi-trillion-dollar economy, the focus must remain on ensuring that growth is broad-based and inclusive. This includes democratizing access to opportunities and resources so that women, especially those at the grassroots, are integral to and benefit from the country's economic transformation.

Mr. Moses also stressed the need for collaboration between government, civil societies, and all ecosystem stakeholders to enhance women-led development and, ultimately, advance the nation.



Panel Discussions

SESSION 1-

COLLECTIVE ENTERPRISE & SHG FINANCING: CATALYSING THE NEXT STAGE OF GROWTH

Moderator: Ms. Girija Srinivasan, Independent Expert

Panelists:

- Dr. Monica Bhutunguru, IPS, Deputy Secretary (RL), Ministry of Rural Development, GoI
- Ms. Leena Datwani, Senior Financial Sector Specialist, CGAP
- Ms. Smita Jacob, Policy Advocacy Director - South Asia, Women's World Banking

The opening panel examined the necessary evolution of Self Help Groups (SHGs) into robust collective enterprises such as Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), and others. While collective models have expanded rapidly over the last decade, the speakers identified that scaling them sustainably requires a fundamental shift in how the ecosystem approaches market power and financial architecture. The key takeaways and recommendations are stated below:

Key Takeaways

- **Shifting market power through aggregation:** Markets continue to remain heavily trader-driven, limiting fair price realization for individual producers. Collective enterprises such as FPOs enable aggregation of produce and services, which strengthens bargaining power and allows women producers to engage more directly with markets. The existing ecosystem under the National Rural Livelihood Mission provides a strong foundation to further position these collectives as effective market aggregators.
- **Overcoming structural financial barriers:** Current financing systems are not aligned with the realities of rural enterprises. Challenges such as lack of formal documentation, seasonal income patterns, and limited credit histories restrict access to formal finance. There is a need to design financial products that reflect actual cash flow cycles and to strengthen community-based financial intermediaries such as Vitta Sakhis who can bridge the gap between institutions and entrepreneurs.
- **Moving beyond basic credit:** Access to credit alone is insufficient to enable enterprise growth. Intermediary organizations play a critical role in reducing systemic barriers by facilitating access to working capital, enabling digital financial inclusion, and strengthening the institutional capacity of SHG federations. Without these support systems, enterprises struggle to scale sustainably.



Key Recommendations

- **Strengthen collective enterprises as market and financial units:** SHG federations and FPOs should be formally recognised as market aggregators with stronger producer-to-market linkages, working capital support, and direct access to formal procurement and financial systems.
- **Design context-responsive financial products and systems:** Financial products must align with seasonal livelihood cycles, irregular cash flows, and micro-enterprise realities, supported by stronger record-keeping, governance systems, and community cadres such as Vitta Sakhis to improve credit readiness and digital financial inclusion.
- **Build leadership and enabling infrastructure for scale:** The next stage of growth requires stronger women's leadership within collectives, along with enabling infrastructure such as warehousing, logistics, digital finance access, and sustained market linkages to build sustainable and creditworthy enterprises.

Building on the discussion on strengthening collective enterprises through financing and governance, the next session shifted focus to the demand side—examining how inclusive procurement systems can create sustained market opportunities for these enterprises.



Member Spotlight

WEE Connect had a special dedicated section for the most active members of the AWE India Network, highlighting three key organisations- Udhyam Learning Foundation, Cohesion Foundation, and the Chaitanya WISE Foundation.

Krishnan Rangnathan, Co-Founder, Udhyam Learning Foundation, showcased his organisation's work for nano-entrepreneurs and micro women entrepreneurs and the organisation's strategies to enhance the income of vulnerable women navigating their economic journeys.



Cohesion Foundation

Hiral Dave, Director- Programmes, representing Cohesion Foundation Trust, presented a holistic, women-centric approach to grassroots development anchored in strengthening livelihoods and community institutions. She emphasized the centrality of women—particularly small and marginal farmers—in driving sustainable socio-economic change, highlighting models such as women-led Wadi initiatives and community-based monitoring systems.

Chaitanya WISE Foundation

Ms. Kalpana Pant, Executive Director, Kala Maitri, highlighted a community-led model of women's entrepreneurship that integrates skill-building, production, and market access through collective structures. She emphasized how the Women Entrepreneurial Network (WEN) enables rural artisans to own and manage end-to-end production processes, ensuring fair incomes and financial independence.



SESSION 2-

INCLUSIVE PROCUREMENT IN ACTION: EXPANDING MARKETS FOR WOMEN-LED ENTERPRISES

Moderator: Ms. Aarti Mohan, Co-Founder, Sattva Consulting

Panelists:

- Mr. Ajit.B. Chavan, Additional CEO, Government-e-Marketplace, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, GoI
- Mr. Ketul Acharya, President, Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship
- Ms. Payal Nath, Co-founder, KADAM Haat

Following the discussion on financing collectives, this panel explored how public and private procurement systems can actually absorb these aggregated enterprises. The conversation provided hard practitioner evidence on supply chain design, platform utilization, and the realities of bridging the gap between policy intent and actual market execution.

Key Takeaways

- **The Collective is the Only Viable Unit of Change:** Individual women entrepreneurs cannot absorb the compliance, documentation, and operational complexity demanded by formal procurement systems. The aggregated enterprise acts as an "air box" that absorbs this complexity on behalf of the producers. Programs and investments designed solely around the individual woman entrepreneur are intervening at the wrong level.
- **Bridging the Last Mile in Public Procurement:** The Government e Marketplace (GeM) has successfully facilitated significant sourcing, surpassing its 3 percent mandate for women led enterprises to reach 4.7 percent. However, a massive drop off occurs during the seller journey. While two lakh women have registered, only 60,000 actively do business. The bottleneck is not capability. The bottleneck is a lack of last mile awareness, active hand holding, and direct connection to grassroots organizations.
- **Treating Craftsmanship as a Competitive Strategy:** Scalable market access requires deliberate supply chain design. Kalam Heart demonstrated this by spending two decades building a decentralized production system across village clusters. By defining skill tiers, providing productivity tools, and designing standard operating procedures for self managed quality control, they turned traditional craft into a genuine operational advantage capable of meeting large corporate orders without a single factory.
- **Leveraging ESG Data as a Procurement Tool:** Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) certification is a powerful tool to close corporate procurement deals. By partnering with institutions to generate certified data on groundwater savings and carbon reduction, enterprises can substantiate corporate ESG claims. This capacity to certify impact must become a government supported infrastructure rather than a rare research partnership.
- **Recognise collectives as formal procurement entities.**



Key Recommendations

Current registration and compliance systems require individual sign-up. This structurally excludes the only vehicle through which most women can participate in formal procurement at scale. Policy must recognise the aggregated enterprise as a valid and distinct procurement supplier category.

- **Introduce supply diversity targets for the private sector.**

GeM's 3% mandate has already been exceeded in the public sector. A comparable requirement applied to large private corporations, backed by mandatory reporting, would create structural demand for women-led enterprises rather than leaving inclusive procurement to voluntary goodwill.

- **Create tax incentives for inclusive corporate procurement.**

A tax benefit for sourcing from women-led or social enterprises shifts the procurement decision from aspiration to commercial logic. It makes inclusive sourcing financially rational for teams that operate on cost and margin, not development goals.

- **Design growth capital mechanisms for collectives.**

SHG financing was built for individuals. Collectives need enterprise-level working capital, growth finance, and patient capital instruments that reflect their structure as a borrower. Blended finance and development finance institutions need to design products specifically for the collective as a procurement-ready entity.

- **Build government-supported ESG impact certification infrastructure.**

The capacity to certify environmental and social impact should not require a research partnership with a premier institution. A government-supported certification system would enable social enterprises across the country to generate credible data and access ESG-driven corporate procurement pipelines.

Building on these insights, the convening deliberately shifted from dialogue to action. While the panel surfaced systemic challenges and emerging solutions, it also underscored the need for deeper, solution-oriented engagement across specific thematic areas.

To translate these high-level discussions into actionable pathways, participants were invited to engage more closely with the issues through structured group discussions. This transition enabled network stakeholders to collectively interrogate bottlenecks, exchange on-ground experiences, and co-create practical recommendations for strengthening the ecosystem for women entrepreneurs.

Collaborative Working Groups: Co-Creating Solutions from Dialogue to Collective Action

The discussion was followed by thematic working group discussions by participants agreeing to dive deep into issues, gaps, and challenges vis a vis access to finance, market enablement, capacity building, policy definitions, and networking value. The WEE Connect audience started working in groups to shift the discussions and lineating viable ecosystem solutions for women entrepreneurs.

Working Group 1: Defining Nano Entrepreneurs

Working Group 2: Market Enablement for Public Procurement

Working Group 3: Capacity Building and Mentorship Systems

Working Group 4: Policy Influencing and Support

Working Group 5: Network Growth and Ecosystem Knowledge

Group 1: Defining Nano Entrepreneurs

Q1. What are the key gaps and opportunities for micro and nano enterprise financing?

- Formal micro finance organizations routinely bypass low value loans of 5,000 to 10,000 rupees.
- This critical infrastructure gap pushes nano entrepreneurs toward informal lenders and predatory loan sharks.
- Informal lenders operate at exorbitant interest rates, creating unsustainable debt for the entrepreneur.
- The current banking architecture fundamentally fails to support micro ticket sizes.

Q2. How can the opportunities be availed and gaps could be addressed?

- Stakeholders must explore alternative models like peer to peer investment and specialized equity structures.
- The ecosystem requires entirely new financial instruments designed specifically for tiny ticket sizes.
- Institutions must redefine entrepreneurial success by evaluating resilience and collective participation rather than relying solely on traditional quantitative metrics.

Q3. How the AWE India Network can leverage on the opportunities and work collectively to address?

- Serve as a primary incubator to brainstorm, design, and prototype novel financial instruments.
- Actively bridge the massive gap between formal micro finance and informal lending ecosystems.



Group 2: Market Enablement for Public Procurement

Q1. What are the key gaps and opportunities for branding and market access?

- Individual enterprises struggle to differentiate their offerings in crowded public and private markets.
- Maintaining consistent customer engagement remains a persistent hurdle for isolated producers.
- Adapting to customer feedback is difficult for producers operating outside of collective structures.

Q2. How can the opportunities be availed and gaps could be addressed?

- Enterprises must establish unique product identification and clear differentiation to remain competitive.
- Producers need to build strong brand positioning rooted in an understanding of customer emotions.
- Enterprises must create repeat customers through an emotional connection to the product, consistent quality, and structured feedback loops.

Q3. How the AWE India Network can leverage on the opportunities and work collectively to address

- Facilitate vital collaborations to help enterprises build strong, recognizable brands.
- Expand direct market access collectively by pooling resources and market intelligence.

Group 3: Capacity Building and Mentorship Systems

Q1. What are the key gaps and opportunities for capacity building and skills?

- Severe knowledge gaps regarding available government schemes actively exist among NGO staff, CSR representatives, and government officials.
- Ecosystem enablers often fail to understand the fundamental importance of capacity building itself.
- Programs operate on the flawed assumption that only the grassroots level requires intervention and training.

Q2. How can the opportunities be availed and gaps could be addressed?

- Implement top down capacity building that trains NGO staff and CSRs before attempting to train the grassroots entrepreneur.
- Create a centralized digital academy or Learning Management System offering a year long calendar of skill modules and certification pathways.
- Start programs with ground level mapping to identify actual field level skill gaps rather than assuming them.

Q3. How the AWE India Network can leverage on the opportunities and work collectively to address

- Drive active collaboration with formal skill councils to create aggregated, replicable mentorship models.
- Deploy common learning plans that standard organizations can adapt and execute seamlessly.



Group 4: Policy Influencing and Support

Q1. What are the key gaps and opportunities for policy and definitions?

- Government portals like Udyam lump nano enterprises into the broader micro category.
- The lack of a precise formal definition obscures the unique challenges faced by the smallest businesses and prevents targeted policy support.
- Women remain structurally excluded from critical office bearer positions within collective organizations.

Q2. How can the opportunities be availed and gaps could be addressed?

- Advocate for formal tax incentives attached to public procurement from women collectives.
- Establish a clear nano enterprise classification within the MSME framework and mandate the collection of disaggregated data.
- Create a comprehensive, centralized mapping of all state and central schemes for easy access.

Q3. How the AWE India Network can leverage on the opportunities and work collectively to address

- Drive focused advocacy directly with the Ministry of MSME to institutionalize precise definitions.
- Push to secure procurement tax incentives and elevate women into collective leadership roles.

Group 5: Network Growth and Ecosystem Knowledge

Q1. What are the key gaps and opportunities for networking and ecosystem value?

- Structuring network sub groups purely by geographic location fails to address the actual operational bottlenecks members face.
- Large national conferences inevitably exclude grassroots participants due to logistical and financial travel barriers.

Q2. How can the opportunities be availed and gaps could be addressed?

- Segment network members by central pain points, such as marketing, sales, or funding, rather than just geography.
- Create specialized micro groups to share highly targeted funding opportunities, capacity building sessions, and specific success stories.

Q3. How the AWE India Network can leverage on the opportunities and work collectively to address

- Institute annual recognition awards to build network momentum and highlight success.
- Shift toward region wise conferences to democratize access, improve relatability, and maximize grassroots member participation.

The thematic group discussions brought forward grounded, experience-driven insights from across the ecosystem, highlighting both shared challenges and emerging solutions. While these conversations unpacked sectoral nuances in depth, they also pointed to a broader need for robust, data-backed understanding to inform policy, programming, and investment decisions.

To complement these practitioner perspectives, the convening transitioned to a presentation of evidence-based research, anchoring the discussions in large-scale data and reinforcing key themes emerging from the working groups.

Building on this momentum, the next segment sought to bridge on-the-ground insights with empirical evidence, offering a structured lens through which to better understand the scale, characteristics, and systemic challenges of women-led nano enterprises.

SESSION 3-

FROM SURVIVAL TO GROWTH: VOICES OF WOMEN NANO ENTREPRENEURS

Moderator: Ms. Sanchita Mitra, National Coordinator, SEWA Bharat

Panelists:

- Atole Ben, SEWA Nagaland
- Usha Ben, SEWA Delhi
- Sheela Deviji, Punjab, Hand in Hand
- Sarita Ben, SEWA Bihar

This session brought forward grounded insights from women nano entrepreneurs across diverse geographies, illustrating their transition from survival-led livelihoods to growth-oriented enterprise aspirations. Through personal narratives, the discussion underscored the role of collective institutions, access to finance, skilling, and market linkages in enabling women's economic agency.

Key Takeaways

- **Shift from subsistence to growth-oriented entrepreneurship**

Women nano entrepreneurs are increasingly moving beyond survival-driven economic activities toward more aspirational, growth-focused enterprise models. This transition is marked by a desire to build sustainable income streams, establish individual identity, and create intergenerational mobility for their families.

- **Centrality of collective and institutional ecosystems**

Community-based institutions and collectives emerge as foundational enablers across the entrepreneurial journey. They provide an integrated support system—including skilling, access to credit, market exposure, and mentorship—while also fostering social capital, peer networks, and leadership capabilities that are critical for enterprise resilience.

- **Finance as both a stabilizer and growth catalyst**

Access to finance is not limited to enterprise investment but serves a dual role:

Stabilizing households during shocks (e.g., emergencies, income disruptions)

- **Enabling enterprise initiation and expansion**

However, formal financial systems remain misaligned with the needs of nano entrepreneurs, reinforcing reliance on informal or community-based credit mechanisms.

- **Persistent gaps in market access and value realization**

While some entrepreneurs benefit from improved market linkages and digital platforms, many continue to face low visibility, weak demand aggregation, and poor physical market infrastructure. This results in constrained earnings and limited ability to scale. The narratives highlight a growing shift toward direct market engagement and brand ownership to capture greater value.



Key Recommendations:

- **Expand inclusive financial ecosystems:** Design low-ticket, flexible credit products tailored to nano entrepreneurs, with faster disbursement and minimal documentation.
- **Strengthen last-mile institutional support:** Scale community-based models that integrate skilling, finance, and market access.
- **Simplify formalization pathways:** Enable easier registration and compliance processes, especially for low-literacy entrepreneurs.
- **Enhance market linkages:** Invest in both physical and digital market access platforms, branding, and aggregation models.
- **Support asset creation:** Facilitate access to machinery, infrastructure, and working capital to enable scale.
- **Adopt inclusive policy design:** Ensure schemes are accessible to women across literacy levels and informal contexts.



Presentation: Data Led Insights on Women Led Nano Enterprises

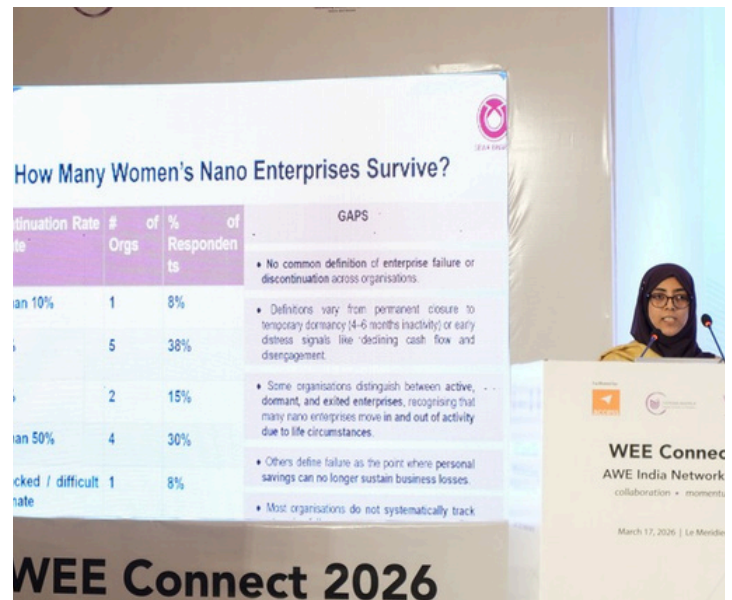
The afternoon sessions shifted focus to the realities of nano enterprises presented by Bhavna Gourishanker Verma, Senior Project Coordinator, ACCESS and Dr. Eisha Choudhary, Researcher, SEWA Bharat. This segment presented preliminary research drawn from 13 practitioner organizations covering over one million women entrepreneurs, establishing a critical evidence base for future policy.

Key Takeaways

- **The Definitional Gap Hinders Policy:** There is no common definition of a nano enterprise across the ecosystem. Organizations use varying thresholds for investment, turnover, and income. This lack of standardization makes targeted policy support and formal classification extremely difficult.
- **Deep Structural Constraints Limit Growth:** Most women-led enterprises are home-based, low-capital, and deeply intertwined with household economies. Women face severe structural barriers, including time poverty, heavy unpaid care work, limited mobility, and irregular income.
- **Redefining Enterprise Discontinuation:** Discontinuation rates appear high, but the metric is flawed. Organizations measure failure inconsistently. Many nano enterprises do not permanently fail but enter periods of dormancy due to health shocks, seasonal changes, or household crises. Understanding the conditions for resilience and restart is more important than simply tracking failure.
- **The Necessity of Integrated Support:** Growth does not result from a single intervention. Women require an integrated support model that includes right-sized flexible finance, sustained market linkages, digital handholding, and social protection.

Building on the evidence presented, the convening moved toward synthesizing insights across discussions, data, and practice. The research findings reinforced many of the challenges surfaced during both the panel and working group sessions, while also sharpening the urgency for coordinated, system-level responses.

At this stage, the focus shifted from identifying gaps to reflecting on actionable pathways and leadership priorities needed to unlock the full potential of nano enterprises. To anchor this forward-looking conversation, the convening brought together key voices from government, philanthropy, and the development ecosystem.



SESSION 4-

FIRESIDE CHAT: WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF NANO ENTERPRISES?

Moderator: Dr. Yamini Atmavilas, Co-Chair, AWE India Network

Panelists:

1. Mercy Epao, Joint Secretary, Ministry of MSME, GoI
2. Poulomi Ghosh, Senior Manager, GEDSI, MicroSave Consulting
3. Mrinalini Shashtry, Vice President, Research & Partnerships, Rang De
4. Krishna Thacker, Senior Program Officer, Gates Foundation

This closing dialogue brought together cross sector leaders to synthesize the day findings. The panel addressed the specific systemic changes required to build an enabling environment for the smallest, most vulnerable enterprises in the economy.

Key Takeaways

- **Designing Purpose Built Infrastructure:** The development ecosystem often expects women to independently manage production, marketing, digitization, compliance, and repayment. This model overloads the entrepreneur. The ecosystem must build support infrastructure around women encompassing packaging, quality testing, and logistics so they can focus entirely on what they do best.
- **Deploying Responsible and Contextual Finance:** Pushing women into formal credit without proper support is dangerous. Formal credit must be responsibly designed with appropriate ticket sizes and repayment cycles strictly aligned to actual cash flows. The financial system must also find ways to utilize alternate data and collective transaction histories to make informal borrowing visible.
- **Simplifying Technology for Immediate Utility:** Technology offers immense promise for visibility and logistics, but it currently acts as a barrier. If a technological solution is too complex or time consuming, it simply adds another burden to the entrepreneur. Technology must simplify processes, ease access to services, and build highly usable pathways rather than complex dashboards.
- **Recognizing Diverse Entrepreneurial Ambitions:** Women nano entrepreneurs are not a homogeneous group. Some are purely livelihood oriented and focus on local survival, while others are highly growth oriented and ready for digital expansion. Market solutions, credit products, and support systems cannot rely on a one size fits all approach.





Concluding Remarks and Vote of Thanks

The convening concluded with closing reflections from the AWE India Network Co-Chairs, who reflected on the progress made through the day's deliberations and outlined the strategic direction for the network moving forward. The concluding remarks reiterated that the AWE India Network is not merely a platform for annual convenings, but a sustained ecosystem for field intelligence, policy support through evidence generation, and collective action toward advancing women-led enterprises.

A central theme emerging from the closing remarks was the urgent need to **include nano entrepreneurship firmly within the policy discourse**. The dedicated panel discussions underscored that nano enterprises must be recognized as a distinct category within the broader enterprise ecosystem, supported by sharper definitions, disaggregated data, and continued engagement with policy stakeholders. Future priorities will focus on building rigorous evidence and sustaining advocacy efforts to ensure that the unique realities of nano entrepreneurs remain visible in policy and programmatic frameworks.

The concluding reflections also emphasized the need to move from dialogue to **practical market access solutions**. This includes strengthening public and social procurement pathways, improving onboarding onto formal digital marketplaces, and creating stronger support systems that enable women entrepreneurs to access larger and more sustainable markets.

Equally, the leadership highlighted the importance of **collective action and ecosystem convergence**. Reducing fragmentation across institutions, building a shared language across stakeholders, and enabling collaborative action pathways were identified as essential to creating long-term impact. By leveraging the collective strengths of network members, the AWE India Network aims to transform the enabling environment for women-led enterprises in a more structured and sustained manner.

The convening formally concluded with a **Vote of Thanks**, expressing gratitude to all speakers, participants, ecosystem partners, government representatives, and network members whose contributions made the dialogue both meaningful and action-oriented. The closing note reaffirmed the network's commitment to translating the convening's insights into tangible next steps for the year ahead.

