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STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FORUM

## VIRTUAL THEMATIC TRACK

### Women on the Rise: Prioritising Gender Equity as a Business Imperative

**Date:** 11 February | **Time:** 6:30 – 8:15 p.m. (IST)/ 8:00 – 9:45 a.m. (EST)

#### Background

With stepped up action on gender equality, every part of the world can make progress towards sustainable development by 2030, leaving no one behind. Businesses are also improving their practices, and investing resources to achieve gender equality and long-term financial value. Such recognition is important to establish gender pay equity, remove barriers for women to advance to senior leadership positions, improve the skills and capabilities of women workers, and develop unique products for women consumers. While such initiatives have resulted in higher productivity, more customers, and a stronger bottom line, the progress remains slow and only a fraction of the companies are addressing gender-based issues and opportunities. So what's keeping most companies on the sidelines? Likewise, the common beliefs of gender differences make women and men effective in different roles. Thus, women are considered to be less effective in leadership roles since it is to incongruent with femininity are not associated with masculine traits such as assertiveness, competitiveness, dominance, independence and self-reliance.

To address such multidimensional issues of gender equality and to demystify stereotyping, The Energy and Resource Institute ([TERI](#)), in partnership with South Asia Women in Energy ([SAWIE](#)), a joint initiative of the USAID and the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF), is hosting a Thematic track - **Women on the Rise: Prioritising Gender Equity as a Business Imperative** to create a space for dialogue to enable gender equality and women's empowerment, which are central to effective and sustainable development outcomes.

The thematic track will be structured in two sessions –

- **Panel 1: Diversity & Inclusion: Gender Equity as a Business Imperative**

This panel will discuss the broader processes and procedures to incentivize the businesses to mobilise its resources towards impacting gender equity and women’s empowerment as part of their business model. It will further deliberate the importance of creating evidences and accountability tools to bridge gap gaps.

*Key questions for discussion*

- How can we better understand the business impacts of gender equity and women’s empowerment across the value chain?
  - Can investments be prioritized based on women’s needs and business objectives?
- What kind of instruments, processes and gender-responsive measurements need to be planned to explain gender gaps and challenges?
  - Can equity & justice be coded into data analytics of business?

- **Panel 2: Advancing Women Leadership in Business**

This panel will discuss some of the key challenges and underlying social norms that prevent women from claiming their space and leadership roles. It will further deliberate on creation of networks, linkages and encouraging support systems grounded on social protection to advance women leadership.

*Key questions for discussion*

- How do women deal with myths about leadership in business and look beyond boundaries of self-limiting perspectives to get past gender bias?
  - What are the common land mines that can damage a woman’s leadership credibility?
- What kind of social policies and targeted incentives are essential to redistribute the burdens of unpaid work and retain women talent in workforce and leadership positions?
  - How to understand the challenges of the moment and build on woman’s inherent talents and strengths?