# Women as Leaders of Technology

## by

## Akhila Srinivasan,
## Managing Director,
## Shriram Life Insurance Co.Ltd.

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## The Art of Living

# Celebrating Womanhood
## key strengths

- Nature has bestowed motherhood on woman – the ability to nurture and care.

- Virtues like compassion, caring, sharing, nurturing, parenting make her play multiple roles effortlessly.

- In the words of His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, "Women have both gentleness and strength. Indian scriptures place tremendous amount of power in women. In fact, the primordial energy known as Shakti which is the life force behind the whole creation is feminine. That is why our scriptures honour women as the highest aspect of divinity – the *Aadhya Shakti*".

- High Emotional Quotient of women brings sensitivity, creativity and inspiration in dealing with issues.

- Inclusive approach and team work.

- It is said 'Men can inspire to fight, but women can inspire to unite'.

- To quote Guruji's words, "Women are innately powerful and they only need to realize it".

# The Key Challenge

- How can women become aware of their inner strength & harness and unleash their potential to impact the world ?

- Empowerment of Women is the Answer.

- Education & Exposure to the right kind of knowledge liberates women from poverty and ignorance and empowers them.

- "The capacity to acquire and generate knowledge in all its forms, including the recovery and upgrading of traditional knowledge, is perhaps the most important factor in the improvement of human condition."

- Women play a strategic role in incubation and transfer of critical knowledge, as they are more aware of the social, economic & environmental needs of their community, largely because of their biological and social roles.

# Economic Standpoint

- In India, after 64 years of independence, nearly 27% of the population lives below poverty line.

- Economists are of the view that only enterprise creation can help wealth creation & lead to poverty reduction.

- Almost 50% of the Indian population comprises of women, majority of whom are homemakers.

- If we can unleash the potential of this population to take part in enterprise creation and nation building activity, substantial wealth creation and poverty reduction can take place.

# Technology & its impact

- **Technology is the making, usage, and knowledge of tools, machines, systems , techniques etc in order to help man solve a problem or perform a specific function.**

- *Technology has and is changing our lives completely*

- *It impacts every aspect of our living*

- *We cannot live without technology - it will rule our future!*

- **Imagine our lives without a pressure cooker, mixie, car, mobile phone, internet, facebook etc!!!**

# Dimensions of the Gender & Technology Concept

- "Any technology that is not appropriate for women is not truly appropriate Technology".

- What are the uses of Technology ?
  - Facilitates women's productivity.
  - Reduces drudgery of work
  - Removes hurdles to women's growth.
  - Aids in Effective Decision making.
  - Empowers women

# Gender sensitivity and Technological aspect

- A nation that wants to progress cannot afford to ignore capacity building and empowerment of women.

- Gender sensitivity to be strengthened at all levels.

- Women's development is now inextricably linked with technology.

- When women are trained, they show remarkable understanding and control in using technologies effectively.

# Women & Technology-An excellent fit

- If encouraged and guided, girls can do very well in Science and Maths.

- More girls register for engineering courses than boys today!

- Women prefer desk work like research, IT, knowledge services as compared to other kinds of careers.

- Women have a natural flair for in-depth analytical work.

- Women are good at experimenting new things, multi-tasking – technology jobs typically warrant such skills

Women are ideally suited to take up

careers in Technology !!

# Women's Contribution to Technology

- UNCTAD report says that Women in Asia and Latin America hold more than 25% of professional jobs in software services.

- Women have adapted very easily to computers & new technologies e.g. in banking, education etc.

- Women occupy Board level positions in many technology companies.

- A number of top scientists, researchers, astronomers & IT professionals are women.

# Remarkable contributions by Women in the field of Technology

- **Ada Lovelace wrote the first 'computer program'**

- **Sister Mary Kenneth Keller, a pioneer in Computer Science**

- **Grace Hopper, Inventor of the Computer Compiler, COBOL programming and came up with the term 'computer bug'**

- **Radia Perlman is known as 'Mother of the Internet'.**

- **Madam Marie Curie discovered Radium & furthered X-ray technology.**

- **Helen Free was the inventor of the home diabetes test.**

- **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Founder of Biocon, Bio-Pharmaceutical company.**

# IT Sector in India

## Women in IT

- 1981   -   19.7%

- 1991   -   22.7%

- 2001   -   25.57%

- 2011   -   30%

Source : NASSCOM

# Constraints for Indian Women

- **Patriarchy & Social Pressure**

- **Gender Inequality**

- **Caste based social restrictions**

- **Inadequate access to productive resources**

- **Poor or limited family support for career growth**

- **Social prejudice towards woman as a leader**

- **Job security and varying working hours**

- **Work versus family responsibility**

# Women Leaders Shaping IT Globally

- Virginia M. Rometty – CEO , IBM

- Meg Whitman – CEO , HP

- Carol Bartz - CEO , YAHOO

- Sheryl Sandberg – COO , FaceBook

- Mitchell Baker - Chairperson, Mozilla

- Marissa Mayer - VP, Google

- Sue Gardner - Executive Director,  Wikimedia

- Safra Catz - President, Oracle

- Ann Livemore - EVP, HP

# Women Leaders Shaping IT in India

- **Neelam Dhawan-MD -,HP**

- **Ritu Nathani-Director ,Cybage Software**

- **Aruna Jayanthi-CEO ,Capgemini**

- **Kalpana Margabandhu, Director – IBM India Software Lab**

# How women have used Technology to become Leaders

- Research shows that if it makes life convenient for them, women adopt new technologies faster e.g. online shopping!

- Technology has made life easier & safer for women –majority of women believe work-life balance has become easier because of technology.

- Women are 'naturally' able to integrate technology into daily activities e.g. using internet for recipes to mobile banking.

- Women make use of Work-from-home and Telecommuting options.

- 64% of Facebook users are women, most using it for community building and keeping-in-touch

- Women are using technology to set up small businesses- 80% of internet cafes in India are owned by women

- According to a survey, most women who have made it to the top believe that one major factor responsible for their success is  usage of technology!

# The Road Ahead

- **Involve women in the technology development lifecycle, as they are Agents of change as well as Beneficiaries.**

- **Women advance economically when they use technology and leverage its advantages.**

- **Pilot test new technologies on women-their standards are higher!**

- **Women need to take the lead in developing technologies that impact them the most-energy, climate change, social services.**

# Benefits of Technology
# Women Empowerment in Rural Villages

- **Assimilating information about variety, range and quality of products, publicity and marketing of products and services through Technology has created avenues for women empowerment.**

- **Case Studies:-**
  - **SEWA**
  - **Smile**
  - **Aamagaon**
  - **Gyandoot**

# SEWA

**Self Employed Women Association ( SEWA )**

- SEWA promotes local income generating opportunities among women.

- Has 200,000 members spread over 800 villages in Gujarat .

- It uses an interactive satellite communication and Internet-based training programme to develop a cadre of poor women workers and helps them to form effective unions and co-operatives.

# SMILE

- **Savitri Marketing Institution for Ladies Empowerment (SMILE), Pune.**

- **This project has increased literacy level of underprivileged women through the usage of Technology and has impacted the lives of over 60,000 women.**

- **Internet has also helped them market their various products like toys, candles, bags, utility items, etc.**

- **Through Internet, there is greater awareness and exposure and market reach for the products.**

# Aamagaon Soochna Kendra

- Aamagaon Soochna Kendra (My village's information centre) is a project started by Government of Orissa by setting up Information and Communication Technology (ICT) kiosks in the rural areas of 12 districts of Orissa.

- These kiosks are run by Women SHGs/ Panchayats/ NGOs / CBOs/ Youth Clubs and managed by the Community IT volunteers paid through user charges collected and managed by the local hosts.

- Under a partnership with Mission Shakti, women SHG members are being trained on computer fundamentals and Internet basics at the IT Kiosks on payment of an affordable fee.

# Gyandoot

- In Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh, Gyandoot is an intranet project which connects 21 rural cyber cafes called Soochanalayas.

- Each Soochanalaya provides services to about 10 to 15 Gram Panchayats, 20 to 30 villages, 20,000 to 30,000 in population.

- Women benefit from such interventions as now they have a greater understanding and control over the local processes. They may file complaints regarding common public grievances through the net and an e-mail reply is assured within seven days.

# The Shriram Story

- **The Shriram Group is one of the largest Financial Conglomerates in India.**

    ❖ **Chit Funds**

    ❖ **Truck Finance**

    ❖ **Consumer Durable Finance**

    ❖ **Stock Broking**

    ❖ **Wealth Management**

    ❖ **Life Insurance**

    ❖ **General Insurance**

    ❖ **Property Development**

    ❖ **Engineering Services**

- **Turnover of the Group - Rs.50,000 crores (USD 10 Billion)**

- **Customer base – 7 million**

- **Employs 47000 people**

- **Over 2700 offices across India**

- **Over 100,000 Agents / Financial Advisors**

- **Objective & Philosophy - To bring financial inclusion to the credit starved segments of society.**

- **Caters to the middle class families of India and offers various saving instruments like Chits, Debentures, Life & General Insurance, etc.**

- **Has the largest Asset Financing Company in India. Finances Road Transport sector which accounts for 70% of the goods movement in the country.**

- **Over 8 lakh cleaners & drivers have become truck owners / entrepreneurs.**

# Management Philosophy

- **Professionally managed. No family member of the promoters involved.**

- **Hard work, dedication and integrity are the only parameters for recognition and rewarding employees.**

- **Ethical approach to business**

- **Frugal and low cost operations**

- **Empowered employees**

- **Customer centricity**

- **Decentralized and entrepreneurial style of management**

- **Unique ownership structure**

# Key competencies

- **Widest distribution network and customer base across India.**

- **Lean operating model.**

- **Robust technology as business enabler.**

  - **Homegrown customized technology.**

  - **Mix of technology and touch and feel to optimize risk management and unique value propositions to customers**

  - **Use of technology to reduce Operational expenses.**

  - **Strong & Trusted Brand Equity.**

  - **Human Resource – philosophy of 'People First'.**

# Shriram Group's presence in the field of Technology

- Shriram has in its fold, Take Solutions Ltd., a reputed IT & ITES Company.

- Runs a BPO outfit.

- Huge presence in EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) business.

- Significant presence in Energy Sector – Wind Energy, Biomass & Solar Power.

- **25% of Group's wealth has been earmarked to the 'Shriram Enterprise Trust' which will promote entrepreneurial activities in Technology related areas. This is one of the ways in which the Shriram Group will contribute to the areas of Technology and Entrepreneurship .**

# Shriram Group's CSR initiatives

- Shriram Group has a strong CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) initiative.

- Shriram Foundation was established in 1993, runs major impact-creating projects in the field of education for marginalized children. Over 20,000 children are getting benefitted annually.

- The Foundation operates Micro-credit Financing projects through the SHG (Self-Help Group) mechanism in over 400 villages in South India and has empowered over 150,000 women to prosperity.

# Personal philosophy

- As a woman, apart from EQ, SQ (Spiritual Quotient) helps in the self-actualization process.

- A spiritually centered woman can make a tremendous contribution to society.

- In the words of H.H. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar "Spirituality is the Technology of the Consciousness." The Source of all technology and creativity is the human mind.

- Focus should be on the subtler technology of mind management. This will help women to free their minds of ego, prejudices and have clarity of understanding, thus enhancing productivity.

# THANK YOU