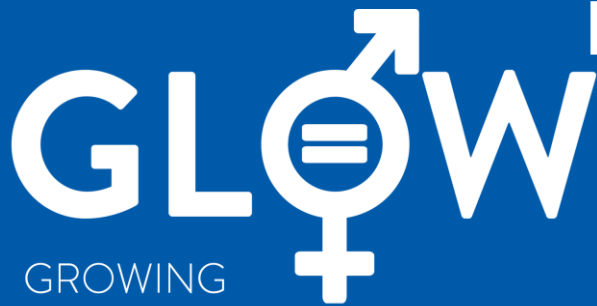




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Best practices for process-based manufacturing companies to improve gender equity

August 2026

Overview of this document



Objective

- Provide a roadmap for improving gender diversity in entry-level roles (e.g., production line worker, machine operator) in the process-based manufacturing industry in India
- Covers manufacturing of (1) Food and beverage, (2) Metals and related products, (3) Non-metallic mineral products, (4) Leather, wood, and paper, (5) Other mfg. (e.g., toys, printing), (6) Chemicals, petrochemicals, rubber and plastics, and (7) Furniture



Audience

- Leaders (e.g., CEO, CHRO) and senior managers (e.g., plant heads, HR heads) at companies operating plants in the process-based manufacturing industry



Scope

- Key challenges faced by process-based manufacturing companies in improving gender diversity
- Business benefits of employing more women in entry-level roles
- Phased roadmap of 17 interventions to improve women's hiring and retention
- ~20-minute questionnaire to assess progress on gender equity



Methodology

- Industry immersion (secondary research, interactions with 25 industry stakeholders¹), learnings from 20+ company engagements², and primary interviews with 6,000+ women³

Acronyms: Mfg. – Manufacturing, CEO – Chief Executive Officer, CHRO – Chief Human Resources Officer, HR – Human Resources | 1. Stakeholders include 11 leaders and experts, 10 managers and 4 entry-level women employees; 2. FSG, through its [GLOW](#) program, has provided multi-year support to 20+ companies in logistics and flexi-staffing industries to hire and retain more women in entry-level roles; 3. <https://www.fsg.org/resource/creating-a-gender-equitable-workforce-in-india/>

Executive summary | Process-based manufacturing industry

Workforce composition and gender diversity

- As per PLFS data, process-based manufacturing industry, clubbed into 7 sub-sectors, employs a total of ~38.2 Mn workers^{1,2}
- The industry employed ~6.9 Mn women in 2025 with <10% women in metals and furniture sub-sectors, and 17- 26% in the remaining sub-sectors¹
- The industry has many entry-level roles, across production, logistics, and housekeeping, that are suitable for women with 10th/ 12th pass qualification

Business benefits

- Hiring more women in the industry can lead to improved productivity and quality, and lower attrition

Key challenges

- Managers' unconscious biases and low priority given to gender diversity are key barriers to employing women

Gender diversity opportunity

- Opportunity to employ more women varies by sub-sector, spanning traditional and non-traditional roles, new geographies, and night shifts

Best practices for gender diversity

- Inclusive hiring practices (e.g., gender inclusive job ads, diverse hiring channel partnerships) can help target more women
- Gender-sensitisation (e.g., workplace conduct poster, training) and business benefits dissemination can mitigate the impact of unconscious biases
- Gender diversity KPIs and diversity guidelines for contract manufacturers can help build accountability

Gender equity scorecard

- Regular assessment of gender diversity outcomes and organisational readiness (e.g., practices and infrastructure) can help track progress and identify areas for improvement

Acronyms: PLFS – Periodic Labour Force Survey, KPIs – Key Performance Indicators | 1. As per PLFS Report 2025; 2. The 7 sub-sectors include: (1) Food and beverage, (2) Metals and related products, (3) Non-metallic minerals, (4) Leather, wood, and paper, (5) Other manufacturing (e.g., toys, printing), (6) Chemicals, petrochemicals, rubber and plastics, and (7) Furniture

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Managers' perspectives on gender diversity from digital survey

Methodology used for arriving at insights

Process-based manufacturing industry, clubbed into 7 sub-sectors, employs a total of ~38.2 Mn workers¹

Sub-sectors	Workforce (% of total process-based mfg.) ¹	Indicative products	Indicative companies
1 Food and beverage ²	7.89 Mn (21%)	- Biscuits, packaged rice - Bottled water, wine	- Hindustan Unilever - Varun Beverages
2 Metals and related products ³	7.33 Mn (19%)	- Steel wires - Metal fasteners (e.g., nuts)	- Tata Steel - Bharat Forge
3 Non-metallic mineral products ⁴	6.23 Mn (16%)	- Cement bricks - Glass bottles	- Ambuja Cements - Kajaria Ceramics
4 Leather, wood, and paper ⁵	4.68 Mn (12%)	- Leather footwear - Plywood/ veneer	- Uflex Ltd. - Greenply Industries
5 Other mfg. (e.g., toys, printing) ⁶	4.38 Mn (12%)	- Toys - Printed packaging	- Funskool - Titan Company
6 Chemicals, petrochemicals, rubber and plastics ⁷	4.13 Mn (11%)	- Soaps/ detergents - Refined petroleum products	- Reliance Industries - Godrej Consumer Products
7 Furniture ⁸	3.57 Mn (9%)	- Wooden/ Metals furniture - Kitchen cabinets	- Godrej Interio - Durian Industries

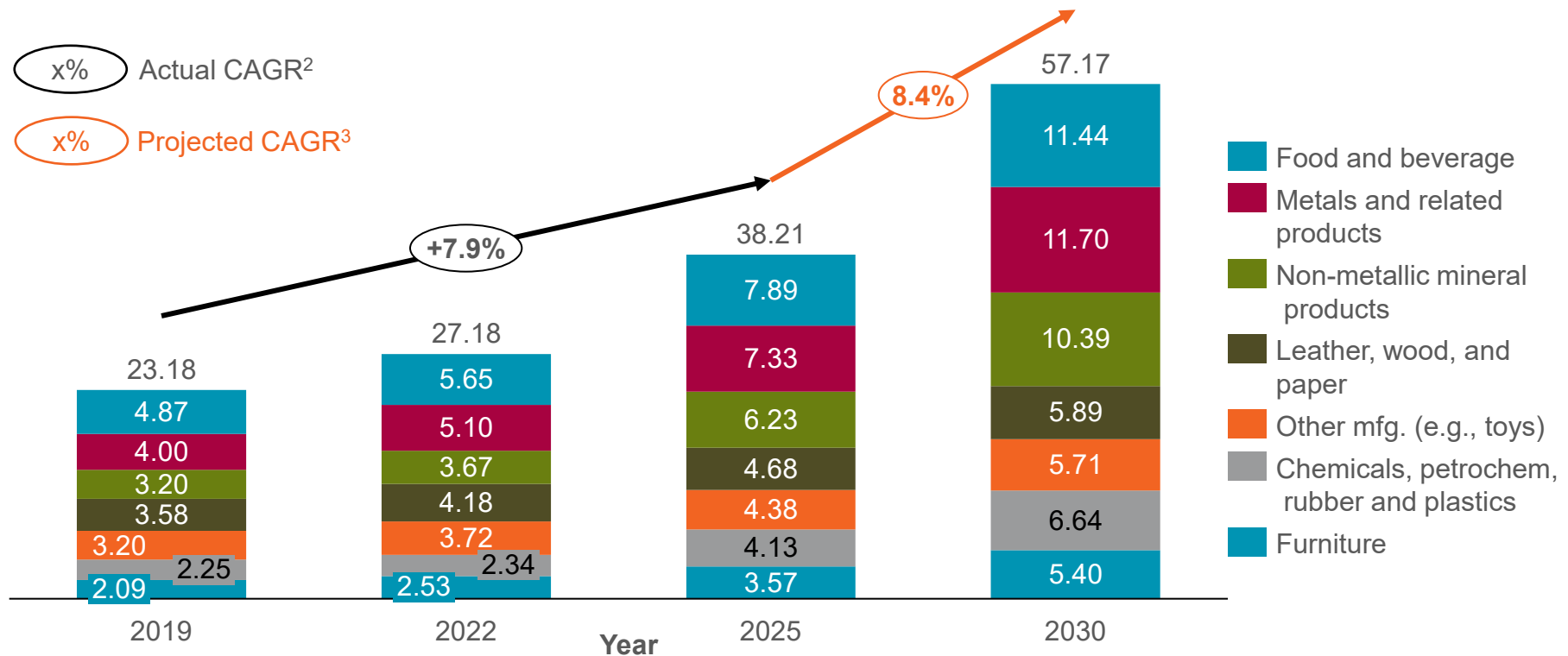
This document excludes the following 4 sub-sectors (employing ~28 Mn workers¹):

- Manufacturing of tobacco products, textiles, and wearing apparel as these are already feminised
- Manufacturing of pharmaceuticals as other organisations have already published gender diversity best practices for this

Acronyms: Mfg. – Manufacturing | 1. a) As per Annual PLFS Report 2025; b) This includes all types of employees i.e., self-employed, casual labour, regular wage/ salaried workforce; 2. Includes PLFS codes 10 and 11; 3. Includes PLFS codes 24 and 25; 4. Includes PLFS code 23; 5. Includes PLFS codes 15,16, and 17; 6. Includes PLFS codes 32 and 18; 7. Includes PLFS codes 19, 20, and 22; 8. Includes PLFS code 31

Headcount in process-based mfg. industry is expected to grow at a CAGR of ~8%, from ~38 Mn in 2025 to ~57 Mn in 2030

Headcount in process-based manufacturing, 2019-2030 (# in Mn, CAGR in %)^{1,4}

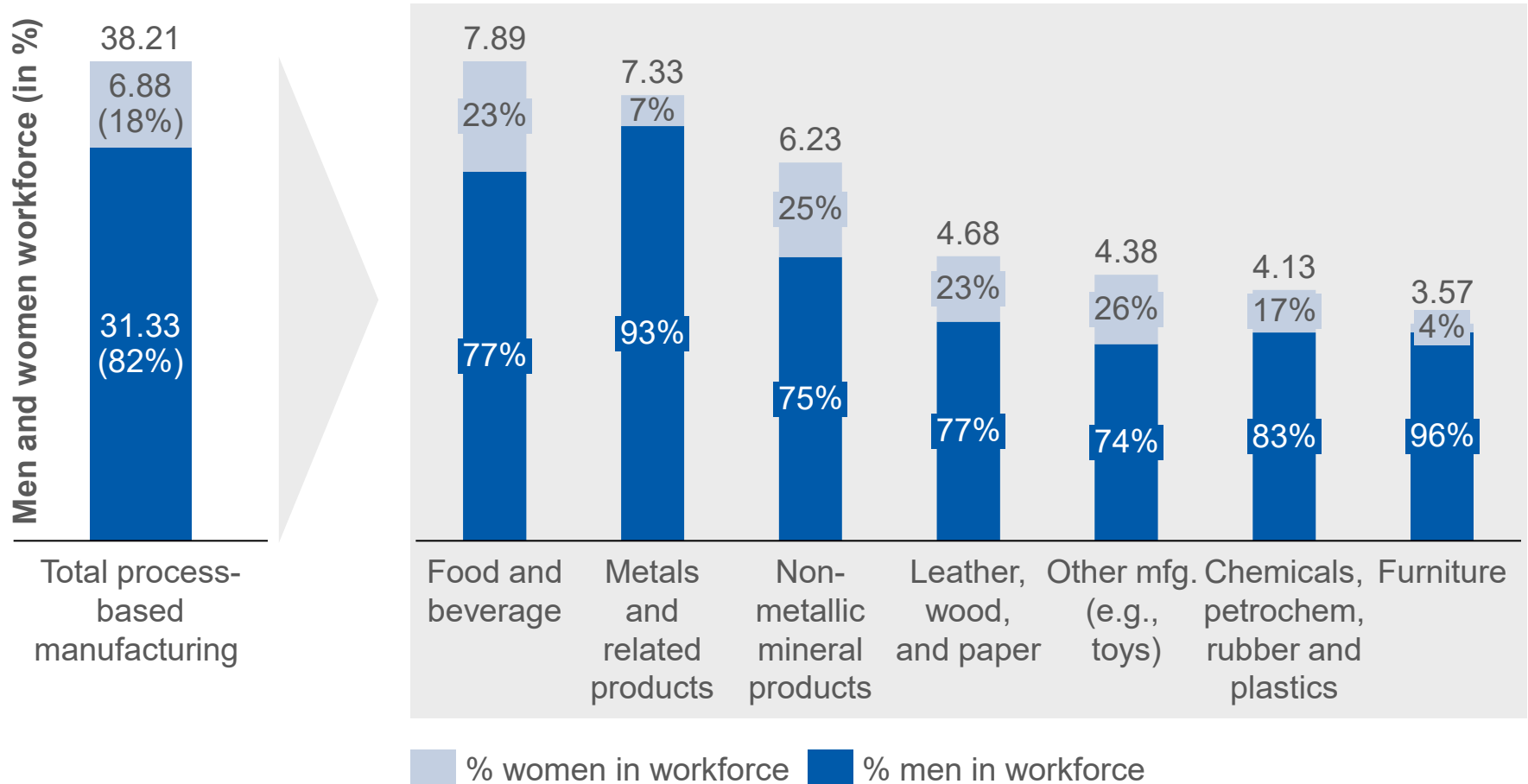


- The past trend is only indicative, as PLFS 2025 methodology differs from PLFS 2019
- Figure for 2030 is a directional estimate based on available data and is subject to change based on external developments (e.g., policy changes, macroeconomic factors)

Acronyms: Mfg. – Manufacturing, CAGR – Compound Annual Growth Rate, PLFS - Periodic Labour Force Survey | 1. Workforce data for 2019, 2022, and 2025 are as per Annual PLFS Reports of 2018-19, 2021-22, and 2025, respectively; 2. Actual CAGR is calculated over ~6.5 years since year 2019 refers to the PLFS reporting period of July 2018 to June 2019 and year 2025 refers to the PLFS reporting period of January to December 2025; 3. Projected CAGR (2025-2030) is calculated using the same CAGR over the 5-year period from 2025 to 2030 (assumed calendar year); 4. This includes all types of employees i.e., self-employed, casual labour, regular wage/ salaried workforce

Process-based mfg. has 18% women, with <10% women in metals and furniture, and 17-26% in the remaining sub-sectors

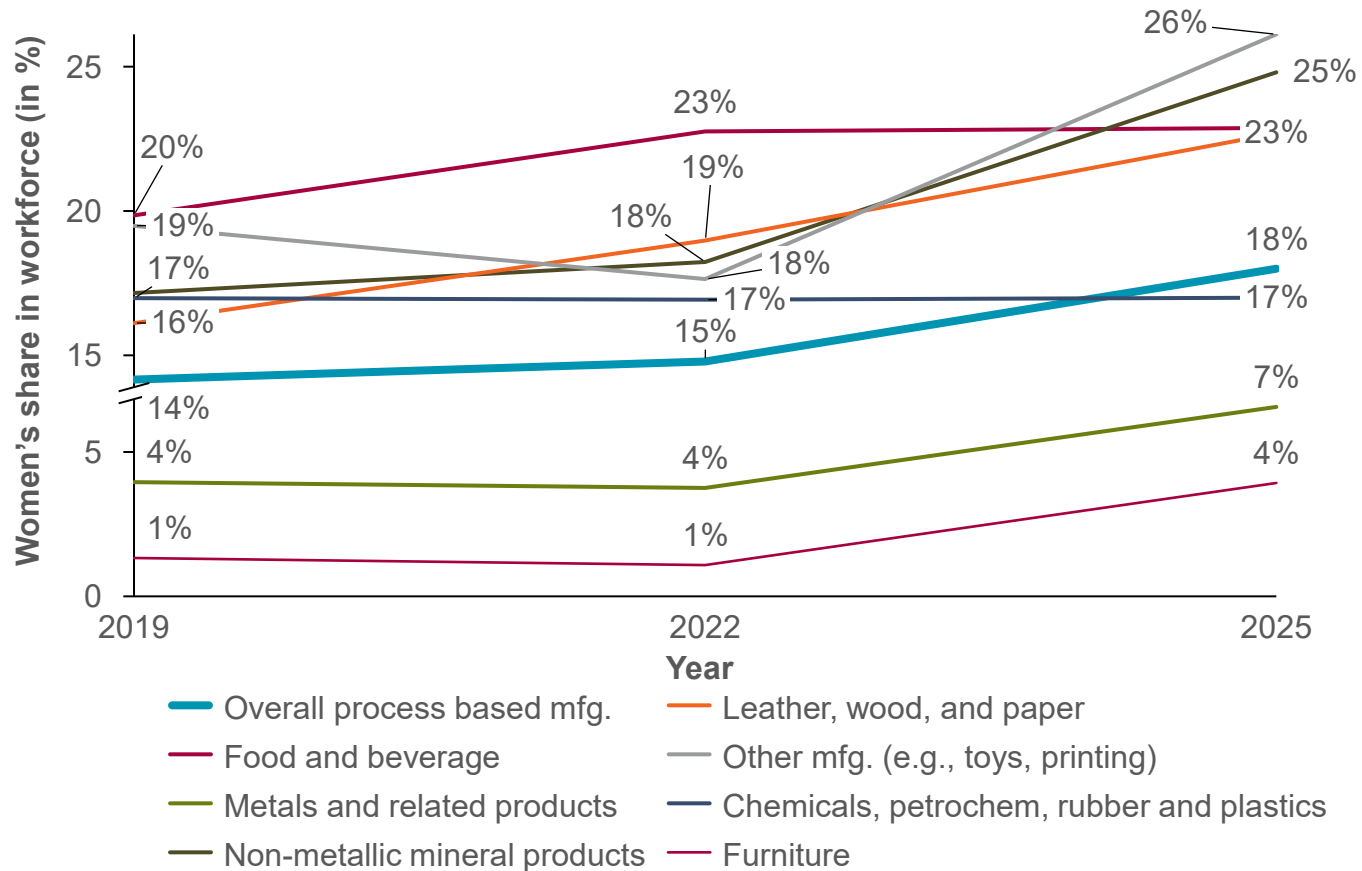
Gender diversity across sub-sectors in 2025 (# in Mn, %, 2025)¹



Acronyms: Mfg. – Manufacturing | 1. As per Annual PLFS Report 2025. This includes all types of employees i.e., self-employed, casual labour, regular wage/ salaried workforce

Gender diversity improved from 14% to 18% in process-based mfg., driven by gains across most sub-sectors

Gender diversity trend in process-based mfg. industry and its sub-sectors (in %)^{1,2}



This trend is only indicative, as PLFS 2025 methodology differs from earlier years

Acronyms: Mfg. – Manufacturing, PLFS – Periodic Labour Force Survey | 1. Workforce data for 2019, 2022, and 2025 are as per respective Annual PLFS Reports; 2. All years refer to PLFS reporting periods of July to June (e.g., 2019 refers to the PLFS reporting period of July 2018 to June 2019), except 2025 which refers to PLFS reporting period of January to December 2025

Process-based mfg. industry has many entry-level roles that are suitable for women with 10th/ 12th pass qualification (1/2)

	Role category	Common role names ¹	Qualification/ skills requirement ¹
Production roles	Production line/ Assembly	- Production shift assistant - Process operator - Smelter line worker	10th or 12th pass - ITI/ diploma/ previous work experience required in some cases
	Machine operation	- Furnace operator - Mixing machine operator - Grinding operator	10th or 12th pass - ITI/ diploma/ previous work experience required in most cases
	Quality check/ Visual inspection	Inspection worker	10th or 12th pass
	Cutting, sewing, and stitching	- Footwear stitcher - Upholstery stitcher - Leather cutter	8th or 10th pass
	Welding and fabrication	- Gas cutting helper - Welder - Metal cutter	10th pass - ITI/ diploma/ previous work experience required in most cases
	Surface coating	- Polisher - Spray painter - Plating worker	10th or 12th pass

- Salary for entry-level roles in the industry typically varies between INR 20K and 25K per month for machine operators, welders, and fabricators, while for others it varies between INR 12K and 15K per month¹
- Key hiring channels in this industry include walk-ins, labour contractors, and referrals

Acronyms: Mfg. – Manufacturing | 1. Based on National Skill Development Corporation, job postings on job portals (e.g., Indeed, Naukri), and conversations with industry players

Process-based mfg. industry has many entry-level roles that are suitable for women with 10th/ 12th pass qualification (2/2)

	Role category	Common role names ¹	Qualification/ skills requirement ¹
Logistics and housekeeping roles	Packaging and labelling	- Packaging operator - Packing assistant	8th pass
	Storekeeping	- Store assistant - Store worker	8th pass - Ability to lift heavy required in some roles (e.g., store assistant)
	Loading/ Unloading	Crate loader	8th pass - Ability to lift heavy required in most cases
	Material handling	- Crane operator - Forklift operator	8th or 10th pass - Driving license required in some cases
	Housekeeping	- Security guard - Cleaner	No formal education required
	Data entry	Data assistant	12th pass/ diploma with computer knowledge - Proficiency in tally, excel required in some cases

- Salary for entry-level roles in the industry typically varies between INR 20K and 25K per month for machine operators, welders, and fabricators, while for others it varies between INR 12K and 15K per month¹
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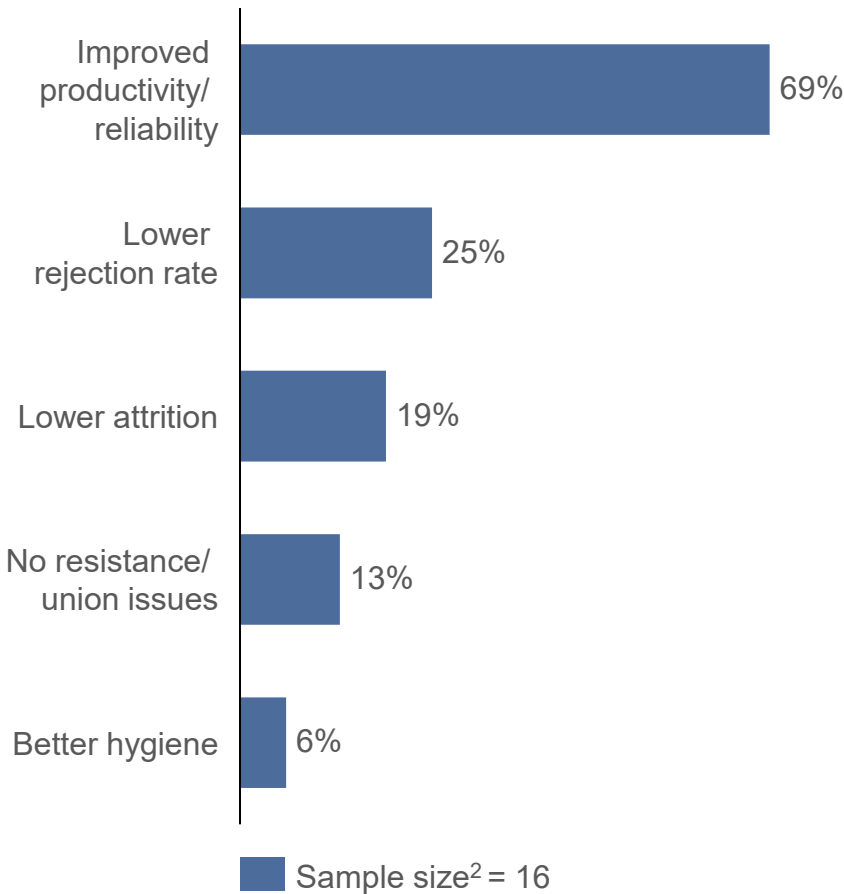
Details of 17 interventions to hire and retain more women

Managers’ perspectives on gender diversity from digital survey

Methodology used for arriving at insights

Hiring more women in the industry can lead to improved productivity and quality, and lower attrition¹

Top benefits of workplace diversity cited by managers and leaders from process-based mfg. industry



Quotes from process-based manufacturing industry interactions

- “Post hiring women, the material lifted per person per shift doubled, this helped us reduce total number of people”
- *Mfg. Manager, Chemicals manufacturing company*
- “Women are suited for quality, packing, painter and carpentry helpers as they are much sharper. For roles where a lot of intricate and sharp observation is required, women are far better”
- *Mfg. Head, Toys manufacturing company*
- “In manufacturing there is a lower industrial relations risk as women create fewer disputes”
- *Vice President HR, Shoes manufacturing company*
- “Women stay back; attrition is lower. Many women in the factory have been with the company for a long time. Women bring much more loyalty to the organisation”
- *Mfg. Head, Toys manufacturing company*

Acronyms: Mfg – Manufacturing; HR – Human Resources | 1. Based on FSG’s secondary research and interactions with industry leaders and managers; 2. The sample size here excludes responses from 2 managers who mentioned no business benefits of hiring women

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Unconscious biases and low priority given to gender diversity are key barriers to employing women in process-based mfg.¹



Legend: High-priority barriers

Acronyms: Mfg. – Manufacturing, ITI – Industrial Training Institutes | 1. Based on FSG's secondary research and interactions with 11 leaders and experts, 10 managers, 4 entry-level women employees, and 6 field visits

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Gender opportunity varies by sub-sector, spanning traditional and non-traditional roles, new geographies, and night shifts

Sub sector	Workforce % ^{1,2}	GD % ¹	Opportunity area ³	Rationale ³
Food and beverage	21%	23%	1 Perceived easy roles (e.g., packaging, quality) in general shift ⁴ in North India	- Identified roles comprise a sizeable % of workforce: – 30-60% of workforce⁵ are in perceived easy roles – 20-40% of workforce⁵ are in night shift – 30% of workforce is in North India, while 45% is in South and West India⁶
Non-metallic minerals	16%	25%	2 Perceived difficult roles (e.g., machine operator) in general shift across locations	
Leather, wood, and paper	12%	23%		
Other mfg. (e.g., toys, printing)	12%	26%	3 All roles in night shift in South and West India	South and West India have higher GD (30-60%)⁵ as managers have fewer concerns about adding women, while GD in North India is typically <10%⁵
Chemicals, petrochemicals, rubber and plastics	11%	17%		
Metals and related products	19%	7%	4 Perceived easy roles (e.g., packaging, quality) in general shift across locations	Identified roles comprise 30-60% of workforce⁵ and are less physically demanding
Furniture	9%	4%		

Acronyms: GD – Gender diversity, Mfg. – Manufacturing | 1. As per PLFS 2025; 2. % of total workforce in the process-based manufacturing industry; 3. Based on FSG’s secondary research and interactions with 11 leaders and experts, 10 managers, 4 entry-level women employees, and 6 field visits; 4. General shift refers to day shift; the timings may vary from company to company. E.g., 8 am to 5:30 pm or 9 am to 6 pm; 5. The percentages are indicative of a typical process-based manufacturing company and can vary depending on the sub-sector and the company; 6. As per PLFS 2025. This % covers all manufacturing sub-sectors, not just process-based manufacturing sub-sectors

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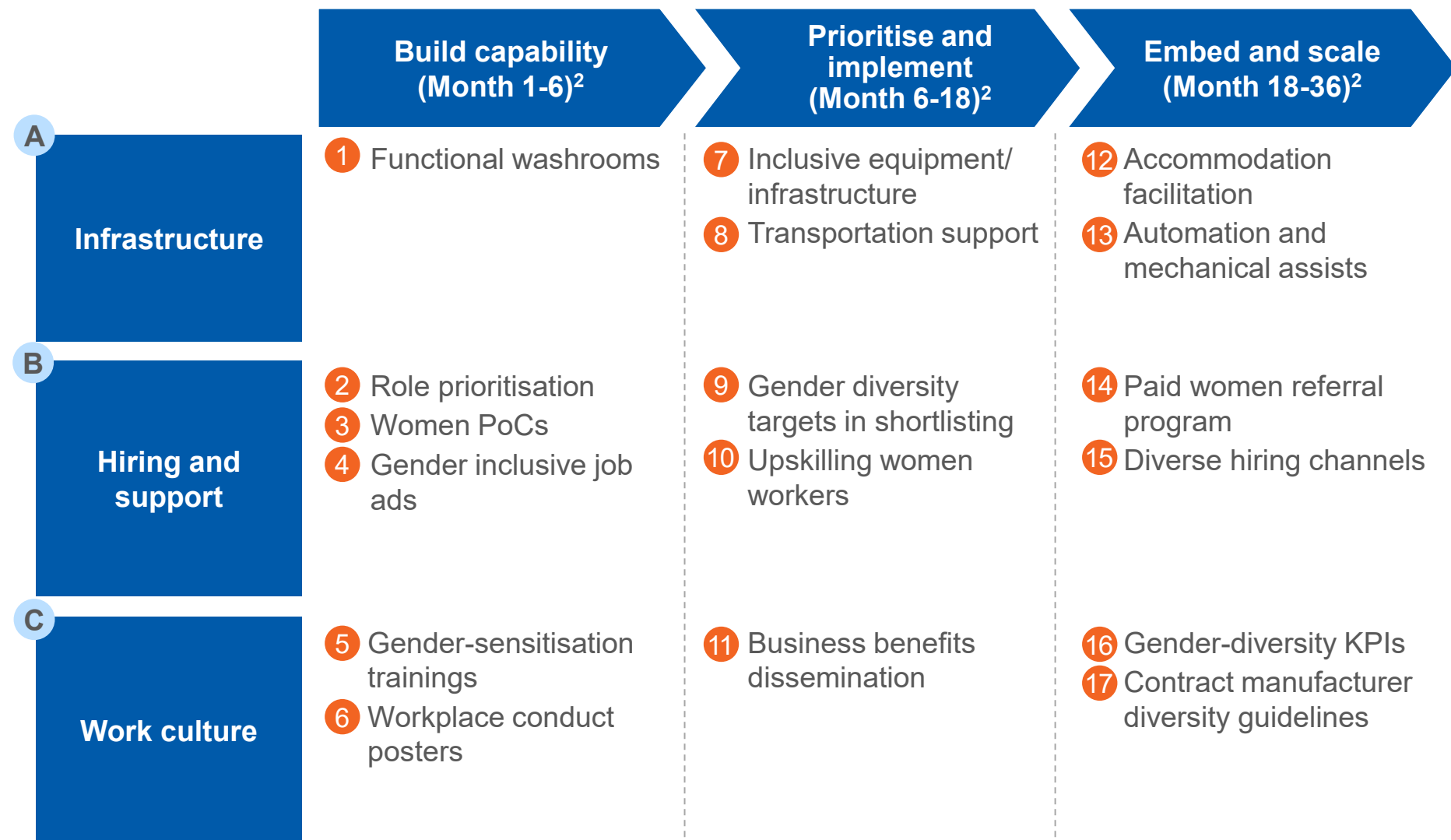
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Process-based manufacturing companies can roll out 17 interventions to hire and retain more women (1/4)¹



Acronyms: PoC – Point of contact, KPI – Key Performance Indicator | 1. Based on FSG's secondary research and interactions with 11 leaders and experts, 10 managers, 4 women in entry-level roles, and 6 field visits; 2. Timelines are indicative

Process-based manufacturing companies can roll out 17 interventions to hire and retain more women (2/4)¹



Intervention theme	Intervention name	Intervention description
Infra-structure	① Functional washrooms	Provide well-equipped women-only washrooms, based on plant size, to ensure women have access to safe, hygienic facilities
Hiring and support	② Role prioritisation	Prioritise hiring women in select easy-to-fill roles with low manager bias and minimal investment requirements, to accelerate improvements in gender diversity
	③ Women PoCs	Assign at least one-woman PoC from HR/ Operations department to serve as an official medium for all women workers to share their concerns
	④ Gender inclusive job ads	Use gender-neutral job titles, explicitly mention women's eligibility in all job posts/ collaterals, and include details of salary structure, timings, skills, and available support/ benefits
Work culture	⑤ Gender-sensitisation trainings	Conduct training workshops to help managers and recruiters recognise and overcome unconscious gender biases
	⑥ Workplace conduct posters	Display posters at work sites highlighting employee behaviour norms that support a respectful, safe, and fair working environment

Further details on each intervention can be found in the Annex

Acronyms: HR – Human Resources, PoC – Point of contact | 1. Based on FSG's secondary research and interactions with 11 leaders and experts, 10 managers, 4 women in entry-level roles, and 6 field visits

Process-based manufacturing companies can roll out 17 interventions to hire and retain more women (3/4)¹



Intervention theme	Intervention name	Intervention description
Infra-structure	7 Inclusive equipment/ infrastructure	Invest in low-cost inclusive equipment to remove design barriers that disproportionately affect women, and improve overall productivity and safety of workers
	8 Transportation support	Provide transportation support (e.g., company-facilitated drop service) for women to reduce workplace commute-related barriers, especially in shifts outside standard daytime hours
Hiring and support	9 Gender diversity targets in shortlisting	Set minimum gender diversity targets (e.g., 10%) for shortlisting stages for each opening
	10 Upskilling women workers	Deploy groups of 2-3 existing women workers on perceived difficult roles (e.g., machine operator) alongside a trained employee, to reduce dependence on external hiring
Work culture	11 Business benefits dissemination	Document data on qualitative and quantitative benefits of hiring women and share these within and outside the firm to increase buy-in from leadership and managers and improve adoption of gender diversity initiatives

Further details on each intervention can be found in the Annex

1. Based on FSG's secondary research and interactions with 11 leaders and experts, 10 managers, 4 women in entry-level roles, and 6 field visits

Process-based manufacturing companies can roll out 17 interventions to hire and retain more women (4/4)¹



Intervention theme	Intervention name	Intervention description
Infra-structure	12 Accommodation facilitation	Facilitate access to affordable accommodation for migrant workers by providing details of facilities that fulfil basic requirements such as distance, safety, and standard amenities
	13 Automation and mechanical assists	Install automation and mechanical assists to reduce physically demanding tasks, unlocking more roles for women, and improving productivity and safety of all workers
Hiring and support	14 Paid women referral program	Offer a referral bonus of INR 300 for each successful referral of a woman candidate who completes at least 30 days of employment
	15 Diverse hiring channels	Introduce 1-2 new hiring channels (e.g., referrals, partnerships with ITIs) to reduce reliance on traditional channels that may filter out women candidates
Work culture	16 Gender-diversity KPIs	Set realistic gender diversity targets for HR and business/operations managers and heads, and link a part of their variable pay to these targets
	17 Contract manufacturer diversity guidelines	Include gender diversity guidelines in manufacturing agreements/code of conduct guidelines to nudge contract manufacturers toward inclusive practices

Further details on each intervention can be found in the Annex

Acronyms: ITIs – Industrial training institutes, HR – Human Resources | 1. Based on FSG’s secondary research and interactions with 11 leaders and experts, 10 managers, 4 women in entry-level roles, and 6 field visits

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Objectives and context

- **Objectives:** This tool is designed to score process-based manufacturing companies on their gender-equity performance in entry-level roles in their plants, and identify areas of improvement
- **Context:** This tool
 - Is designed to be used by either the companies themselves or independent evaluators
 - Is recommended to be used annually/ bi-annually to track progress
 - Has been designed to evaluate all plants directly operated by a process-based manufacturing company
 - Does not include scores on parameters mandated by law (e.g., creche facilities, maternity leave)
 - Can be used effectively by medium or large process-based manufacturing companies
- **Common terms used:**
 - **Workers:** Refers to both on-roll and off-roll workers in entry-level and supervisory roles within plant operations. This includes roles such as production line worker, quality control, housekeeping, inventory handling, and senior floor-level positions (e.g., shift supervisors or team leads)
 - **Plant:** Refers to plants directly operated by the process-based manufacturing company

How to use this tool

Whom to interview to score the organisation

- Interview someone in the corporate team who has:
 - Data (e.g., headcount, gender diversity) on all plants directly operated by the company
 - Information about hiring policies (e.g., referral bonus) and key HR policies (e.g., KPI)
- Ideally interview the HR head of the company's manufacturing division, but in some cases, you could also interview the CEO (for medium process-based manufacturing companies) or senior HR manager (for large process-based manufacturing companies)

How to score the organisation

- For each parameter, give a tick for each of the scores from Score A to Score D where conditions/ criteria are met for that score
- Count the number of ticks for the parameter, multiply by the applicable multiplier (if any) and enter the calculated score in the “Final score” column. For example,
 - If for the parameter “Accommodation”, the number of ticks is 3, write 3 in the “Final score”
 - If you have not given any ticks for the parameter, write 0 in the “Final score”
 - If for the parameter “Women workers across all shifts”, the number of ticks is 2 and multiplier is 3, write 6 (=2x3) in the “Final score”
- Continue the scoring in a similar manner for other parameters
- Select ‘NA’ for scores that do not apply to you. Scores that allow ‘NA’ are indicated with a number
- Add the “Final score” across all parameters to calculate the total score

Gender Equity Readiness Scorecard (GERS) for process-based manufacturing roles – Outcome

Parameter	Score A	Score B	Score C	Score D	Final score
Women workers across all shifts	What % of workers (both off-roll and on-roll), across all shifts and all plants are women?				(# of ticks x 3)
	Tick if >=10%	Tick if >=17%	Tick if >=25%	Tick if >=35%	
Women workers in night shifts ^{1,2}	What % of workers (both off-roll and on-roll) working in night shifts, across all plants, are women?				(# of ticks x 2)
	Tick if >0%	Tick if >=5%	Tick if >=10%	Tick if >=15%	

Note: Please tick all applicable columns for each parameter above (i.e., for the parameter “women workers across all shifts”, if the % of all women workers (both off-roll and on-roll), across all shifts and all plants is 35%, please tick “score A”, “score B” and “score C”)

1. As per OSH code 2020, night shift is defined as hours between 7 pm - 6 am across all sub-sectors and establishments; 2. Select ‘NA’ if you do not have night shift

Gender Equity Readiness Scorecard (GERS) for process-based manufacturing roles – Infrastructure (1/2)

Parameter	Score A	Score B	Score C	Score D	Final score
Transportation	Do all of your plants with women in night shifts provide pick up and drop facilities for all women workers?¹ <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do at least 50% of your plants with women provide drop facilities for all women workers employed in day shifts? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do at least 50% of your plants with women provide pick up and drop facilities for all women workers employed in day shifts? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do all transport vehicles provided for your women workers have at least one of the following: an SOS/ emergency button, security guard, GPS tracker, or CCTV?² <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 2)
Accommodation	As part of onboarding, do at least 50% of your plants share details of available accommodation with all new migrant workers via mediums such as WhatsApp groups, notice boards?³ <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you have a policy to pay ~2 weeks' salary in advance to cover the accommodation rent for all new migrant workers?³ <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do any of your plants provide accommodation facilities for all migrant workers? (e.g., company-owned, leased)³ <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you have a policy to pay a month's salary in advance to cover the accommodation rent for all new migrant workers?³ <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 1)

1. Select 'NA' if you do not have night shift or women workers in night shift; 2. Select 'NA' if you do not provide transportation to women workers; 3. Select 'NA' if you do not have any migrant workers

Gender Equity Readiness Scorecard (GERS) for process-based manufacturing roles – Infrastructure (2/2)

Parameter	Score A	Score B	Score C	Score D	Final score
Automation and mechanical assists	Do you have mechanical/ automation assists (e.g., hoists, lift tables, conveyors, vacuum lifters, robots) for at least 75% of all roles involving handling of loads/ components above 15 kgs, to ensure no routine manual lifting is required? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you use mechanical/ automation tools (e.g., powered pallet jackets, motorised carts) for at least 75% of all roles requiring high physical force (i.e., pushing manual pallets, carts)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you use mechanical/ automation tools (e.g., boom lifts, compact scissor lifts) for at least 75% of all roles requiring sustained overhead work (> 5 ft height for 10+ mins)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you use mechanical/ automation tools (e.g., torque tools, hydraulic assist) for at least 75% of all roles requiring high torque (e.g., loosening seized bolts, chassis bolting), to ensure no task requires sustained high grip strength? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 2)
Wellness and comfort	Do at least 75% of your plants with women have at least one separate toilet seat for every 25 women workers? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do all of your plants provide customised PPEs to suit women workers of different body types? (e.g., size-appropriate gloves, adjustable coveralls, adjustable helmets) <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do at least 75% of your plants have a dedicated resting area for women workers? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do at least 75% of your plants have customised workstations for workers of different heights? (e.g., adjustable-height workbenches, sit and lean stools) <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 1)

Acronyms: PPE – Personal Protective Equipment

Gender Equity Readiness Scorecard (GERS) for process-based manufacturing roles – Workplace practices (1/2)

Parameter	Score A	Score B	Score C	Score D	Final score
Gender sensitisation	Do at least 75% of your plants have non-POSH posters highlighting Do's/ Don'ts (e.g., "No abusive language or shouting") to promote a safe and respectful work environment? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	In the last or current FY, have you conducted any training for your plant HR/ operations managers to share tips on hiring, onboarding, and retaining women at entry level (e.g., creating inclusive job ads)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	In the last or current FY, have you conducted any non-POSH sensitisation session for your plant managers/ leaders on reducing unconscious gender bias? (e.g., checklist to identify bias) <i>Tick if Yes</i>	In the last or current FY, have you conducted any non-POSH gender sensitisation training for entry-level workers at your plant? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 1)
Support and grievance redressal	Do HR PoCs conduct 1:1 check-ins with all new women workers to understand their concerns (e.g., safety, workplace)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do at least 50% of your plants with women workers have a woman PoC (e.g., supervisor, HR) to act as go-to contact for women shopfloor workers to raise any concerns? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Is there a non-POSH grievance redressal channel (e.g., plant-level HR, helpline, email ID) for workers to report routine workplace issues (e.g., washroom-related)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Is there a non-POSH anonymous grievance redressal channel (e.g., suggestion box, QR feedback form) for workers to report workplace issues? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 1)

Acronyms: POSH – Prevention of Sexual Harassment, FY – Financial Year, HR – Human Resources, PoC – Point of Contact, QR – Quick Response

Gender Equity Readiness Scorecard (GERS) for process-based manufacturing roles – Workplace practices (2/2)

Parameter	Score A	Score B	Score C	Score D	Final score
Inclusive hiring practices	For roles open to women, do all your plants explicitly mention women/ ask for women on different hiring channels (e.g., mentioning 'women can apply' in job ads)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you have a paid referral program for hiring women, or do you provide a higher per-hire reward to workers for referring women compared to men? <i>Tick if at least one is done</i>	Do you specify GD requirement (e.g., >10% women profiles) to recruiters/ staffing companies, (or) do you include GD guidelines in 3rd party mfg. contracts? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you have any sourcing partnerships (e.g., NGOs, community mobilisers) where you provide financial incentives for hiring women (e.g., INR 500 per woman hired and retained for 30 days)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 1)
Upskilling and mobility	Do you have a practice of training women workers on roles beyond their current assigned role (e.g., machine operation, carpentry)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you have a structured program (e.g., shadowing, supervised practice, skill checklist) to train and transition women into higher-skilled roles? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you track (bi-annually/ annually) how many women have been trained and transitioned into higher-skilled roles? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do at least 50% of your plants have at least 5 women workers who have been transitioned into a higher-skilled role in the last 12 months? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 1)

Gender Equity Readiness Scorecard (GERS) for process-based manufacturing roles – Accountability

Parameter	Score A	Score B	Score C	Score D	Final score
Diversity KPIs	Have you internally announced a diversity target (through CXO quote, press release, or company-wide email) for entry-level on-roll and off-roll workers? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do you review plant-level gender-diversity progress (e.g., % change in women's representation) for both on-roll and off-roll workers at least twice a year? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Do at least 50% of your plants have diversity targets assigned to respective plant/ HR heads? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Are financial incentives of leadership and plant/ HR heads linked to diversity KPIs? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 2)
Diversity data publication	Have you internally documented the qualitative benefits of hiring women in entry-level roles, and shared with plant heads and HR managers/ PoCs? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	In the last two years, have you externally published content on your gender diversity progress or initiatives for entry-level roles (via news articles, blogs, etc.)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	In the last two years, have you published your gender diversity numbers externally (via website/ annual report/ news article)? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	Have you estimated the quantitative benefits of hiring women (e.g., rejection rate of men vs. women), and shared the findings internally with plant heads and HR managers/ PoCs? <i>Tick if Yes</i>	(# of ticks x 1)

Total score (Out of 72¹):

Acronyms: HR – Human Resources, KPIs – Key Performance Indicators, PoC – Point of Contact | 1.Total possible score would be lower if 'NA' is selected as the response for some questions

Table of contents | Process-based manufacturing industry

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- 1 Workforce composition and gender diversity
 - 2 Business benefits of employing women
 - 3 Challenges in hiring and retaining women
 - 4 Opportunities to employ more women
 - 5 Interventions to hire and retain more women
 - 6 Scorecard to assess progress on gender equity
-

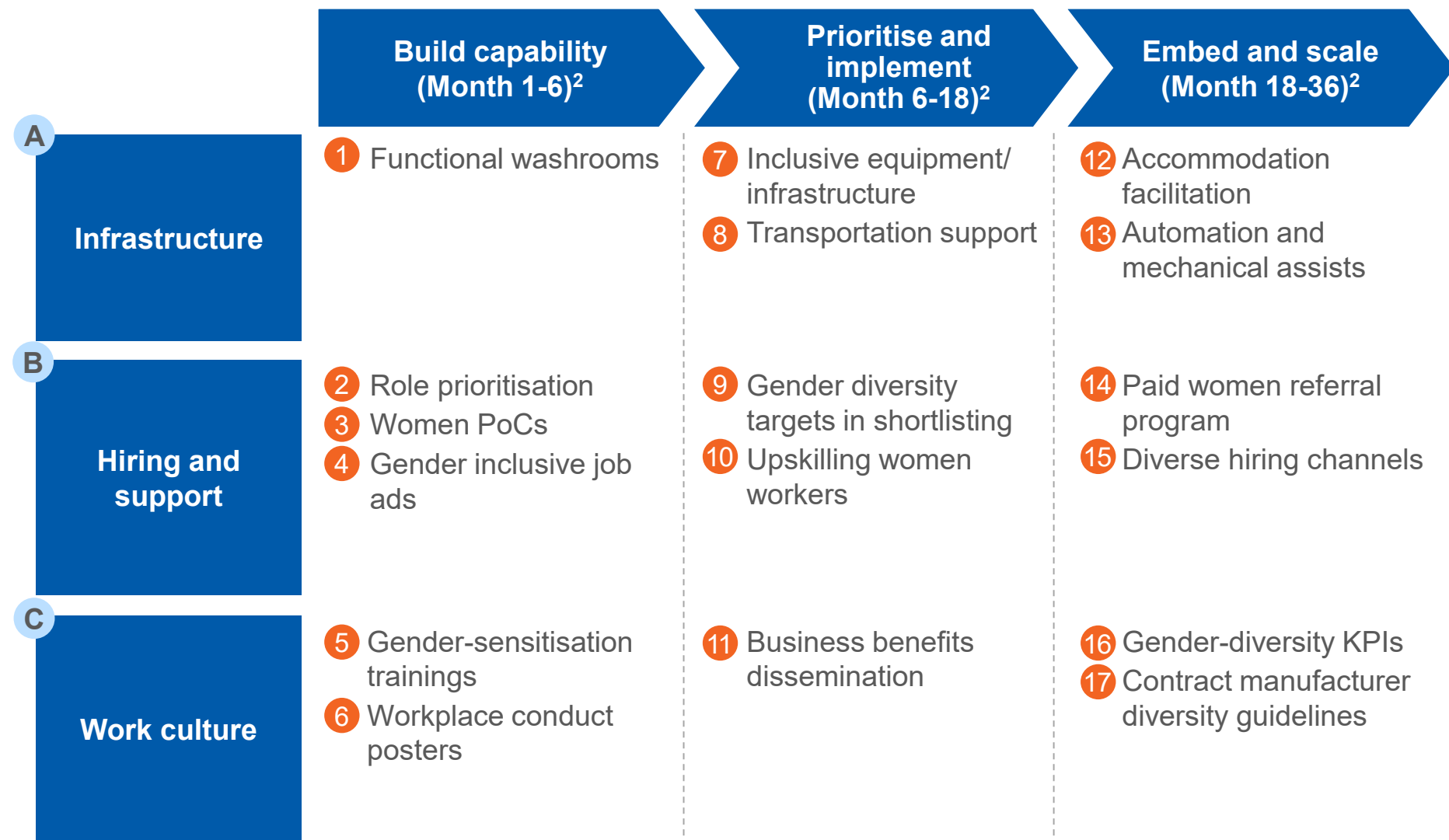
7 Annex

Details of 17 interventions to hire and retain more women

Managers' perspectives on gender diversity from digital survey

Methodology used for arriving at insights

Process-based manufacturing companies can roll out 17 interventions to hire and retain more women¹



Acronyms: PoC – Point of contact; KPI – Key Performance Indicator | 1. Based on FSG's secondary research and interactions with 11 leaders and experts, 10 managers, 4 women in entry-level roles, and 6 field visits; 2. Timelines are indicative

Functional washrooms

Provide well-equipped women-only washrooms, based on plant size, to ensure women have access to safe, hygienic facilities

Access to washrooms

- **Plants with < 5 women:** At least 1 common washroom for men and women
- **Plants with 5 - 25 women:** At least 1 dedicated women-only washroom
- **Plants with > 25 women:** At least 1 dedicated washroom for every 25 women¹

Well-equipped and well-maintained washrooms

- Ensure all women's washrooms are equipped with:
 - Sanitary pads
 - Closed dustbins to dispose off sanitary pads/ other waste
- Regularly clean and maintain washrooms to keep them hygienic and functional
- Set up a simple complaint/ reporting system (e.g., dedicated PoC such as HR) for women to flag maintenance issues

Acronyms: PoC – Point of contact; HR – Human Resources | 1. The Factories Act, 1948 mandates that there should be at least 1 washroom for every 25 women employees in facilities where women are employed

Role prioritisation (1/2)

Prioritise hiring women in select easy-to-fill roles with low manager bias and minimal investment requirements, to accelerate improvements in gender diversity

A

Collate workforce data and document restrictions

- Collate break-up of workforce data by:
 - Shifts
 - Roles
 - Plant location
- Document restrictions for hiring women based on:
 - Shift timings
 - Roles
 - Government restrictions
 - Client clauses

B

Prioritise roles where women can be hired immediately

- Prioritise roles with:
 - Minimal resistance from supervisors and women
 - No operational change requirements
 - No investment requirements
- Examples of such roles:
 - Production line workers in general shifts
 - Packing assistants
 - Inspection workers
 - Stitchers
 - Cleaners

C

Invest in support to open more roles for women

- Invest in operational changes to reduce bias and support supervisors/ women workers. Examples:
 - Transportation support
 - In-house upskilling for women
- Examples of additional roles:
 - Machine operators
 - Store assistants
 - Production line workers in night shifts
 - Loaders

Estimate potential to hire women based on prioritised roles and expected openings

Role prioritisation (2/2) | Sample¹

Illustrative

Sample template for collating workforce data

Role	General shift head count (9 AM to 5 PM)			Afternoon shift head count (2 PM to 10 PM)			Restrictions in hiring women
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	
Production line worker	10	5	15	5	2	7	No drop service in the afternoon shift
Machine operator	5	0	5	3	0	3	Parts are too heavy
Inspection worker	5	1	6	3	0	3	Frequent overtime and no drop service in the afternoon shift
Packer	3	1	4				
Supervisor	2	1	3	1	1	2	

Legend:	
	Roles with no potential to hire women
	Roles where women can be hired immediately
	Roles where women can be hired after introducing operational changes

1. List of roles is indicative and not exhaustive

Women POCs (1/2)

Assign at least one-woman PoC from HR/ Operations department to serve as an official medium for all women workers to share their concerns

Benefits of appointing women POCs

- Builds trust and psychological safety for women workers
- Effectively addresses women workers' concerns
- Reduces attrition by proactively surfacing concerns

Role of women POCs

- Act as a medium for women workers to share concerns
- Check in weekly with new women workers in the first 1-2 months to surface concerns and share solutions
- Connect new women with ~1-2 existing women workers to support role familiarisation
- Conduct monthly plant walk-throughs and check for concerns with a few women workers
- Relay women workers' challenges to superiors (e.g., corporate HR)

Appointing women POCs

- Appoint women HR/ other experienced women based out of plants (e.g., TLs, shift supervisors, experienced woman worker) as POCs
- If needed, assign multiple plants to 1 woman POC

 Detailed on the next slide

Acronyms: HR – Human Resources, POC – Point of Contact, TL – Team Leads

Women POCs (2/2) | Weekly check-ins

Assign at least one-woman PoC from HR/ Operations department to serve as an official medium for all women workers to share their concerns

Sample questions for check-ins with new workers

- A How are you?
- B What do you like about the job?
- C What challenges are you facing?
- D Is your team lead/ shift supervisor helpful?
- E Can I provide any additional support to help you?

Gender inclusive job-ads (1/3) | Job portal

Use gender-neutral job titles, explicitly mention women's eligibility in all job posts/ collaterals, and include details of salary structure, timings, skills, and available support/ benefits

Indicate that women can also apply in the headline

Include minimum guaranteed salary to set expectations

Include expected work timings

Include minimum experience requirement to reduce self-selection by women

Include mandatory skills so women can assess fit

Include language expectations

Sample job advertisement

Female/ Male Production Line Worker
Company name

📍 Vadodra (Located in Makarpura industrial area)

💰 ₹12,000 salary per month and additional overtime pay

🕒 Full time
🚌 Drop service available
👤 Any experience

🕒 **Employment type**
Full Time (9:00 am-5:00 pm)

Job requirements

👤 **Experience**
Any experience

✍️ **Skills**
Attention to detail

🗣️ **Regional language**
Fluent in speaking Gujarati

🚗 **Benefits**
Provident fund, Leave encashment, Transport, Canteen facility

⚙️ **Shift**
Day Shift

🎓 **Education**
10th/ 12th pass

🗣️ **English level**
Basic English

👤 **Gender**
Any gender

Include the plant location so women can assess commute distance and safety

Include minimum education requirement to reduce self-selection by women

Indicate that any gender can apply

Include benefits available to workers, particularly those women would find appealing

Transparency and explicit inclusion signals reduce uncertainty and self-screening among women candidates, leading to higher applications, better fit, and lower drop-offs

4 Gender inclusive job-ads (2/3) | Whatsapp poster/ status and message

Use gender-neutral job titles, explicitly mention women's eligibility in all job posts/ collaterals, and include details of salary structure, timings, skills, and available support/ benefits

Sample WhatsApp poster/ status

Job opportunity!
**Earn ₹12,000 per month working as a
production line worker in Vadodra (Makarpura
industrial area)**



Photo Credit: ICRISAT



Photo Credit: iStock

Men and women are welcome to apply!
NO CHARGES, APPLY NOW!
Call/ WhatsApp: +91 xxxxx xxxxx

Sample WhatsApp message

Job opportunity! Earn ₹12,000 per month!

Wanted Female/ Male Production Line Worker in
Vadodra for Food processing

- Job role: Production line worker
- Shift: Full-time, day shift (9:00 am to 5:00 pm)
- Qualification: 10th/ 12th Pass
- Language: Fluent in speaking Gujarati, Basic English
- Benefits: Provident fund, Transport facilities

Call or Whatsapp on +91 xxxxx WhatsApp.
Forward this message to others interested or in
need!

Clear information on the role and benefits, along with visible cues on inclusion (e.g., women's photo, "women can apply"), reduces self screening and increases applications from women

Gender inclusive job-ads (3/3) | Job flyer

Use gender-neutral job titles, explicitly mention women's eligibility in all job posts/ collaterals, and include details of salary structure, timings, skills, and available support/ benefits

Sample poster/ flyer for circulation on field

Hiring production line workers for <company name>



Earn INR 12,000 per month

Both women and men can apply

Timings: 9:00 AM to
5:00 PM

Provident fund and
leave encashment

Entry level job for
10th/ 12th pass, no
experience required

Transport and
canteen facilities
available



Call: +91 XXXXX XXXXX

Share with friends and family

*Benefits of the job that
women would find
appealing (e.g., fixed
timings and transport)*

*Job requirements to
allow candidates to
assess fit*

*Photo of a woman
and man to indicate
both are
encouraged to apply*

*Fixed salary
component to set
earnings
expectations*

*Clear and low effort
call to action for
ease of application*

Gender sensitisation trainings

Conduct training workshops to help managers and recruiters recognise and overcome unconscious gender biases

Objectives

- Help managers (e.g., HR manager, plant heads) recognise unconscious gender biases
- Show how gender biases affect the company, women, and men at work
- Share practical solutions to reduce common biases and the benefits of doing so
- Provide a simple checklist to self-assess bias during hiring and team management

Training checklist



Attendees: HR managers, Plant heads, Production managers, Team leads, Shift supervisors



Trainer: Internal (e.g., HR, L&D)/ External trainer



Duration: ~1.5 hours



Mode: In-person/ virtual



Frequency: Every 6 months



Set-up required: Projector, whiteboard, markers, Video conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom)

Indicative content is shared in the subsequent slides

Video: Types of unconscious biases at the workplace



What are your main takeaways from this video?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDgLQN2bdtw>

5 Fast thinking, although essential, is often the cause of unconscious gender bias

Fast thinking – Intuition, feelings, and pattern recognition that act as mental shortcuts and help us navigate our complex everyday lives



For example, fast thinking helps to:

Slam the brakes quickly when needed while driving

Recognise hesitant body language and react encouragingly

Take routine decisions like choosing a weather-appropriate outfit

However, fast thinking also leads to unconscious gender bias by causing us to:

Hold on to pre-existing beliefs despite evidence to the contrary. *E.g., if we believe women are poor drivers, we overlook competent women drivers*

Assign behaviours to groups instead of individuals. *E.g., one man's angry behaviour makes us believe all men behave that way*

Fail to question assumptions, thus reinforcing stereotypes. *E.g., we assume that a woman worker cannot lift heavy weights without checking her abilities*

Slow, deliberate thinking is essential to mitigate the impact of unconscious biases on important decisions

5 Sample group activity: How do you think unconscious gender bias affects the business and employees?

- How does unconscious gender bias affect women employees?
 - <XX>
- How does unconscious gender bias affect men employees?
 - <XX>
- How does unconscious gender bias affect business?
 - <XX>

5 Unconscious gender bias in hiring negatively affects women's participation, motivation, and growth in the workplace



Exclusion from participation

- Women may be excluded from roles viewed as inappropriate or unsuitable for them (*e.g., machine operator*)



Lower motivation

- Women may not even try to perform some tasks
- Women may be demotivated resulting in lower productivity



Lower pay and slower growth

- Women may receive lower pay and incentives if seen as less productive
- Women may not get promoted if managers are unsure of their skills



Poor attitude towards women

- Other male employees may be biased toward women if managers are biased
- The authority of women in positions of power may not be recognised

Unconscious gender bias can lead to poor workplace culture

5 Unconscious gender bias in hiring restricts roles and opportunities for men and puts undue pressure on them



Exclusion from roles

- Men may be excluded from roles seen as traditionally more suitable for women (*e.g., quality control roles*)



Gendered workload distribution

- Some physically intense tasks may be assigned only to men
- Men may be expected to do overtime more regularly



Caregiving duties ignored

- Men may not be given leave for caregiving responsibilities (*e.g., caring for children, taking care of old parents*)

Unconscious gender bias can lead to poor workplace culture

5 Unconscious gender bias in hiring could lead to lower efficiency, higher attrition, smaller hiring pool and fewer clients



Lower efficiency

- Missed opportunities for improvement in business metrics (e.g., productivity, absenteeism), if not hiring women



Lower workforce stability

- Higher average attrition rates when hiring men only



Smaller candidate pool

- Smaller candidate pool to hire from if excluding women

Workplace conduct posters

Display posters at work sites highlighting employee behaviour norms that support a respectful, safe, and fair working environment

Poster benefits

- Discourages use of abusive language and gender-biased behaviour
- Sets a clear standard of acceptable behaviour, creating a safe and conducive work environment
- Reduces attrition due to poor work culture issues (e.g., abusive language)

Poster guidelines

- **Placement:** Near workstation and high-visibility areas (e.g., drinking water points, changing rooms) in all plants
- **Language:** English and local language

Sample poster

How to make your workplace respectful, safe, and fair?



Treat everyone with respect, regardless of gender



Use respectful language – no shouting or abusive words



Maintain clear physical boundaries – no unwanted touch or staring



Do not make comments or insults about any gender



Assign roles and tasks fairly, regardless of gender

**In case of concerns, report at:
+91 22 XXXX XXXX**

Inclusive equipment/ infrastructure

Invest in low-cost inclusive equipment to remove design barriers that disproportionately affect women, and improve overall productivity and safety of workers

Category	Guideline	Examples	Benefits
 PPE¹	• Provide safety gear in multiple sizes to accommodate diverse body types	• Size-adjustable coveralls • Adjustable helmets • Size-appropriate gloves	✓ Improves comfort and compliance for all including women, smaller-built men, and aged workers ✓ Improves productivity by reducing discomfort-related slowdowns
 Work station	• Design workstations that are adjustable and usable by workers of different heights and dexterity preference (e.g., right or left-handed)	• Adjustable-height workbenches (e.g., inspection tables for glass) • Adjustable stitching machines • Sit-stand or lean stool for packaging lines	✓ Allows workers of different heights to maintain neutral posture and reduce bending ✓ Reduces ergonomic injuries and absenteeism
 Support tools	• Select tools to support workers with varying strength and dexterity	• Padded handles (e.g., for knives used in ceramic moulding) • Lightweight hand tools • Hand-held spray nozzles for chemical coating	✓ Reduces repetitive strain and fatigue for all including older workers and workers with prior injuries ✓ Enables precise handling of delicate components, reducing rejection rate

Acronyms: PPE – Personal protective equipment

Transportation support

Provide transportation support (e.g., company-facilitated drop service) for women to reduce workplace commute-related barriers, especially in shifts outside standard daytime hours

	Transportation support options	
	Vetted transport contacts	Company-facilitated drop service
Description	Share contact details of reliable auto/ cab drivers for pick-up and drop	- Provide company-facilitated transport to: - Fixed points (e.g., bus stops, metro/ railway stations), or - Doorstep drop at the employee's residence - Prioritise transportation support for: - Plants where public transport hubs are located >1 km away - Employees working in shifts ending late-evening or in night shifts
Effort and cost	- No cost to the company - Minimal effort to identify and update contacts	Medium-to-high cost and effort for the company, to fund the transport and manage daily logistics
Other guidelines	Regularly update the list of auto/ cab drivers based on employee feedback	- Prioritise vendors who provide GPS-enabled vehicles - Explore the below options to reduce cost: - Coordinate pooled rides with nearby plants - Recover a portion of the transportation cost from employee's salary

Gender diversity targets in shortlisting

Set minimum gender diversity targets (e.g., 10%) for shortlisting stages for each opening

Why set targets?

When there's only one woman in the pool, she's statistically unlikely to be hired, but on including **two or more women**, the chances of them getting selected increase drastically¹

What to do?



Set targets

- Set minimum shortlisting target, at least 2 women candidates, for each opening
- Customise targets by plant as required (e.g., higher targets for new plants)
- Identify roles to which these targets apply (e.g., roles with low manager resistance)
- Recalibrate targets and applicable roles annually based on outcomes



Communicate targets

- Communicate shortlisting targets to managers (e.g., plant heads, HR heads) and staffing vendors
- Share tips to meet targets (e.g., ask women workers to refer, increase number of staffing vendors) in monthly meetings/ quarterly review calls



Track compliance

- Review compliance (e.g., random quarterly checks, standing agenda item in reviews) of the targets
- Require a quarterly documented justification from HR/ plant heads in case targets are unmet

Acronyms: HR – Human Resources 1. <https://hbr.org/2016/04/if-theres-only-one-woman-in-your-candidate-pool-theres-statistically-no-chance-shell-be-hired>

Upskilling women workers

Deploy groups of 2-3 existing women workers on perceived difficult roles (e.g., machine operator) alongside a trained employee, to reduce dependence on external hiring

Role of the company

- Identify 2-3 tenured women workers with potential to take on higher-skilled roles (e.g., machine operator)
- Pair the identified women with an experienced worker on the target role for 10-15 hours over a month
- Conduct a mid-point check at 15 days using a simple checklist (e.g., identifying machine parts, setting instructions on machine)
- Deploy women who meet the checklist into the new role and extend training by 1-2 weeks for the rest

Benefits for the company

- Backup workforce for absenteeism or peak demand period (e.g., festive season)
- Reduced external hiring cost and time-to-fill for these roles
- Improved retention of women workers through promotion opportunities

Mitigation measures for potential challenges

- Schedule the training during planned downtime or lean periods to minimise disruption
- Communicate explicitly that women being trained are for filling new headcount, or vacancies from attrition, not displacing existing workers
- Give small incentives (e.g., INR 200-300 or an extra half-day off) to the trainers to appreciate the effort

11 Business benefits dissemination (1/2) | Steps to compute and disseminate

Document data on qualitative and quantitative benefits of hiring women and share these within and outside the firm to increase buy-in from leadership and managers and improve adoption of gender diversity initiatives

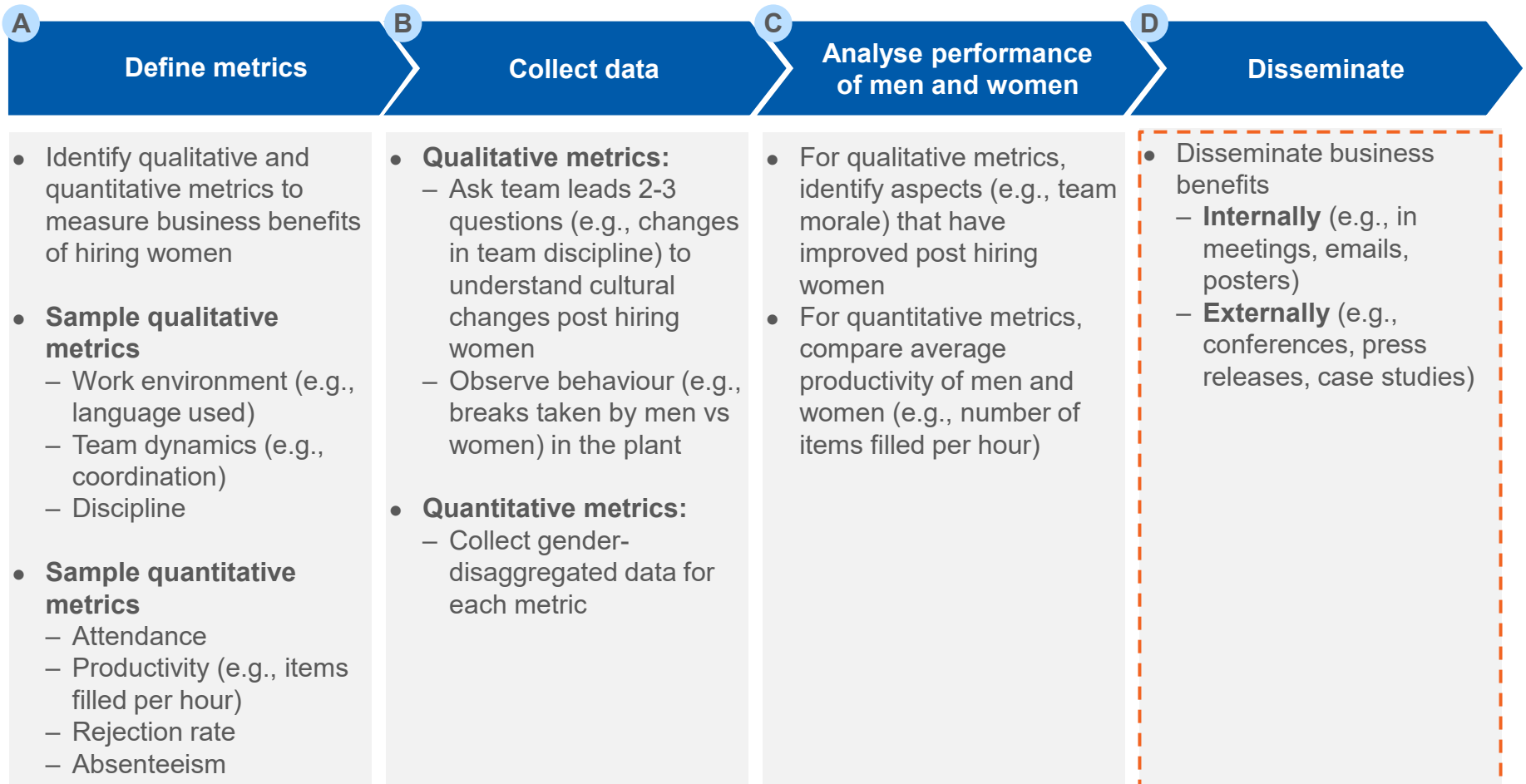
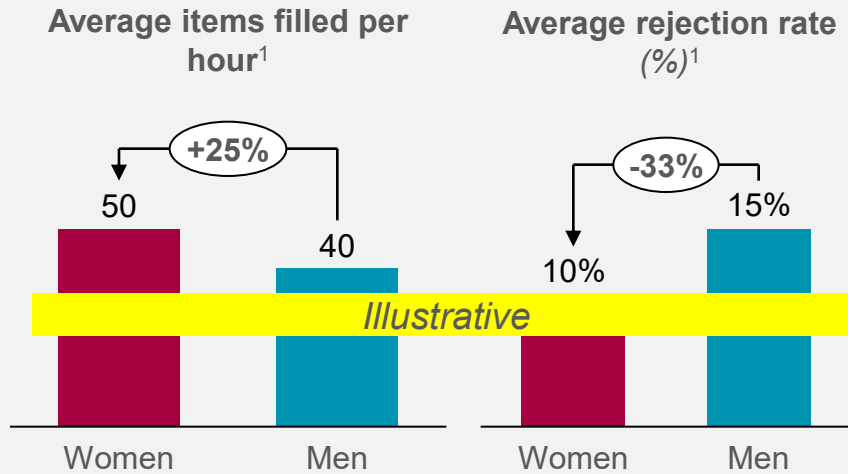


 Illustration in subsequent slide

11 Business benefits dissemination (2/2) | Dissemination – Illustration

Sample insights for dissemination internally and externally



“Post hiring women, the material lifted per person per shift doubled, this helped us reduce total number of people”

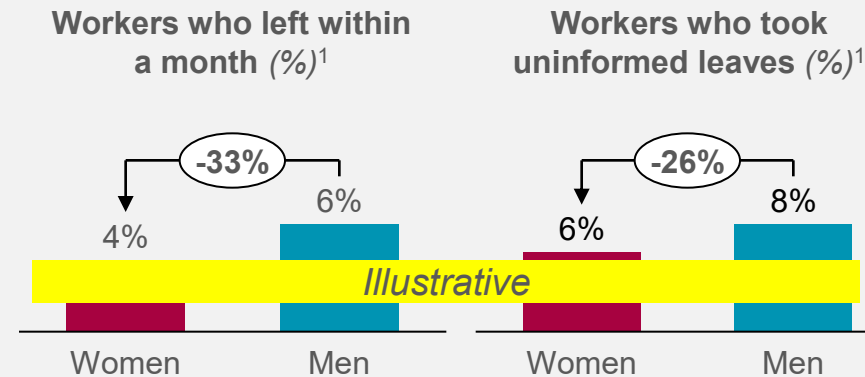
- Mfg. Manager, Chemicals manufacturing company

“Women are suited for quality, packing, painter and carpentry helpers as they are much sharper. For roles where a lot of intricate and sharp observation is required, women are far better”

- Mfg. Head, Toys manufacturing company

“In manufacturing there is a lower industrial relations risk as women create fewer disputes”

- Vice President HR, Shoes manufacturing company



“Women stay back; attrition is lower. Many women in the factory have been here for a long time. Women bring much more loyalty to the organisation”

- Mfg. Head, Toys manufacturing company

Accommodation facilitation

Facilitate access to affordable accommodation for migrant workers by providing details of facilities that fulfil basic requirements such as distance, safety, and standard amenities

Rationale

- Plants are often located in remote areas, and safe transport options are limited for women

Role of the company

- Use a standard checklist to identify appropriate facilities. Sample items include:
 - Distance (e.g., <5km from the plant location)
 - Standard facilities (e.g., canteen/ kitchen, separate washrooms for men and women, basic furniture such as bed and chair)
 - Safety (e.g., 24/7 security guard, CCTV)
- Share contact details of ~2-3 worker dormitories/ hostels/ PGs nearby
- Conduct an annual physical audit of the accommodation facility

Benefits for the company

- Cost-effective and asset-light
- Quick execution

Effort and cost for the company

- ~2-3 days of effort to find suitable accommodation to recommend for each location
- Minimal travel costs to find accommodation

Acronyms: PGs – Paying guest facilities

Automation and mechanical assists

Not exhaustive

Install automation and mechanical assists to reduce physically demanding tasks, unlocking more roles for women, and improving productivity and safety of all workers

Category	Applicable role	Equipment example	Benefits to company	Benefits to workers
Handling excessive weight (e.g., >15 kg)	- Machine operator - Raw material handlers (e.g., loading flour bags) - Inventory roles (e.g., store assistant)	- Powered pallets - Roller conveyors - Vacuum lifters - Drum/ bag lifters	Increases throughput by reducing manual loading and transfer time	Improves stamina across tasks reduces risk of injuries
Working at heights	- Inventory roles - Tank/ vessel cleaners - Machine operator (e.g., mixer operator in food and beverage)	- Scissor lifts/ hydraulic man lifts - Mobile work platforms with guardrails	Increases productivity by reducing time spent repositioning ladders and scaffolds	Reduces fall risk and improves stability when working on elevated components
Managing high force requirements	- Machine operator (e.g., valve operators in chemicals) - Mould clampers (e.g., for plastics)	- Electric torque wrenches - Power-assisted valve actuators	- Improves quality of fastening and press-fit operations - Reduces rework and downtime	Prevents over-exertion injuries and joint damage
Minimising repeated movement	Inventory handlers moving bins/ kits across aisles	- Roller/ skate wheel conveyors - Mobile trolleys and kitting carts	Reduces idle time by eliminating unnecessary walking and manual transfers	Reduces fatigue and helps workers sustain energy across tasks and shifts

Paid women referral program (1/3)

Offer a referral bonus of INR 300 for each successful referral of a woman candidate who completes at least 30 days of employment

Process

- A** Announce the program via meetings, WhatsApp messages, or posters in the plant
- B** Track women candidates hired through referrals in each plant monthly
- C** Give a INR 300 voucher to employees whose referred candidates complete 30 days of employment
- D** Announce the top 3 referrers every quarter through meetings, WhatsApp messages, or posters in the plant
- E** Run the program during select hiring seasons or festival months (e.g., Diwali), to optimise referral incentives and manage costs

Eligibility for incentive

- All on-roll and off-roll workers, including housekeeping, security, and other plant staff, can participate
- Referral bonus is paid only when the referred woman completes at least 30 days in the role

Recognition message for the top 3 referrers

Congratulations to our diversity champions!

Photo of
referrer 1

Photo of
referrer 2

Photo of
referrer 3

XX women were hired through referrals!
Top referrers were:
1. <Name> referred ~X women, earning ~INR Y
2. <Name> referred ~X women, earning ~INR Y
3. <Name> referred ~X women, earning ~INR Y

Encouraging women referrals helps companies access an untapped candidate pool. Further, retention-linked referral bonus could reduce hiring time and attrition

Paid women referral program (2/3)

Sample format to collect data			
Referrer ¹ name	Number of successful women referrals ²		
	March	April	May
Referrer 1	2	1	0
Referrer 2	0	1	3
Referrer 3	...	...	...
Referrer 4	...	...	...
...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...

1. All on-roll and off-roll workers, including housekeeping, security, and other manufacturing staff; 2. Only includes women employees who completed at least 30 days in the role

Paid women referral program (3/3)

Poster for announcing the program

Refer your women friends for roles and earn INR 300!



Photo Credit: Triloks from Getty Image

If selected, the candidate will earn INR 12,000 in-hand + provident fund + insurance (ESI)

Work fixed 9-hour shifts with weekly offs

Earn additional income through overtime work

Finish by 5 pm on most days

Receive ESI/ health insurance coverage

Logo



+91 XXXX XXXX

Photo of a woman

Benefits for women

Clear call to action

Acronyms: ESI – Employees’ State Insurance

Diverse hiring channels (1/2)

Introduce 1-2 new hiring channels (e.g., referrals, partnerships with ITIs) to reduce reliance on traditional channels that may filter out women candidates

Rationale

Traditional hiring channels systematically filter out women due to societal biases and over-reliance on male networks. For example:

- Regional contractors may not even consider women candidates due to gender biases
- Regional contractors typically rely on male-centric networks (e.g., community labour brokers, informal worker referral) for hiring
- Walk-in hiring is more accessible to men, as it lacks signals on timings/ safety/ benefits that women value

Hiring channel	Role of company	When to use
Women referrals	• Communicate about referral hiring via shift supervisors/ HR	• Existing strong base of women workers • Requiring women workers to meet urgent production demands
Job portals	• Post women-only job openings on blue collar job portals to attract women • Highlight benefits available (e.g., drop service) to women in the job description	• Recruiting across multiple plant locations • Requiring prior experience in similar industry or education qualification
Certified institutes (e.g., ITIs ¹)	• Conduct campus recruitment drives at institutions with good gender diversity • Share clear job description (e.g., location, salary range)	• Recruiting for roles requiring specific technical skills (e.g., welding)

Acronyms: ITIs – Industrial training institutes, HR – Human Resources

Diverse hiring channels (2/2)

Hiring channel	Role of company	When to use
Skilling/ training organisations	• Identify and partner with relevant organisations/ mobilisers • Share recruitment pitch and sample responses to FAQs	• No existing base of women workers • Recruiting women in bulk who have finished same training at organisations
Community mobilisers (e.g., SHGs)	• Share clear job description (e.g., location, salary range)	• Recruiting from nearby communities • Recruiting in areas with high societal bias

Acronyms: SHGs – Self-help groups, FAQs – Frequently Asked Questions

Gender diversity KPIs (1/2)

Set realistic gender diversity targets for HR and business/ operations managers and heads, and link a part of their variable pay to these targets

Guidance to set KPIs

- Set realistic KPIs, considering plant-specific limitations (e.g., location of the plant, nature of operations in the plant)
- Set KPIs related to both efforts and outcomes, to encourage managers to take actions related to improving diversity
- Revise KPIs for different plants/ regions annually to incorporate the impact of internal/ external circumstances (e.g., 2 more states allow night shift employment of women) and communicate these changes formally via email
- Gradually increase requirements in KPIs to encourage improved diversity through the years (e.g., 5% increase in annual target)

Variable pay linked to performance on gender diversity metrics can encourage active involvement by managers in achieving gender diversity outcomes

Gender diversity KPIs (2/2) | Sample criteria

Sample gender diversity KPIs for business/ operations managers

Parameters	% Weightage (of GD bonus)	Criteria for bonus eligibility			
		25% bonus	50% bonus	75% bonus	100% bonus
A % of job roles in plant with gender-neutral job ads currently	30%	30% to 50%	51% to 75%	76% to 90%	>90%
B % women interviewed in the last month	30%	10% to 20% of candidates interviewed are women	21% to 30% of candidates interviewed are women	31% to 40% of candidates interviewed are women	>40% of candidates interviewed are women
C # of new women hired last month	20%	30% to 50% of target	51% to 75% of target	76% to 90% of target	>90% of target
D % of women retained in the last month	20%	30% to 50% of women headcount in the last month	51% to 75% of women headcount in the last month	76% to 90% of women headcount in the last month	>90% of women headcount in the last month

For parameters 1 and 2 (% gender neutral job ads, % women interviewed), managers to self report data and HR to conduct spot checks; for parameters 3 and 4 (# women hired, % women retained), HR to use payroll data

Acronyms: KPI – Key performance indicators, GD – Gender Diversity, HR – Human Resources

Contract manufacturer diversity guidelines

Include gender diversity guidelines in manufacturing agreements/ code of conduct guidelines to nudge contract manufacturers toward inclusive practices

Sample diversity guidelines for contract manufacturers

Sections in code of conduct guidelines	Suggested gender diversity guidelines
Human rights, labour, and employment	• Supplier shall support safe working conditions for all genders, including access to appropriate facilities (e.g., restrooms, changing areas) and inclusive equipment (e.g., PPEs in multiple sizes)
	• Supplier shall provide equal opportunity and not discriminate in hiring, promotion, or termination based on gender, marital status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable laws
	• Supplier shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that at least 10% of workforce (<i>includes both on-roll and off-roll workers</i>) are non-male, measured on an aggregate basis across production, maintenance, and supervisory staff
Monitoring and compliance	• Supplier shall, upon reasonable request, share workforce diversity data with buyer or its designated auditor, subject to data protection laws

Inclusive practices at contract manufacturers strengthen safety and workforce stability, potentially leading to more reliable production and quality outcomes

Acronyms: PPE – Personal protective equipment

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- 6 Scorecard to assess progress on gender equity

7 Annex

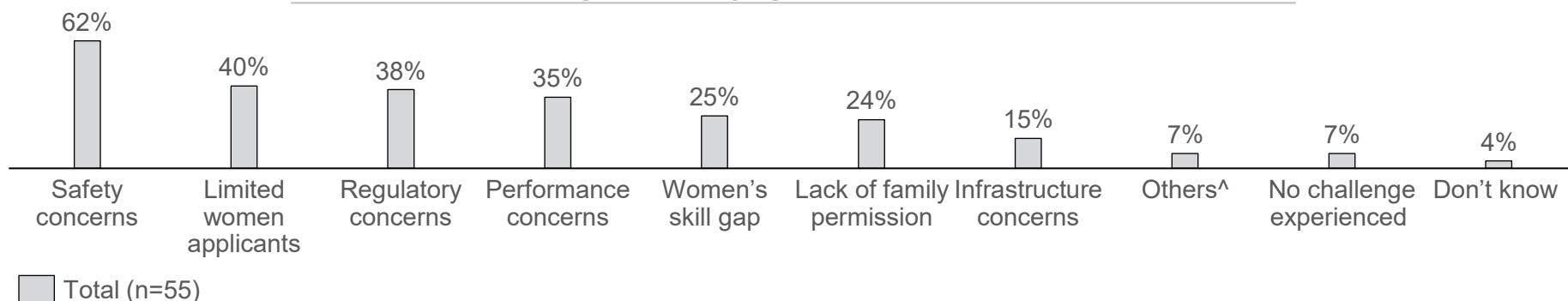
Details of 17 interventions to hire and retain more women

Managers' perspectives on gender diversity from digital survey

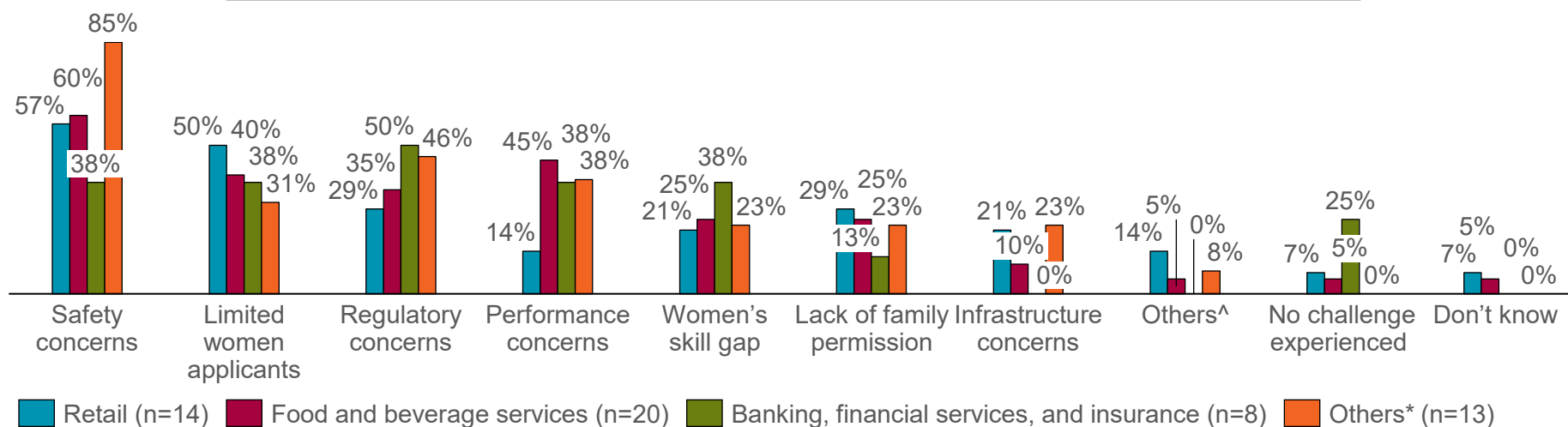
Methodology used for arriving at insights

Most managers cited three key challenges in hiring women: safety, limited applicants, and regulatory concerns

Perceived challenges in employing women in frontline/ blue-collar roles



Perceived challenges in employing women in frontline/ blue-collar roles by industry



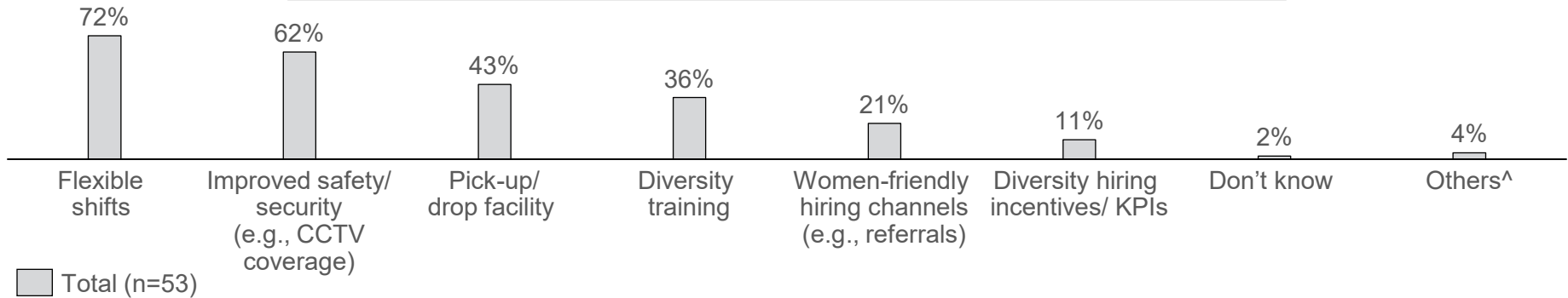
^ Includes preference to work near family residence

* Includes Manufacturing, Information Technology, Hospitality, Facilities Management, Logistics

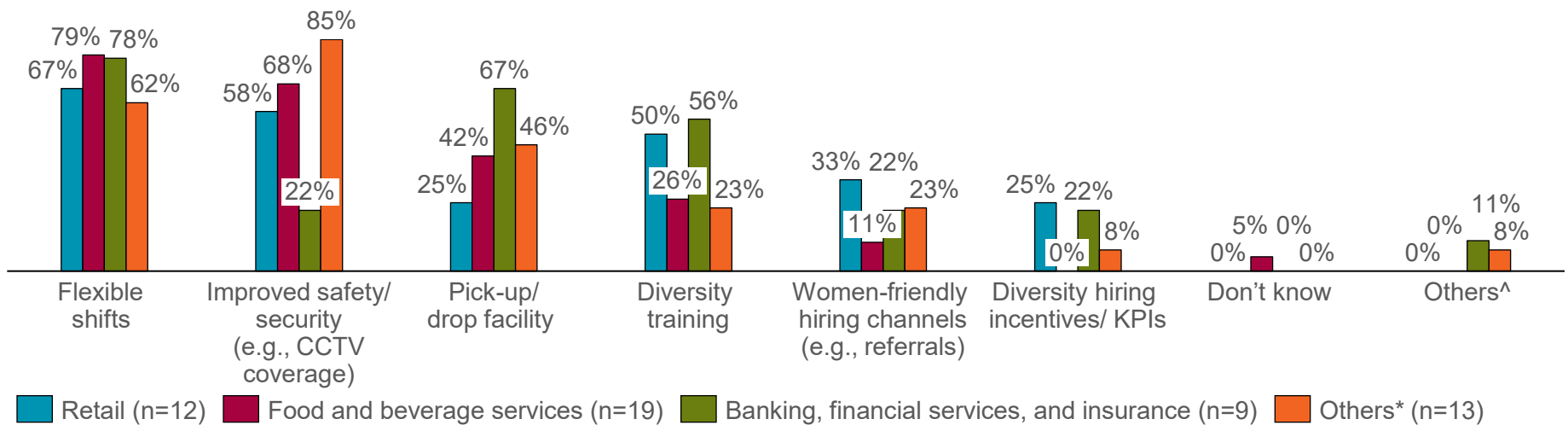
Source: Based on FSG's digital survey to understand managers' perspectives on diversifying the talent pool in frontline/ blue-collar roles

Managers cited flexible shifts, safety measures, and pick-up/drop facilities as key practices that help hire more women

Perceived practices that help employ women in frontline/ blue-collar roles



Perceived practices that help employ women in frontline/ blue-collar roles by industry

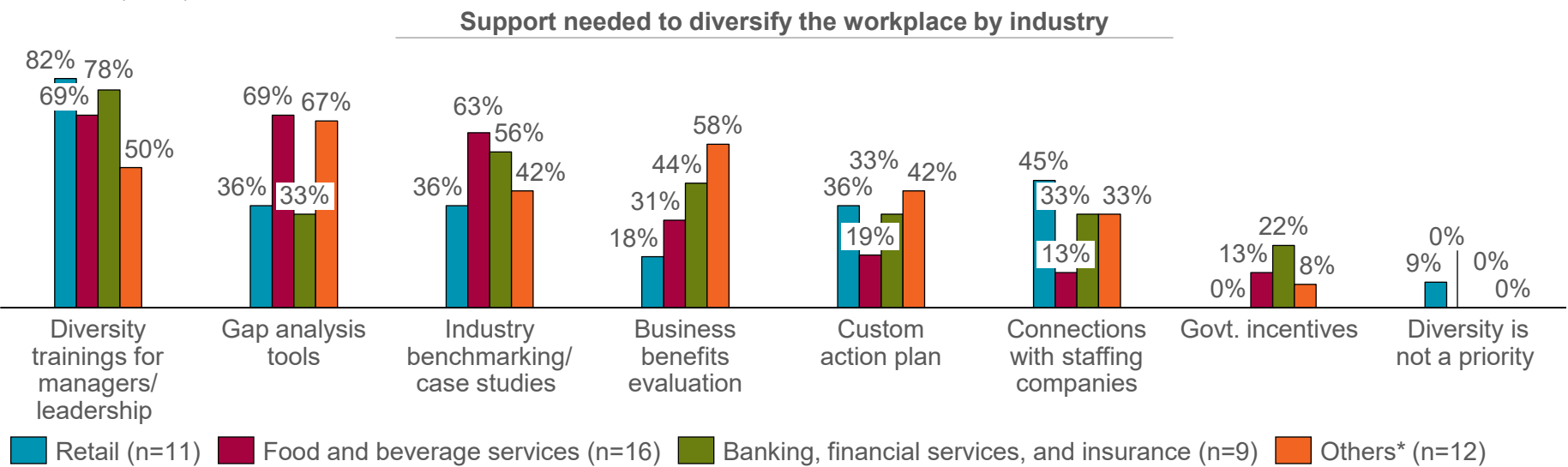
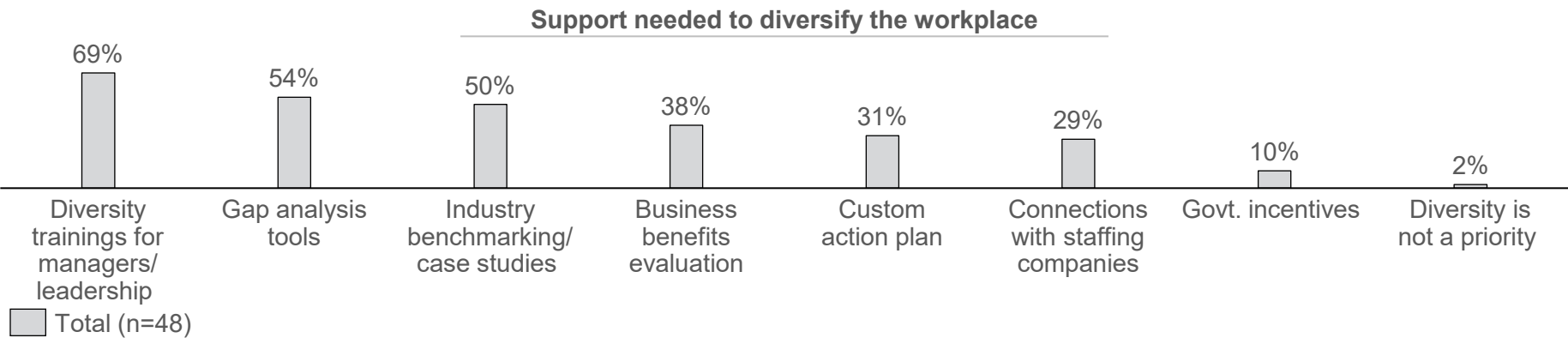


^ Includes Inclusive infrastructure and policies, and counselling sessions

* Includes Manufacturing, Information Technology, Hospitality, Facilities Management, Logistics

Source: Based on FSG's digital survey to understand managers' perspectives on diversifying the talent pool in frontline/ blue-collar roles

Managers cited diversity trainings, diagnostic tools, and industry benchmarking as top support needs to boost diversity



* Includes Manufacturing, Information Technology, Hospitality, Facilities Management, Logistics
Source: Based on FSG’s digital survey to understand managers’ perspectives on diversifying the talent pool in frontline/ blue-collar roles

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Details of 17 interventions to hire and retain more women

Managers' perspectives on gender diversity from digital survey

Methodology used for arriving at insights

Gathered data and feedback from multiple stakeholders including managers, women, industry leaders, and experts

Industry deep-dive

-  **Secondary research** (e.g., PLFS data, news articles, reports) to map roles, headcount/ diversity status, and industry trends
-  **Interviews with 10 managers and 4 women in entry-level roles** in the process-based manufacturing industry to understand workplace practices and challenges, and test interventions
-  **Field visits to 6 plants** to observe available infrastructure and understand roles and processes
-  **Consultations with 8 leaders and 3 experts** in the manufacturing industry to understand industry priorities, best practices, and validate interventions

Cross-industry learnings

-  **Digital survey with 50+ managers** across industries to gather perspectives on challenges, opportunities, and support requirements¹
-  **Interviews with 6k+ women** across urban India to understand women's employment-related needs, preferences, and challenges²
-  **Learnings from supporting 20+ companies** on hiring and retaining women to understand internal hurdles (e.g., lack of priority, limited resources) and tailor interventions³

- Considered multiple perspectives (e.g., managers' concerns, women's preferences) to identify the critical barriers limiting women's participation
- Gathered industry feedback to ensure the solutions are feasible and context-relevant

Acronyms: PLFS – Periodic Labour Force Survey | 1. Refer to 'Managers' perspectives on gender diversity from digital survey' in 'Annex' for key findings; 2. <https://www.fsg.org/resource/creating-a-gender-equitable-workforce-in-india/>; 3. FSG, through its [GLOW](#) program, has provided multi-year support to 20+ companies in logistics and flexi-staffing industries to hire and retain more women in entry-level roles

PLFS codes covered under process-based manufacturing industry in this document (1/3)

Sub-sector	Related PLFS codes	PLFS code description ¹
1 Food and beverage	101	Processing and preserving of meat
	102	Processing and preserving of fish, crustaceans and molluscs
	103	Processing and preserving of fruit and vegetables
	104	Manufacture of vegetable and animal oils and fats
	105	Manufacture of dairy products
	106	Manufacture of grain mill products, starches and starch products
	107	Manufacture of other food products
	108	Manufacture of prepared animal feeds
	110	Manufacture of beverages
2 Metals and related products	241	Manufacture of basic iron and steel
	242	Manufacture of basic precious and other non-ferrous metals
	243	Casting of metals
	251	Manufacture of structural metal products, tanks, reservoirs and steam generators
	252	Manufacture of weapons and ammunition
	259	Manufacture of other fabricated metal products; metalworking service activities

Acronyms: PLFS – Periodic Labour Force Survey, n.e.c – Not elsewhere classified | 1. As per NIC (National Industrial Classification) 2008

PLFS codes covered under process-based manufacturing industry in this document (2/3)

Sub-sector	Related PLFS codes	PLFS code description ¹
3 Non-metallic mineral products	231	Manufacture of glass and glass products
	239	Manufacture of non-metallic mineral products n.e.c.
4 Leather, wood, and paper	151	Tanning and dressing of leather; manufacture of luggage, handbags, saddlery and harness; dressing and dyeing of fur
	152	Manufacture of footwear
	161	Sawmilling and planing of wood
	162	Manufacture of products of wood, cork, straw and plaiting materials
	170	Manufacture of paper and paper products
5 Other manufacturing (e.g., toys, printing)	181	Printing and service activities related to printing
	182	Reproduction of recorded media
	321	Manufacture of jewellery, bijouterie and related articles
	322	Manufacture of musical instruments
	323	Manufacture of sports goods
	324	Manufacture of games and toys
	325	Manufacture of medical and dental instruments and supplies
	329	Other manufacturing n.e.c

Acronyms: PLFS – Periodic Labour Force Survey, n.e.c – Not elsewhere classified | 1. As per NIC (National Industrial Classification) 2008

PLFS codes covered under process-based manufacturing industry in this document (3/3)

Sub-sector	Related PLFS codes	PLFS code description ¹
6 Chemicals, petrochemicals, rubber and plastics	191	Manufacture of coke oven product
	192	Manufacture of refined petroleum products
	201	Manufacture of basic chemicals, fertilizer and nitrogen compounds, plastics and synthetic rubber in primary forms
	202	Manufacture of other chemical products
	203	Manufacture of man-made fibres
	221	Manufacture of rubber products
	222	Manufacture of plastics products
7 Furniture	310	Manufacture of furniture



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