

# FUTURE OF WORK IN INDIA: WHY AND HOW LABOUR AND TECHNOLOGY CAN GAINFULLY COEXIST

01  
MAY, 2023  
Monday  
11:00-13:15  
(IST)

## Welcome Address

- **Yatika Agrawal**, Senior Research Associate, CUTS International

## Opening Remarks

- **Pradeep S Mehta**, Secretary General, CUTS International

## Moderators

- **Aruna Sharma**, Former Secretary, Electronics and Information Technology and Distinguished Fellow, CUTS International
- **A Didar Singh**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and Distinguished Fellow, CUTS International

## Key Speakers

- **Bornali Bhandari**, Professor, National Council of Applied Economic Research
- **Farzana Afridi**, Professor, Indian Statistical Institute
- **Samar Verma**, Program Officer, Ford Foundation
- **C. K. Saji Narayanan**, Former President, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh
- **Amrat Singh**, Director, CUTS International

## Key Takeaways

- India is facing the danger of jobless growth. The future of jobs in 2030 is going to be demanding and the influence of AI and automation will be very significant. Therefore, it is much needed to prepare young people by skilling, re-skilling, and upskilling them to make them future ready.
- Manufacturing sector and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are the largest contributors to job creation. Government should focus on creating good and

better jobs in these sectors. These jobs can be created depending on the production processes.

- There is a need to create a system of direct benefit transfers which provides social support to people at least for a short time to support them through the transition process. Thus, there is a need for a combination of social welfare support and skills to work together.
- Women's participation in the labour force is very low. It is important to create an enabling environment for women, which will encourage them to be part of the labour force.
- New investment requires skilling and re-skilling of the labour and also improved labour laws which allows the country to tap the right labour force.
- Digitalisation is creating jobs but not all are gainers, some are even losers of the jobs. Therefore, there is a need to provide incentives to the losers in this digital era of jobs.
- The country's economic growth is still in a prison of a linear economy. There is a need to incorporate circular thinking and transparency in public policies.
- Policy and planning should begin at the district level and then be aggregated. MSME clusters and district industry associations are critical for understanding the local dynamics and anticipating future demands and skills requirements.
- Skilling the workforce is important not only for the future of work but will also provide them with better negotiation power for better wages and working conditions.
- India has a large informal labour workforce and their skills need to be recognised. The government should certify the skills of the informal workers.

## **Way Forward**

- The Skilling Ministry may collaborate with MSMEs to provide skilling to the manufacturers, instead of providing training in silos.
- The entire skilling and reskilling structure require gender-specific strategies to enhance female labour workforce participation.
- The skills of the informal workers need to be certified by the government.
- It is important to design skill enhancement courses on skill-based assessment and market demands, rather than the availability of trainers and the market supply.