

Inclusive Development and Gender Mainstreaming for Viksit Bharat: Bridging Gaps through Social Justice and Equity

Dr. Mohammad Tahir

Department of Social Work, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

Received: 29/03/2025 | Accepted: 17/04/2025 | Published: 09/05/2025

Abstract: Inclusive development and gender mainstreaming are crucial for achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat—a developed India that ensures equitable opportunities for all. This paper explores the importance of integrating gender perspectives into policymaking, economic growth, and social justice frameworks to bridge systemic gaps in access, participation, and empowerment. Through a multidimensional approach, the study highlights the role of social work interventions, legal frameworks, and grassroots movements in promoting gender equity. It also examines global best practices and their relevance to India's socio-economic landscape.

Keywords: Inclusive development, gender mainstreaming, social justice, equity, Viksit Bharat, policy reforms.

Cite this Article:

Tahir, M., (2025). Inclusive Development and Gender Mainstreaming for Viksit Bharat: Bridging Gaps through Social Justice and Equity. *World Journal of Arts, Education and Literature*, 2(5), 1-5.

1. Introduction

India's development trajectory has witnessed significant progress in various sectors. However, social disparities, gender inequalities, and economic exclusion continue to hinder holistic progress. Viksit Bharat, or a Developed India, envisions a nation where every individual has equal access to resources, opportunities, and rights. Inclusive development and gender mainstreaming play a pivotal role in achieving this vision by ensuring marginalized communities, especially women and gender minorities, actively participate in the socio-economic and political spheres.

This paper explores how gender-responsive policies, social justice mechanisms, and equitable access to resources can drive inclusive growth in India. It also highlights the challenges and solutions for integrating gender perspectives into India's development policies.

2. Conceptual Framework

Viksit Bharat 2047: Vision, Purpose, and Significance

'Viksit Bharat' means 'Developed India'. Viksit Bharat 2047 is the government's initiative to achieve the goal and vision of transforming India into a developed entity by 2047, the 100th year of independence for India. The government is working towards achieving all-round development of the country by empowering and improving the capabilities of people to achieve a developed nation or Viksit Bharat.

The Viksit Bharat 2047 initiative seeks to evolve India as a developed nation by its centenary of independence, in 2047. This forward-looking plan focuses on inclusive growth and sustainable development with effective governance. Key to this transformation is the active participation of India's youth, who are seen as both the

agents and the recipients of change. This approach promotes innovation and advancement as well as self-reliance, thus accelerating the achievement of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Objectives of Viksit Bharat 2047

Viksit Bharat's primary goal is to transform India into a developed nation by 2047 through inclusive economic participation for all citizens. It aims to take India's economy to \$30 trillion within just two decades. The strategy is on consolidating infrastructure, expanding social welfare schemes, driving economic growth, promoting sustainable development, and enhancing both ease of living and ease of doing business

Zero Poverty

- Zero Poverty in Viksit Bharat 2047 is achievable through a multi-dimensional approach towards empowering the underprivileged and promoting inclusive development.
- At the same time, food security schemes continue to benefit over 80 crore Indians. The Jan Dhan Yojana, the world's largest, has empowered crores by providing access to banking, ensuring financial empowerment.
- Special emphasis is placed on fulfilling aspirations, protecting the rights of weaker sections, and empowering Divyangs (divyangjan) through specialised support mechanisms.
- Tribal development is prioritised by providing more than three crore rural poor with affordable homes with basic amenities enhances their quality of life.

*Corresponding Author

Dr. Mohammad Tahir*

Department of Social Work, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) license



Farmer Welfare

- Several schemes such as PM KISAN, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, and Soil Health Cards ensure financial security and protection against crop loss risk, benefiting crores of farmers.
- The government has also emphasised the development of irrigation facilities through PM Krishi Sinchayee Yojana and agricultural infrastructure development with a Rs. 1 lakh crore funding facility.
- Schemes such as Kisan Credit Cards, the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, and the SVAMITVA scheme are designed to empower farmers with better resources, enhanced credit availability, and enhanced titles.
- The PM-PRANAM scheme promotes organic farming and sustainable fertiliser use, improving the vision of a prosperous, self-reliant agriculture sector.

Women Empowerment

- Reservation of 33% of the seats in the Lok Sabha and in the state assemblies and the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam guaranteeing quotas to SC and ST women are promoting women's leadership.
- The criminalisation of triple talaq has increased Muslim women's rights and security.
- Efforts towards financial inclusion have seen over 28 crore women opening Jan Dhan accounts, and most of the beneficiaries of PM Mudra Yojana and Stand Up India are women.
- Initiatives like the Jal Jeevan Mission, Swachh Bharat Mission, and increased maternity benefits under PMMVY also promote a culture of increased inclusivity and empowerment of women in India.

Education

- About Rs. 630 crores has been disbursed as the first instalment for the chosen PM SHRI schools, and 12 institutions have been announced as Institutions of Eminence.
- Initiatives like Nishtha Teachers' Holistic Education, Vidyanjali Mentoring, and Nipun Bharat emphasise foundational literacy, adaptive curricula, and credit-based learning.
- The Skill India Mission and PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana have upskilled millions, and SAMARTH Udyog Centres are industry-readying the workforce for Industry 4.0.
- More than 10,000 Atal Tinkering Labs nationwide encourage scientific temperament, while the first National Sports University in Manipur is a milestone achievement.
- Internationalisation of higher education is in progress with the setup of IIT campuses in Zanzibar and Abu Dhabi, supported by schemes like the Fund of Funds and Start Up India Fund Scheme.

Improvements for Middle Class

- PM Awas Yojana (Gramin) has provided more than 2.5 crore houses, while SBM Gramin and its Phase II have enhanced sanitation through large-scale toilet construction and women-led waste management.

- Urban schemes like AMRUT have enhanced water and sewer connections and enabled green spaces, and Har Ghar Jal is supplying tap water to every rural household.
- The Rozgar Mela drive is attempting to create 10 lakh jobs and has added 5.5 crore new EPFO subscribers, further encouraging economic stability.

Healthcare

- The PM-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission and Digital Mission are strengthening public healthcare and digital connectivity, with thousands of health centres and millions of registered health accounts.
- Initiatives such as e-Sanjeevani OPD and PM Jan Aushadhi Yojana enhance the accessibility and affordability of quality care and medicines.
- Initiatives in organ donation and rehabilitation of drug dependents through the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan and the Child Health and Nutrition Mission Indradhanush are leading to a sustainable healthcare ecosystem in India.

National Security

- The country's robust defence capabilities are attested by the induction of indigenously developed Light Combat Helicopters and the pioneering Agnipath scheme, which modernises the armed forces with young, high-tech soldiers.
- The sharp reduction in insurgent incidents as well as successfully executed surgical strikes indicate India's success with its counter terrorism measures.
- Additional measures include the annulling of Article 370 and fast tracked developmental projects, including Jammu & Kashmir, as well as Ladakh; the latter added stability and prosperity to the regions.

Economic Development

- GST implementation has united the market, and digital initiatives like Aadhaar-DBT and UPI have revolutionised payments.
- PM MUDRA, Startup India, and PM Jan Dhan Yojana reforms in the MSME sector have expanded financial inclusion and employment, and the Government e-Marketplace has enhanced efficiency.

Ease of doing business

- India has made tremendous strides in the direction of business facilitation with an emphasis on simplification, transparency, and reduction in compliance.
- The government has removed 41,000 redundant compliances and decriminalized specific company law provisions that are making the business ecosystem more facilitative.
- Tax reforms have further reduced the corporate tax burden and implementation of the PLI scheme and National Single Window System is accelerating manufacturing and investment.

Infrastructure

- The development of infrastructure in India has increased through initiatives like PM Gati Shakti, which enhances

the transport of goods and services and employment generation and improves citizens' lives.

- India has expanded the road, railway, air, and waterway network, and achievements like the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre and the Vande Bharat Express have highlighted India's engineering capabilities.
- The UDAN scheme has also made air travel affordable for the common public.

Technology

- With efforts like Chandrayaan-3 being achieved, India became the first country to reach the South Pole of the Moon, showcasing the cost-effective capability of space by India.
- The Aditya-L1 mission will study the Sun, and the Gaganyaan mission will soon undertake sending Indian astronauts to space.
- India is transforming governance and service delivery through platforms like UMANG and KisanRath, while over 4.6 crore people have been digitally empowered under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan.

Sustainability

- India is now the 4th largest in the world in terms of installed renewable energy capacity, with solar capacity growing exponentially and a record low solar tariff of Rs. 1.99 per unit achieved.
- The Global Biofuel Alliance, is leading the way in the use of sustainable biofuels around the world.
- The GOBARdhan scheme is encouraging waste-to-energy solutions, converting agricultural waste to biogas and compost.
- Through the PM-KUSUM scheme, India is empowering farmers with solar energy solutions. At the same time, the One Sun, One World, One Grid initiative plans to develop a global grid for solar energy, encouraging sustainable growth on the world map.

Inclusive Development

Inclusive development refers to growth that benefits all sections of society, ensuring that the most marginalized and vulnerable groups have equitable access to resources and opportunities. It encompasses:

Economic Inclusion: Equal access to employment, entrepreneurship, and financial resources.

Social Inclusion: Elimination of discrimination and barriers in education, healthcare, and governance.

Political Inclusion: Equal representation and decision-making power for marginalized groups.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a strategic approach to ensure gender equality by integrating gender perspectives into policies, laws, and programs. It involves:

Equal participation of women and gender minorities in economic and social decision-making.

Eliminating structural inequalities that limit access to education, employment, and leadership.

Reforming institutions and policies to address gender-based disparities.

Challenges to Inclusive Development and Gender Mainstreaming in India

Economic Disparities and Workforce Participation : Despite economic growth, women's workforce participation in India remains low. According to the World Bank (2022):

Women's labor force participation in India is only 25%, compared to the global average of 47%. Gender pay gaps persist, with women earning 20-30% less than men for similar work.

Social Barriers and Gender Stereotypes

Deep-rooted patriarchal norms, gender-based violence, and limited access to education restrict women's and gender minorities' social mobility. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB, 2021) reported: A rise in gender-based violence, including domestic abuse and workplace harassment. Limited women's representation in leadership roles, with only 14% of parliamentary seats occupied by women.

Policy and Implementation Gaps

Lack of gender-sensitive budgeting: Many government schemes do not allocate funds for gender-specific needs. **Weak enforcement of existing laws:** Policies such as the Maternity Benefit Act (2017) and Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act (2013) are often poorly implemented.

4. Strategies for Bridging Gaps through Social Justice and Equity

Strengthening Legal and Policy Frameworks

Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB): Ensuring at least 30% of public funds are allocated for gender-inclusive projects. **Strengthening Labor Laws:** Implementing equal pay regulations and maternity/paternity benefits across all sectors. **Strict enforcement of anti-discrimination laws:** Penalizing gender-based workplace discrimination and harassment.

Economic Empowerment and Skill Development

Women Entrepreneurship Schemes: Expanding access to credit for women entrepreneurs through Mudra Yojana and Stand-Up India Scheme. **STEM Education for Girls:** Promoting girls' participation in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields to bridge gender gaps in high-paying careers.

Enhancing Political and Social Representation

Reservation in Political and Leadership Positions: Implementing 33% women's reservation in Parliament and state assemblies. **Grassroots Women's Movements:** Strengthening community-based organizations that empower women and marginalized communities.

5. Role of Social Work in Promoting Inclusive Development

Social workers play a critical role in advancing gender equality and social justice through:

Role of Social Workers in Inclusive Development and Gender Mainstreaming

Social workers play a critical role in advocating for social justice, equity, and empowerment, particularly in the context of Viksit Bharat. Their contributions help bridge gaps in economic, social, and gender inequalities.

1. Empowering Marginalized Communities

- Social workers provide access to essential services like healthcare, education, and employment.
- They advocate for policies that uplift underprivileged groups and ensure inclusivity in development.

2. Gender Mainstreaming & Advocacy

- They promote gender-sensitive policies in government programs, ensuring women's participation in decision-making.
- They work on gender equality initiatives, addressing issues like domestic violence, workplace discrimination, and financial inclusion.

3. Policy Implementation & Social Justice

- Social workers help implement government schemes effectively at the grassroots level.
- They act as mediators between communities and policymakers, ensuring that social justice principles are upheld.

4. Education & Awareness Building

- Conduct community workshops on gender rights, digital literacy, financial independence, and social justice.
- Help eliminate stigma and cultural barriers by fostering awareness and behavioral change in society.

5. Crisis Intervention & Support Systems

- Provide counseling and rehabilitation for victims of abuse, discrimination, and social marginalization.
- Develop self-help groups and support networks to empower individuals facing social injustices.

For Viksit Bharat to be truly inclusive, social workers must be active agents of change, advocating for equitable policies and ensuring that development reaches every section of society. Their efforts strengthen the foundation of social justice and gender mainstreaming, paving the way for a more progressive and fair India.

Advocacy and Policy Change

Working with policymakers to integrate gender-responsive measures into development programs. Mobilizing communities to demand equal rights and access to resources.

Capacity Building and Awareness Programs

Conducting gender sensitization workshops in schools, workplaces, and rural communities.

Training women in legal literacy to help them understand their rights and access justice mechanisms.

Rehabilitation and Support Services

Crisis intervention for survivors of gender-based violence. Skill development programs for economically disadvantaged women.

6. Global Best Practices and Lessons for India

Several countries have successfully implemented gender-inclusive policies that India can learn from: India can adopt similar models by scaling up financial inclusion programs, enforcing gender quotas in politics, and strengthening anti-discrimination laws.

7. Conclusion and Way Forward

For **Viksit Bharat** to become a reality, **inclusive development** and **gender mainstreaming** must be at the core of policy-making and implementation. This requires:

Strengthening Gender-Sensitive Policies

- Expand **gender budgeting** to ensure equitable resource allocation.
- Enhance existing laws on **women's rights, workplace safety, and economic participation**.

Increasing Representation in Leadership & Governance

- Promote **women's political participation** through effective implementation of reservation policies.
- Encourage **diverse leadership** across industries, ensuring decision-making reflects societal inclusivity.

Enhancing Access to Education and Economic Opportunities

- Bridge the gender gap in STEM education and vocational training.
- Support financial inclusion and entrepreneurship, especially for women in rural areas.

Leveraging Digital Inclusion for Equitable Growth

- Expand digital literacy programs to empower women and marginalized communities.
- Ensure access to technology for economic and educational advancements.

Promoting Social Justice & Eliminating Barriers

- Address intersectional inequalities affecting women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and marginalized groups.
- Strengthen community-driven initiatives for empowerment and social equity.

A **Viksit Bharat** cannot thrive without **equal participation and empowerment of all its citizens**. Gender-sensitive policies, inclusive economic frameworks, and strong governance mechanisms are essential to creating a **just, fair, and equitable society**. Through sustained efforts and systemic reforms, India can **bridge gaps in development** and ensure **progress benefits all sections of society**.

- Stronger gender-sensitive laws and policies with proper enforcement.
- Economic empowerment through employment, entrepreneurship, and education.
- Community-driven social justice movements to challenge gender norms and discrimination.
- By integrating gender perspectives into all aspects of development, India can bridge gaps in social justice and equity, ensuring that Viksit Bharat is truly inclusive and sustainable for all.

References

1. World Bank. (2022). Women's Workforce Participation Report.
2. NCRB. (2021). National Crime Records Bureau Report on Gender-Based Violence.
3. UNDP. (2020). Gender Mainstreaming Strategies in Developing Economies.
4. Government of India. (2023). Budget Report on Women Empowerment Schemes.
5. <https://cleartax.in/s/viksit-bharat-2047>
6. Sen, Amartya (1999). Development as Freedom. Oxford University Press. – Explores the capability approach, emphasizing inclusive development.
7. Crenshaw, Kimberlé (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex. University of Chicago Legal Forum. – Introduces intersectionality theory, critical for gender mainstreaming.
8. Duflo, Esther (2012). Women Empowerment and Economic Development. Journal of Economic Literature. – Discusses how gender equity contributes to sustainable economic growth.
9. NITI Aayog (2023). SDG India Index & Dashboard. – Evaluates India's progress on gender and social inclusion within Sustainable Development Goals.
10. Ministry of Women & Child Development (2001). National Policy for the Empowerment of Women. Government of India. – A key framework for gender-inclusive policy.
11. Reserve Bank of India (2022). Report on Financial Inclusion & Gender Equity. – Discusses financial empowerment strategies for women in India.
12. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2023). Gender Equality Strategy. – Global perspectives on gender mainstreaming.
13. World Bank (2021). Women's Economic Participation in India. – Analysis of workforce participation and policy gaps.
14. International Labour Organization (ILO, 2020). Gender and Inclusive Growth. – Research on labor rights and economic inclusion.