

EVENTS & ENGAGEMENTS

Cape Town Conversations

November 26-28, 2024 | South Africa



Organised by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in partnership with the Thabo Mbeki Foundation, the Cape Town Conversations focused on amplifying the voice of the Global South in tackling cross-border challenges. Deepak Mishra presented the State of India's Digital Economy (SIDE) 2024 report, emphasising the need for digitalisation indices that are more relevant to the Global South. Senior Fellows Tanu Goyal and Mansi Kedia moderated sessions on Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) reforms and the globalisation of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), respectively. Our thanks to ORF for providing an important platform to showcase India's progress to the global community.

Women in the Workforce: Moving the dialogue from Centre to States

November 13, 2024 | Delhi



EPWD, a gender initiative, co-founded by ICRIER in partnership with Gates Foundation and UNDP, hosted an event focusing on mechanisms to enable state governments to enhance women's participation in the workforce.

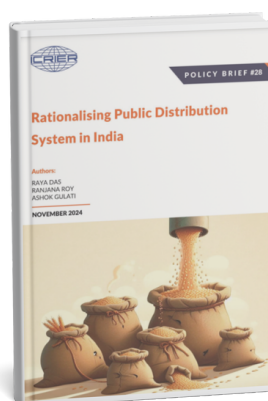
Discussions emphasised the need for augmented financial resources and cooperative federalism to strengthen state-level programs that support women in the labour market. Annie George Mathew, Member of the XVIth Finance Commission, delivered the keynote address. UNDP India and Saachi Bhalla, Deputy Director, Gender Equality, BMGF India also made remarks focusing on the same.



Looking Beyond Bangladesh: Making India's Medical Value Travel Sector More Resilient

Author(s): *Nisha Taneja, Sanjana Joshi, Nirlipta Rath, and Vasudha Upreti*

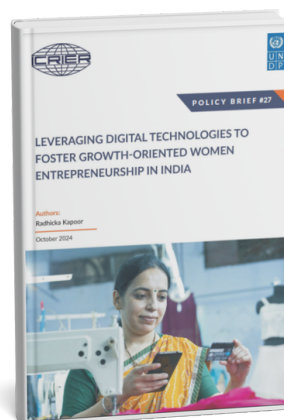
The policy brief highlights the impact of recent political developments in Bangladesh on the medical value travel (MVT) sector in India. Emphasizing the key imperative of diversification of source markets for greater resilience, the publication identifies the key challenges faced by this sector and provides recommendations to address these in order to attract a wider range of foreigners to seek cost-effective and holistic health solutions in India.



Rationalising Public Distribution System in India

Author(s): *Raya Das, Ranjana Roy, and Ashok Gulati*

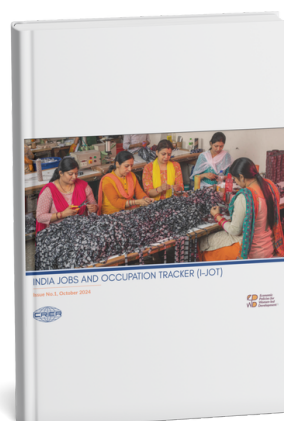
The policy brief addresses inefficiencies in India's PDS. PDS serves 813.5 million beneficiaries, but 28% of food grains fail to reach recipients. Recommendations include better targeting, Direct Benefit Transfers, and transforming Fair Price Shops into Nutrition Hubs to enhance food security and fiscal sustainability.



Leveraging Digital Technologies to Foster Growth-Oriented Women Entrepreneurship in India

Author: *Radhicka Kapoor*

The publication highlights the potential of digital tools in supporting women entrepreneurs. Despite numerous government initiatives, only 17.5% of MSMEs are women-owned. The report explores how digital advancements can improve financial inclusion, enhance skill-building, and break societal barriers, fostering an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in India.



India Jobs and Occupation Tracker (I-JOT)

Author(s): *Deepak Mishra, Cledwyn Fernandez, and Havishaye Puri*

ICRIER's *India Jobs and Occupation Tracker (I-JOT)* offers a quarterly analysis of India's labour market. The inaugural issue examines urban labour trends for Q2:2024, highlighting a resilient labour market, increased female participation, and regional improvements in employment. However, challenges persist, including a lack of structural transformation, declining industrial employment, and a shortage of high-skill jobs. The report underscores the need for creating higher-skilled employment opportunities to drive sustainable economic progress.

FIELD VISITS

Visit to the Integrated Check Post, Petrapole, India-Bangladesh Border

Team Trade, Investment, and Economic Relations (TIER)

The TIER team undertook a field visit to Petrapole to assess infrastructure constraints faced by women at the border crossing. Discussions with stakeholders, including port officials, freight forwarders, customs house agents and passengers highlighted the need for gender responsive infrastructure and facilities. The insights gathered will guide recommendations for making land ports in the BBIN region more inclusive and gender-friendly. The team also toured the newly inaugurated passenger terminal building and Maitri Dwar cargo gate at ICP Petrapole.



Industrial Damage Assessment: Climate Change and Floods in Guwahati, Assam

Climate Change, Urbanisation, and Sustainability (CCUS)

From November 18-22, 2024, the CCUS team conducted a stakeholder analysis in Guwahati, Assam, to assess industrial losses caused by annual floods. They engaged with industries in pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and paper, as well as government agencies like the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA). The team explored the impact of floods on production, supply chains, and disaster preparedness strategies. The findings aim to inform policies that will enhance industrial resilience to climate change-induced flooding.

Agriculture Policy, Sustainability, and Innovation (APSI) Team Travels Across the Country

Research on Potatoes & Sugarcanes in the Meerut & Agra Belts, Uttar Pradesh

The team investigated the potato and sugarcane value chains, identifying inefficiencies in market structures and price dynamics. Discussions with farmers and traders emphasised the potential of solar-powered cold storage, ethanol production from sugarcane by-products, and improved irrigation practices to boost productivity and market efficiency.





Team visits to Jodhpur, Rajasthan to study Solar Farming Initiative.

The Agri-PV team visited ICAR-CAZRI to study a dual-use solar farming system. The team studied its impact on crop productivity, water efficiency, and economic returns. Discussions also revolved around scaling similar projects to optimize land use and promote renewable energy in agriculture.

Visit to Akola, Maharashtra to study the Cotton Value Chain.

The APSI team delved into challenges faced by cotton farmers, including rising costs and outdated seed varieties. Stakeholder interactions covered the entire value chain—from farmer-producer organisations (FPOs) to ginning and spinning mills. The visit highlighted the potential of automation, policy reforms, and improved futures trading to strengthen India's position in the global textile market.



Field Visit to the cotton fields of Vadodara, Gujarat

The team visited the cotton fields of Vadodara in Gujarat to interact with farmers. They explained how cotton is produced from the application of inputs to the cotton fruit and flower, and the cotton ball. As part of their visit, they also went to the ginning mills to see how raw cotton from the farm is converted to ginned cotton. The team also visited the spinning mills that produce yarn out of the ginned cotton.

WHAT'S BREWING @ICRIER

The 24th Annual Neemrana Conference

ICRIER, in collaboration with NCAER, will host the 24th Neemrana Conference from December 20 to 22, 2024. Key topics for discussion will include dollar hegemony, the middle-income trap, India's development models, the RBI's management of the economy, India's strategy toward China, the future of the digital economy, global megatrends, and the modernization of India's statistical system.

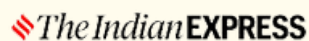


MEDIA MENTIONS



India-China trade, investment and the way forward

Author: Saon Ray - Visiting Professor, ICRIER | Nov 04



Public Distribution System must be reformed to fix leakage, invest in farming

Authors: Ashok Gulati and Raya Das | Nov 11

2024 Dietary Guidelines: What Indians should eat — and don't

Author: Arpita Mukherjee | Nov 20

Three solutions for clean air

Authors: Ashok Gulati and Reena Singh | Nov 25

The bulldozer at CoP29: By silencing developing world, process has lost credibility

Author: Somit Dasgupta | Nov 28



India-US trade after Trump returns: Much to fret about but scope for optimism too

Authors: Arpita Mukherjee and Aahana Srishti | Nov 11



Does a US exit really matter?

Authors: Somit Dasgupta | Nov 25



High cost of compliance is lowering farmers' income – Is national turmeric board an option?

Authors: Arpita Mukherjee and Trishali Khanna | Nov 30



High GST is preventing innovation in the carbonated beverages industry in India

Authors: Arpita Mukherjee and Eshana Mukherjee | Nov 25

MEET THE TEAM



Ms. Sruthi Vanguri, Digital Economy, Startups, and Innovation (DESI), ICRIER

Sruthi is a Research Assistant with the Digital Economy, Startups and Innovation team at ICRIER. She holds Master's degrees in Public Policy from IIT Delhi, Political Science from University of Delhi, and a Bachelor's in Economics from Lady Shri Ram College for Women. She has previously held research assistantships at IIT Delhi, London School of Economics, Ernst & Young, Data Security Council of India, NITI Aayog and NHRC. Her research interests include Tech Policy, Data Feminism and Development Economics. Sruthi is a 2023 Youth Internet Governance Forum Fellow and is passionate about contributing to policy developments in Digital Economy and Internet Governance.