

MAHILA SABHA



What is a Mahila Sabha?



A Mahila Sabha is a **democratic platform for women in the Gram Panchayat to voice their needs, concerns, and priorities.** Women voters from the Gram Panchayat participate in the meetings of the Mahila Sabha. Mahila Sabhas ensure that **all women, including those from marginalized communities have an equal opportunity** to engage in the local development process. Organisation of Mahila Sabhas are mandated by Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, before the Gram Sabha.



Who can participate in a Mahila Sabha?



All women voters from the Gram Panchayat can participate in the Mahila Sabha. Special efforts should be made to ensure participation of:

- ▶ **Women from marginalized communities** (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, religious minorities)
- ▶ Women with **disabilities, elderly women**, and those from economically weaker households
- ▶ Women members of **Self-Help Groups** (SHGs)





Why should a Mahila Sabha be organised?



Mahila Sabhas should be organised to:

- ▶ Create an **enabling environment for women to actively participate** in rural governance
- ▶ Provide a platform for women to collectively **identify, discuss** and **prioritize** their development needs and concerns
- ▶ **Ensure women's priorities** are incorporated in the Gram Panchayat Development Plan



How can women be mobilised for a Mahila Sabha?



The Gram Panchayat must **notify the date, time, and venue** of the Mahila Sabha at least **15 days in advance**. This can be done through:

- ▶ Posters, leaflets, and pamphlets
- ▶ Word-of-mouth via SHG members, Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers, and Panchayat members
- ▶ Loudspeaker announcements in public spaces



What is the quorum for a Mahila Sabha?



At least **10 percent of all women voters** from the Gram Panchayat must be present for the Mahila Sabha to take place

It is mandatory for the Sarpanch, Panchayat Secretary, Mahila Panch, Ward Panch, women members of Standing Committees, and Officials from line Departments to participate in the Mahila Sabha

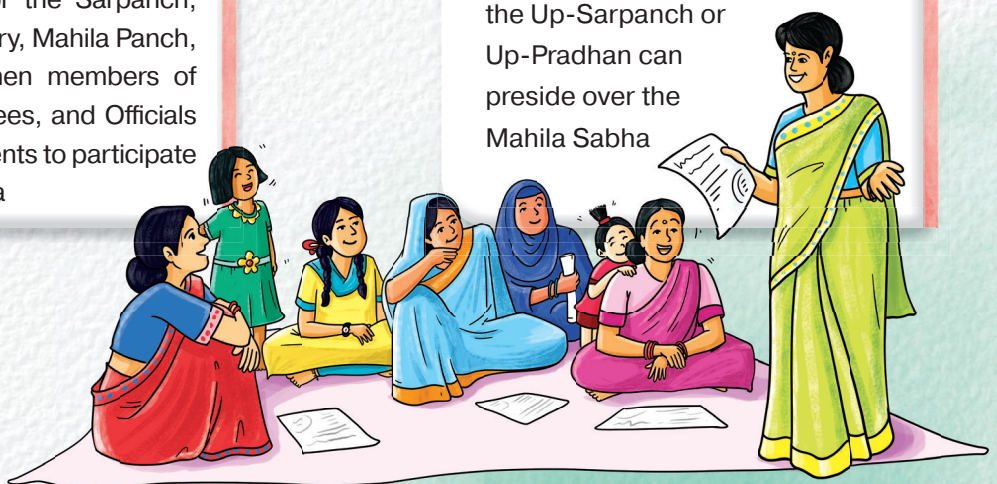


Who can preside over the Mahila Sabha?



The Mahila Sabha should be presided over by the **Sarpanch** or the **Pradhan**.

In the absence of Sarpanch, the Up-Sarpanch or Up-Pradhan can preside over the Mahila Sabha





What issues can be discussed in a Mahila Sabha?



Women can discuss a wide range of issues, including:

- **Health & Nutrition** – Access to health, including sexual and reproductive health, menstrual health and hygiene, immunization
- **Education & Employment** – School dropouts, vocational training, livelihood opportunities
- **Safety & Security** – Addressing violence in private and public spaces
- **Harmful Practices** – Addressing local harmful practices like child marriage, gender biased sex selection, witch hunting and dowry
- **Basic Services** – Water, sanitation, electricity, and housing



How are decisions taken in the Mahila Sabha processed?



- **Decisions** made during the Mahila Sabha are officially **recorded by the Panchayat Secretary** and signed by all participants
- The **resolution** passed in the Mahila Sabha **is presented to the Gram Sabha**, relevant Standing Committees of the Gram Panchayat and Line Departments for taking action
- The **needs prioritised** during the Mahila Sabha are **included in the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP)** as costed, low cost and no cost activities. Budgetary provisions are made for the costed activities
- **Progress on activities** included in the GPDP is **monitored** in the Panchayat meetings

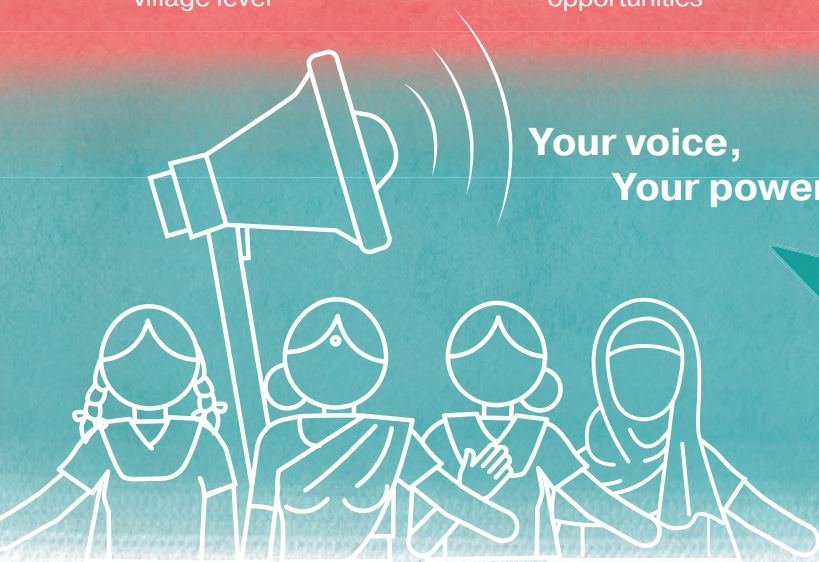




How does a Mahila Sabha help in creating Woman and Girl Friendly Panchayats?

By ensuring women's participation, Mahila Sabhas help in:

- ▶ Ensuring implementation of **gender-inclusive policies** and programmes at the village level
- ▶ **Promoting equal access** to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities
- ▶ **Reducing gender-based violence** and harmful practices
- ▶ Ensuring **government schemes reach women, girls,** and individuals in vulnerable situations



**Your voice,
Your power!**

- ▶ Attend the Mahila Sabha
- ▶ Encourage other women to join
- ▶ Identify local issues and bring them up
- ▶ Engage with Panchayat representatives to track progress on decisions