

2nd day at G20 EWG meeting at Brasilia sees progress on commitments made under Indian Presidency 2023 on developing an international reference classification of occupations and skills, enabling skills based international mobility of labour.

Posted On: 29 MAR 2024 7:01PM by PIB Delhi

Second day of the G20 Employment Working Group (EWG) meeting started with a **special session** dedicated to the follow-up of implementation of commitments made during India's G20 presidency to develop an international reference classification of occupations and skills.

The Secretary, Labour & Employment, Ms. Sumita Dawra, highlighted that the first step towards realization of the long awaited global skill harmonisation has been taken with ILO and OECD having prepared the draft terms of reference (ToR) of the feasibility study for international reference classification. The feasibility study, spanning two years, will include a pilot in select sectors, including IT, care and green sectors.

The Indian delegation highlighted the need for G20 countries to work towards the G20 EWG commitment of Indian Presidency in 2023 for incorporation of basic and extended indicators in respective national surveys for mapping global skills gaps. This classification of occupations and skills has the potential to benefit developed, developing and least developed nations alike.

Joint Secretary Sh Rupesh Thakur presented that upon completion, the global framework will cater to the anticipated immediate, medium and long term skill requirements of G20 countries and beyond. It will open up a world of employment opportunities to the workers of G20 countries especially emerging economies like India and Brazil. It will enable demand-based employment mobility, fostering a more interconnected and efficient global job market.

Further sessions were on critical issues of the impact of care policies and equal pay in promotion of gender equality in the world of work were deliberated upon at the forum. The EWG acknowledged the challenges faced by women due to disproportionate caregiving responsibilities and the necessity of supportive care policies.

India's pro-active approach and steps in this direction were highlighted:

- A Time Use Survey was conducted for the first time in the nation in 2019 to understand the distribution of paid and unpaid activities among genders.
- The *Palna* Scheme provides quality day care facilities for children of working women.
- The Code on Social Security 2020 aims at extending social security benefits to gig and platform workers including women.
- Increase in paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks and mandatory crèche facility in the establishments having 50 or more employees.
- Provision in labour laws for work from home for such period and on such conditions mutually agreed by employer and workers, especially women.

Another key agenda taken up was the issue of pay disparity between genders. The Indian delegation enunciated the Government's efforts which have aided in the notable decrease in the gender pay gap in India.

- The newly enacted Code on Wages, 2019 aims at eliminating discrimination in matters related to

conditions of work in addition to the matters of recruitment and pay, thereby, building on the existing Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.

- There are schemes like Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, Stand-Up India, etc for providing women access to collateral free subsidized credit and seed money to set up or scale up their own enterprises.
- Skill India Mission endeavours to equip women with market-relevant skills to bridge the learning-to-livelihood gap and the gender pay gap. Several initiatives taken aim to promote change and tackle societal barriers, which eventually encourages pay parity at workplace.
- Today, over 78.6% of women own bank accounts that they themselves use, which is an improvement by 25% over last 5 years.
- India has made notable progress in closing the gender pay gap over time and in 2022, equal match fees for both male and female centrally contracted Indian cricket team players was implemented.
- MGNREGA implementation is helping in reduction of the gender pay gap, both directly and indirectly.

The meeting concluded with comprehensive discussions on equality in the world of work. It was emphasized that equality is economic necessity not just a moral obligation. On this issue, **India's multifaceted approach** to enhancing female participation in the workforce on an equal footing was highlighted. **Legislative and schematic interventions**, such as the National Education Policy 2020, Skill India Mission, and schemes for women in STEM fields, were elucidated. The **Government of India's historic move** to reserve one-third of seats for women in the House of People (Lok Sabha) and in the State Legislative Assemblies in 2023, and efforts to increase women's representation in armed and police forces were well received by the forum.

The meeting concluded with a strong reiteration of the collective resolve of the G20 countries to continue working towards, advancing gender equality, diversity at workplace and social security.

MJPS

(Release ID: 2016666)