



# Women on Boards

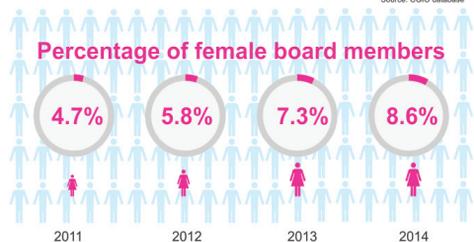
## Refresher Report 2016 - Executive Summary

~ Biz Divas Research Practice

The companies act of 2014 on the woman-director mandate is a landmark act and it has sowed the seeds of greater representation of women not just in Boards but across all levels and hierarchy across India. Even though there are legitimate concerns on women not exactly been chosen on merit and taken as mere act of tokenism, it still shows that there is an increase in women participation in decision making from 2011 till date. Studies have also shown that companies with three or more women directors have outperformed those who have had less and they also show an improved understanding of customer needs leading to better shareholder value.

Continuous improvement in gender diversity

Source: CGIO database



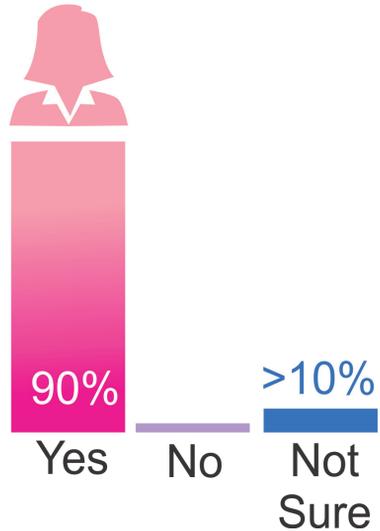
The ambition of women in India is greater than most of the developed economies. This reflects in the 2014 ministry of HRD India report which mentions the passing out statistics of women graduates as slightly higher at 50.6% as compared to men at 49.6%. Care needs to be taken that the pipeline of women passing out of educational institutions need to start reflecting at the work space both at corporate

and entrepreneurial professions. Studies have shown that India's gross domestic product could be higher if more women work.

Women professional surveyed though aspire to take up board roles, still feel limited as awareness and action around it is minimal. Women are increasingly aware of the 'bigger picture' and look forward to 'mentoring' and 'sponsorship' opportunities to help them upgrade their skills to make themselves 'board ready'. However Boards and companies need to focus on transparency in the hiring practices and a balanced process to enable meritorious women candidates being selected in those positions.

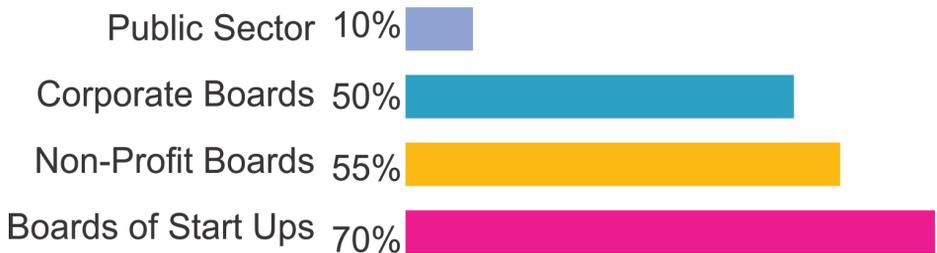
The preferred choice of Boards for aspiring women is Start-up and Not-for-Profit organizations. This could also be due to the fact that traditional industries also are more difficult to break through due to dated norms and

## Board Aspirations



requirement and associated bias and stereotypes. Access to the right Networks coupled with Mentoring and sponsorship programs as the greatest need of the hour. Organizational commitment and efforts also needs to rise above the regular lens of looking at Diversity seriously and not just as Compliance and tokenism.

Women board members add to the effectiveness of the boards





## Benefits to have Women on Boards



and improve the quality of discussions. They bring a different mindset to the boardroom and ensure a balanced perspective in the decision making process. Incorporating customer insights leads to better decisions and an improved customer experience. Women board members bring positive changes to boardroom environment and culture. Getting

capable women on boards is not only the right thing to do but also the smart thing to do. If companies intend to grow their long-term shareholder value and competitiveness, it is a business case for them to implement measures to improve representation of women on boards.

To read full Women on Boards - Refresher Report 2016, please write to [Nancy@bizdivas.in](mailto:Nancy@bizdivas.in)