



INCLUSIVE GROWTH: TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

All biographies have been provided by the speakers.

Speakers:



The Honourable Smriti Zubin Irani
Minister, Women and Child Development and Minority Affairs, India

Mrs. Smriti Zubin Irani was elected to the Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of the Indian Parliament representing the State of Gujarat, in 2011. In August 2017 she was re-elected to Rajya Sabha from the state of Gujarat. In the 2019 General Elections, she was elected to the House of the People 'Lok Sabha' from the constituency of Amethi in Uttar Pradesh by defeating the then National President of the Indian National Congress.

Mrs. Irani is currently serving as the Union Minister for Women & Child Development and Minister for Minority Affairs. She has previously served as the Union Minister for Education (formerly known as Human Resource Development) from May 2014 to July 2016, Minister for Information & Broadcasting from July 2017 to May 2018, and Minister for Textiles from July 2016 to July 2021. She is India's youngest Union Cabinet Minister in the government and the first woman to hold office as Minister for Education and as Minister of Textiles.

As Education Minister, Mrs. Irani introduced various educational reforms to upscale India's capacities in the field of research, innovation and technology. She was instrumental in conceiving the New Education Policy of India and initiated several large-scale projects including India's first MOOC platform SWAYAM, the National Digital Library, and a global network of academicians called GIAN. She launched IM-PRINT to foster research, innovation and technology among students and academia. As Textiles Minister during the COVID-19 pandemic, she managed to galvanize both public and private sector companies to make India the world's second-largest producer of PPE in a span of three months amidst the global lockdown. As part of a national initiative to make India self-reliant, she gave impetus to advanced textile technologies which included her effort to notify important HSN codes for the crucial technical textiles sector. In the last three years as Minister for Women & Child Development, Mrs. Irani has worked towards strengthening women & child protection services in India; including making child pornography a criminal offence through POCSO Amendment Act.



While serving as National President of her political party the Bharatiya Janta Party's Women's Wing, she successfully pursued Permanent Commission for Women in the Indian Army by facilitating legal aid to women officers. She is credited with the launching of 'Saksham'- the first ever Vision Document released by any political party in India underlining policies, programs and implementation tools for the upliftment of the differently-abled in India. In the 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Mrs. Irani was unanimously elected as a Member representing the Asia Pacific Region to the Task Force responsible for establishing the first-ever Committee for Young Parliamentarians in the IPU. At the same Assembly, Mrs. Irani was also unanimously elected by Member Nations as Rapporteur for the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade. The World Economic Forum has named Mrs. Irani as the Young Global Leader from India for the year 2015. She also served as the USAID Goodwill Ambassador to India for the WHO-ORS program before her political debut in India.



Anita Bhatia
Assistant Secretary-General, the United Nations and
Deputy Executive Director, UN Women

Ms. Anita Bhatia serves as the Assistant Secretary-General and UN Women's Deputy Executive Director for Resource Management, UN System Coordination, Sustainability and Partnerships since August 2019.

Before joining UN Women, Ms. Bhatia had a distinguished career at the World Bank Group, serving in various senior leadership and management positions, both at Headquarters and in the field. She brings extensive experience in international development, strategy, resource mobilization, strategic partnerships, and organizational change management.

In various positions, she led teams to deliver significant resources for scaled-up impact, including at the country level, and to craft innovative partnerships to advance development agendas and has made significant contributions to the evolving discourse on development finance. She has led diverse teams, including as Global Head of Knowledge Management, Head of Business Process Improvement, and Head of Change Management. In addition to Latin America, she has worked in Africa, Europe, Central Asia and South and East Asia. Ms. Bhatia holds a BA in History from Calcutta University, an MA in Political Science from Yale University and a Juris Doctor in Law from Georgetown University.



Erna Motinga
Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Prudential Supervision
(Executive Member), Namibia Financial Institutions
Supervisory Authority (NAMFISA)

As the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Prudential Supervision of NAMFISA, Erna Motinga is responsible for strengthening NAMFISA's supervisory regime and prudential requirements for the financial services sector aimed at protecting the users of financial services as well as deepening the financial markets.

Erna has a proven executive management track record and over 20 years of experience in the financial services sector. Prior to joining NAMFISA in 2013, Erna served as Managing Member of Nascent Capital Investments cc, an independent investment, consulting and financial advisory corporation, primarily responsible for financial and investment advisory services. In 2006, she was appointed as an Investment Analyst at Allan Gray Namibia, where she was the Advisory in equity analysis and fixed-income investments and served as an advisor on equities and fixed-income instrument prices whenever Allan Gray Namibia had to trade in equities and instruments.

Prior to joining Allan Gray, Erna served as Research Officer at the Central Bank of Namibia from 1998 – 2001 and as an Economist from 2001 – 2006. In her capacity as Research Officer, she has done analysis in two of the macro accounts, public finance and monetary and financial statistics. Having served in this position for 3 years, Erna was promoted to an Economist at the central bank in 2001. Within her portfolio, she was responsible for the inflation forecasting framework and ensuring that monetary and liquidity aggregates were related to developments in the real sector of the economy and advising of policy implications.

Erna holds a Bachelor of Economics from the University of Namibia, an MSc in Financial Economics from the University of London and recently graduated with a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Stellenbosch.