

“Thousands of new women entrepreneurs by 2025: GAME and Facebook Landscape Study”

New Delhi, December 12, 2019: Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship (GAME), a partner-led platform that supports mass entrepreneurship, and Facebook launched **“Unlocking Entrepreneurship Opportunities for Women”**, a landscape study that provides a comprehensive overview of the entrepreneurship opportunities available to women, especially home-based entrepreneurs, across urban India. The research study, in line with GAME’s vision of creating 10 million entrepreneurs in India by 2030, 50% of whom will be women, was conducted from May to August 2019 across Bangalore and Mumbai.

“Supporting women entrepreneurship is both an economic and a moral imperative for India. The data is clear -women entrepreneurs create more jobs for other women and invest back into their families. Bridging the gender divide in labour force participation can increase our GDP by 20% and this is a collective goal we should strive for. Identifying priority sectors with high demand-led opportunities such as food and education will allow us to be specific in our actions and create a ripple effect in other sectors, crowding in many more women entrepreneurs in the country” **said Smriti Zubin Irani, Union Minister of Women and Child Development and Textiles**

Currently only 3% of businesses with more than four employees are women-owned, says the report, which calls out food, education (specifically creches), beauty and wellness sectors in India as holding high potential for home-based women entrepreneurs. The study digs deep into the demands, megatrends, and the challenges that potential women entrepreneurs in India face. The study also highlights the interventions needed to address these concerns.

Said Ankhi Das, Director, Public Policy, Facebook India, *“Our partnership with GAME is an opportunity to improve the lives of women across India; boost digital literacy, bridge the gender digital divide, and train five million people by 2021. Technology has a strong potential to reduce the gender gap on the Internet by creating more economic opportunities for women entrepreneurs, enabling them to build and grow their businesses. The research findings that have been released today can help shape their success.”*

According to the study, the **food sector encompasses approximately 550K women-owned enterprises that employ more than 2 million women.** The sector appeals to women as it doesn’t require a high financial investment to start a business, and offers flexible work schedules, found the report. The emerging opportunities within the sector include homemade snacks, home cooked meals, and cloud kitchens.

“This report shows that women have many opportunities to build entrepreneurial ventures. The food and education sectors in particular show great promise and we want to encourage more women to set up their own businesses be their own boss and achieve economic independence. While women entrepreneurs face formidable challenges,, the combination of new market platforms, peer-support networks, and role models, will make women entrepreneurs a force to reckon with before the end of the decade”, **said Ravi Venkatesan, Founder of GAME**

“Globally, countries are struggling to put in initiatives that assure the youth bulge becomes a dividend and not end up as a disaster. GAME’s mission of enabling youth to take charge of their own destiny through entrepreneurship strongly resonates with our own for Generation Unlimited, known in India as Yuwaah, where we seek to nurture India’s youth as catalysts of change. We hope this alignment translates into limitless opportunity for the largest youth cohort in the world” **said Yasmin Haque, UNICEF Representative in India.**

Women-owned businesses within the education sector are more prevalent than in the food sector. One in five urban enterprises in the education sector is owned by a woman. The employee base of these businesses is fairly gender balanced with on an average women comprising 48% of the labour force at these organizations. The report identifies

three sectors as where-to-play areas for women in mass entrepreneurship: **day care and pre-school, vocational skilling, and after-school education.**

The study also identifies inhibitors for women entrepreneurs today. These include

- Lack of **awareness of the possibilities** related to their passion;
- **Inadequate skills or knowledge** to be a successful entrepreneur;
- Skepticism about taking **unconventional routes**;
- **No access to available resources**
- **No immediate support system.**

The study has identified ~10 **interventions to deal with these challenges. Some of these are to**

- Boost **peer-to peer connections & learning** amongst entrepreneurs
- Disseminate **success stories** of entrepreneurs with relatable personas
- Access the **best-of-breed entrepreneurship curriculum**
- Enable entrepreneurs to build **clear business model** basis needs & aspirations
- **Demystify government. support** for entrepreneurship e.g. navigating the Mudra loans process

As a direct next steps, GAME initiated:

- the 'Futurepreneurs Grand Challenge supported by Facebook', recruiting college students to identify and share stories of women entrepreneurs across Bengaluru
- Community for peer learning and mentorship that brings women entrepreneurs together under one roof to learn from each other and to simplify the involvement of other partners – market aggregators, financial institutions, skilling organisations etc. while enabling significant growth.

GAME and Facebook announced their partnership in April 2019 with an aim to ignite mass entrepreneurship in India, by ramping up job creation and to further empower entrepreneurs. Through this partnership, they will action various initiatives including the annual mass entrepreneurship convening on 12th December to build a robust mass entrepreneurship ecosystem and more specifically, help women start and succeed as entrepreneurs.

The complete GAME Landscape Study on Women Entrepreneurship can be viewed and downloaded here

<https://massentrepreneurship.org/landscape-study/>

A note on methodology: we used a mixed method approach to arrive at priority sectors, opportunities within them, and challenges women face to become entrepreneurs. This included extensive desk research to identify growth potential of sectors for women entrepreneurs, megatrends relevant to them etc. This was combined with ethnographic research to identify archetypes of entrepreneurs. To cement our findings, we spoke to industry leaders and sector experts.

About Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship (GAME):

Launched in August 2018, GAME is India's first national-level organization to pioneer the movement of Mass Entrepreneurship in the country. Through learning and advocacy, GAME will galvanize the ecosystem for youth-led mass entrepreneurship at the local level, helping create 10M entrepreneurs, 50% women, who create 50M jobs by 2030. It envisions a thriving environment for Mass Entrepreneurship (ME) in India, resulting in large-scale job creation. For more information, please visit: www.massentrepreneurship.org

Media contact:

Sandhya Thukaram

Director, Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship (GAME)

sandhya@massentrepreneurship.org