

# Unlocking the Platform Dividend for the Indian Economy

A Policy Roundtable on NITI Aayog's Roadmap for an Inclusive Future of Work

**Magnolia Hall, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi | August 25, 2022**

**Organized by IT for Change**

## CONCEPT NOTE

### **Background**

In June 2022, the NITI Aayog published a [research report](#) Titled, 'India's Booming Gig and Platform Economy - Perspectives and Recommendations on the Future of Work', mapping the opportunities and challenges in India's platformising economy, and coming up with recommendations for a future of work agenda. (Policy Brief [here](#)).

In order to engage with this report and deepen the debate on leveraging the platform dividend for an inclusive future of work in the Indian economy, IT for Change would like to hold a round table consultation. The deliberations from this consultation will be sent to NITI Aayog in the form of a set of recommendations to feed into a 'Platform India' roadmap of the government. We see an opportunity here to crystallise and channel additional/different perspectives on platformisation and future of work(ers) from academia and civil society, reflecting the evidence from research and practice that several organizations have pursued in the past years.

### **What the NITI Aayog Report covers:**

The Report estimates that currently there are 7.7 million gig economy workers in the country and their number will grow to 23.5 million by 2029-30. In the coming years, the gig economy is expected to contribute significantly to job creation, with a conversion of non-gig work to gig work arrangements projected to be the dominant trend. Platformisation is seen to be a key driver of these future gig work arrangements, making possible real-time demand-supply matching in different segments of geographically tethered gig work also known as location based gig work (in sectors such as ride-hailing, logistics fulfilment, delivery, urban services etc.), and enabling the emergence of new forms of online remote work and freelancing arrangements, also referred to as crowdwork.

The Report seeks to chart a future policy roadmap for leveraging the platform opportunity for job creation and occupational mobility. Capitalising on India's demographic dividend, it proposes

avenues for the inclusion of traditionally marginalised segments of the population into the labour market: in particular, women, migrants, and persons with disabilities.

The recommendations of the Report focus on the following areas:

(a) Meaningful inclusion of workers in the platform economy, through:

- Occupational health and safety guarantees, social security cover, and contingency support.
- Transformational skill development schemes supported by the state and implemented through platform companies, which enable new pathways to vertical and horizontal mobility.
- Targeted measures to address socio-structural barriers impeding the participation of women, migrants, and people with disabilities in platformised labour markets.

(b) Encouragement of entrepreneurial innovation through:

- Incentivisation of new platform businesses, particularly women-run businesses, through a new 'Platform India' initiative, analogous to the Start-up India initiative.
- Access to finance for micro-entrepreneurs seeking to market their products and services on platform marketplaces.

### **Focus of the Roundtable – what we aim to achieve**

We seek to bring together a group of 15 to 20 scholars and practitioners with expertise on the platform economy and future of work, on August 25, 2022 in a face to face meeting at Magnolia Hall, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.

During this meeting, we would request all the attending participants to take 10 minutes each, to present their inputs that touch upon the key themes of the NITI Aayog Report, and also go beyond the report, into exploring the conditions and shifts in gig and platform work, that can enable the Indian economy to reap platform dividends. These can be in relation to decent work, social security, enterprise support, skilling, data rights, infrastructural aspects including digital public goods, and measurement issues in the gig economy, to name a few.

If the participants can share their respective inputs with us beforehand as one-pagers, by August 22, it will help us compile the final recommendations to be sent to NITI Aayog. We look forward to your participation. A detailed agenda will soon follow.