

## **Executive Summary on Global Focus Championing Women Entrepreneurs**

The World Trade Centre Mumbai (WTC Mumbai) in association with Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture (MACCIA) organized a conference titled 'Global Focus Championing Women Entrepreneurs' on May 16, 2015 at the South Lounge, World Trade Centre. The main purpose of the event was to promote women entrepreneurship and explore the emerging career opportunities for women in the changing economic landscape. The event was started with the traditional lighting up of the lamp.

Delivering the opening address, **Amit Kamat, Vice President – MACCIA** urged all women to be gainfully employed and contribute to the economic development of the country. Noting the global focus of this conference, he suggested women entrepreneurs to participate in Government of India's 'Make in India' campaign.

He highlighted the history of the MACCIA and how the organization represents the issues of traders, retailers, women entrepreneurs and other business community.

**Dhanashri Hardas, Chairperson – WEC, MACCIA** noted how women have progressed from 3K (kids, kitchen and knitting) to 3Ts (tax, training, technology). Elaborating on how the times have changed on the perception of women's contribution to the economy, Dr Hardas said now economic status of women is accepted as an indicator of society's development. She urged women entrepreneurs to take advantage of the entrepreneurship opportunities thrown open by India's current economic environment, which is based on the principle of liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG), and the 'Make in India' campaign.

She suggested women to explore entrepreneurship in the low-end manufacturing sector, which has tremendous potential to generate employment opportunities. Talking about the global focus of this conference, she said women entrepreneurs must have a global approach to connect with emerging markets, new technologies, new societies, and new partnership.

She highlighted the excellent contribution of Nilima Mishra, Sujata Sahoo who transformed the lives of many women in rural areas of Maharashtra and in Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir respectively through their respective NGOs.

**Pankaja Munde, Honourable Minister for Rural Development, Women and Child Development** explained that the real empowerment of women lies in making them think independently and making them confident instead of only financially equipping them.

She demystified the perception that women are economically backward in poor countries by substantiating with statistics that only 5% of women are entrepreneurs in western countries as compared to 40% in Asia and Africa. However, she stressed on the need to uplift and empower the downtrodden and marginalized women in rural areas who do not have the same level of access to education and employment opportunities as urban women have.

**Ritu Kumar, Fashion Designer** enumerated how career opportunities for women expanded more in the last 40 years than in the 400 years before that. She talked about how India's textile industry employed mainly female weavers and how women multi-managed time and resources optimally.

**Shaina NC, Fashion Designer and Politician** highlighted the need for a supportive environment to encourage women entrepreneurship and suggested every woman to inspire other women to venture into entrepreneurship. She also stressed on the need for including the concept of Women's role in 'Make in India' to make India a global manufacturing hub.

**Lalitha Kumaramangalam, Chairperson, National Commission for Women, Government of India** urged women to eschew the regressive tendency of 'stifling their dreams' in order to progress in their career and called for out-of-the-box thinking to explore entrepreneurship opportunities in sectors outside the traditional areas of papad and pickle making etc. Ms Kumaramangalam stressed women to make full use of the government schemes on housing, financial support to start business etc.

**Rupa Naik, Director, World Trade Centre** offered the full support of her organization to MACCIA's future endeavour to promote women entrepreneurship. She put forth a request to the government to support and encourage the cluster development model for promoting women entrepreneurship.

**Amruta Amdekar and Ms Neeta Arora** proposed the vote of thanks for the inaugural session.

Thereafter, a **Pep Talk Session on the 'Importance of Smile'** was conducted by **Suhas Lele**, cosmetic dentist. He shared with the audience the importance of smile in de-stressing the mind and making a pleasant personality.

**Palekar, S.P. Jain Institute**, was the Chairperson of the **Business Session – 1: Branding the Way Ahead to Market**. He introduced the speakers and invited them to speak. The discussion was mostly focused on the role of marketing and advertising in developing a business. Most of the speakers opined that success in business requires innovative ideas, differentiated products, customer satisfaction more than high-budget advertisements.

**Karon Shaiva, Social Entrepreneur and Chief Impact Officer, IDOBRO** was given the topic 'Marketing My Way'. She spoke extensively on marketing and said anybody who has the conviction to offer something valuable to others can market any product or service.

**Bharat Dabholkar, Creative Director**, was given the topic 'Empowerment'. He spoke on how he and his advertising team made some of the successful advertisement campaigns and films on women empowerment in the past.

**Brinda Miller, Designer and Artist**, was given the topic 'Branding'. She shared her experience of how her women colleagues made meaningful contribution in the field of aesthetics.

**Ms Sunita Bhuyan, violinist and musician**, was given the topic 'Stree Shakti'. She talked about the valuable contribution of women in society through their in-born qualities of empowering, enabling and enriching. She express herself through a solo music performance on the violin as a tribute to these qualities of women.

Post lunch, there was a **Pep Talk Session on 'Stress Management'** by Avinash De Souza. He spoke about the important of positivity in helping nurture entrepreneurship by easing stress through concentration on one's own goals and not being bothered by what others said.

The next session was '**Interviews with dynamic Women Personalities**' conducted by Amrutha Amdekar and Neeta Arora. They conducted a question-answer session with four women who made have impacted lives of other women.

**Kalpna Saroj, Chairperson, Kamani Tubes** took the audience through the journey of her success story which started with the occupation of tailoring to acquiring the sick company Kamani Tubes on the request of the labourers of the latter.

**Jabeenben Jambughodawala, Founder-Director – Sahaj Foundation** explained how her organization encourages tribal women in Gujarat to stand on their own feet and become financially independent.

**Mohini Kelkar, Founder, Grind Master Machines Pvt Ltd** shared how she started a business along with her husband with an initial saving of Rs 25,000 in 1984. In the course of time, her business evolved into a company named Grind Master which exports more than 50% of the products to foreign countries.

**Sujata Sahu, Founder, Director 17,000 ft Foundation** narrated how she chose to become a social worker imparting education among children in the remote villages of Ladakh.

A **Pep Talk Session on 'Effective use of Nutrition Labels'** was organized by **Manisha Parelkar, Food Researcher**. She gave a pep talk on how the unhealthy dietary and food habits gives rise to various life-style diseases. She suggested manufacturers of food products to provide comprehensive information on the ingredients and the nutritional value of the products on the label.

**Business Session II: Plans, Policies and Finance for Women Entrepreneurs** was chaired by **Jaya Goyal, Chairperson, WEC, Integrated Association of MSME of India**. He introduced the others on the panel and gave them the opportunity to present their perspectives on the topic.

**CS S. Suresh, NSIC** provided a brief introduction of the various schemes being offered by NSIC namely, Marketing assistance scheme, B2C portal benefits and procurement of raw material scheme.

**Bharat Shah, ED, BNI, Hyderabad** spoke of the 3Is which are most important of business networking, namely, infrastructure, information and individuals. He emphasized that it was most important to make investments on people, in terms of choosing the right kind of people for the right job. Thereafter orientation is a must.

**C.K. Kumaravel, CEO & Co-founder of Naturals (Beauty Chain)** spoke of following one heart and believing in oneself. One should aim to have a big dream.

A **Pep Talk session on 'Music Therapy'** was organized by **Rahul Joshi** where he presented rag Bhairavi in order to lighten the mood and to create the spirit of entrepreneurship.

Thereafter a **panel discussion on 'Business Women at par with men'** was moderated by Rupa Naik. Ms. Naik raised two questions, namely, 'what are the challenges women have to face in being in a man's world' and 'How is work-life balance maintained'? to each of the panelists.

**Sunila Patil, Director – Veena World** said that maintaining a work-life balance was the greatest challenge. With regard to maintenance of work-life balance, she said that it was all within us, all it required was a bit of effort.

**Tara Sharma, Actress** express that each individual is unique, however everyone had opportunities. The key to facing challenges was to not stagnate. Go all out and get things done. She emphasized that one enjoys satisfaction for achieving something. Work-life balance is different for different people and is difficult to judge.

**Santosh Mandiecha from Reliance electronics** who was asked to join the panelists said that women' contribution to industry is pertinent, citing the example of 90 per cent

employment in a garments factory. He said that if everybody planned they would succeed.

**Ansoo Gupta, Global Head of Business, Pinstorm** said that women are an integral part of industry and that they have gone far ahead and that there was no question of challenges. She said that she chose to draw her own boundaries in her work-life balance.

**Dhanashri Hardas, Chairperson – WEC, MACCIA** said that facing challenges depended on the support a woman receives from home and her peers. She has had a good experience and so she feels that women are at par with men. Work-life balance was entirely her choice.

**A Pep Talk Session on ‘Skin Glows Business’ was conducted by Kalpana Sarangi, Dermatologist.** She visually presented how skin health could be maintained.

In the valedictory session Amrutha Amdekar and Neeta Arora provided a sum up and vote of thanks.