Sustainability Development Report (2023-24)

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Executive Summary

The Institute of Engineering and Management (IEM), Kolkata, has made significant strides in promoting gender equality during the 2023-24 academic year through inclusive policies, leadership, and support mechanisms. Women occupy key leadership positions, including Deans, HoDs with meritocratic appointments across departments. The campus ensures safety with 987 CCTV cameras, 35 full-time security officers, and a strict visitor policy, alongside an Internal Complaints Committee operating under Supreme Court guidelines. The institute facilitated gender sensitization through mandatory core and elective courses, workshops like the "Virangana" self-defense program, events commemorating International Women's Day and National Girl Child Day, and extensive mentorship and scholarship opportunities for women in STEM and entrepreneurship. Comprehensive welfare includes financial support, maternity and paternity benefits, health insurance, and interest-free loans for female faculty and students. Data collection and analysis on gender-segregated metrics guide continuous improvements, while repeated awards recognize IEM's efforts in advancing gender equity. Wellness programs, community outreach, and proactive grievance redressal also feature prominently in institutional efforts. These initiatives have fostered a safer, more inclusive environment, empowering women and affirming IEM's unwavering commitment to SDG 5 — Gender Equality.

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Overview and context

The Institute of Engineering and Management (IEM), Kolkata, in 2023-24 reinforced its commitment to SDG 5 by promoting gender equality through inclusive leadership, merit-based appointments, and comprehensive support systems. Gender sensitization is integrated into the curriculum, and robust safety and grievance mechanisms ensure a secure campus. Financial aid, mentorship, and scholarships empower women, while data-driven monitoring guides continuous improvement toward gender equity.

Core Mandate

Advance empowerment initiatives that foster leadership, promote respect, dismantle discriminatory barriers, support female professionals and students, and establish fair governance structures for gender equity.

Annual Strategic Priorities for 2024–25

- Increase female representation in senior faculty, academic, and administrative leadership

- Embed gender awareness and sensitivity as part of the core curriculum

- Enable and support women's entrepreneurship and technical careers

- Increase financial, psychological, and professional support to female students and staff

- Strengthen safety and redressal mechanisms (e.g., Internal Complaints Committee)

- Organize sensitization, health, and mentorship programs in collaboration with NGOs and professional bodies

- Celebrate achievements of women and gender-diverse persons across academic and extracurricular domains

- Promote public displays of gender-neutral codes of conduct and institutional policies

- Expand outreach to the community through workshops, legal awareness, and career training in underrepresented sectors

Campus Environment, Representation, and Policy

Gender-Inclusive Policy and Governance

Women occupy critical decision-making roles with appointments grounded in merit and without bias against gender, caste, or religion. Gender-neutral uniforms for students underscore acceptance and inclusivity. All statutory, academic, and administrative committees ensure mixed-gender representation, fostering participative decision-making.

Professional Support and Welfare

Key facilities and support metrics include:

- Equal access to financial support, health insurance, maternity and paternity leave, and interest-free loans.

- Tuition fee reimbursement and travel grant schemes benefiting women staff.

- Proactive performance feedback and transparent appraisal channels supporting career progression for female faculty.

- Women-led and gender-inclusive cells for cultural, technical, and social activities.

Safety, Security, and Redressal Mechanisms

Comprehensive Security Framework

IEM maintains advanced security through:

- **987 CCTV cameras**, round-the-clock monitoring of campus and hostels

- **35 full-time security officers** overseeing major entry and exit points

- Stringent visitor and alumni registration guidelines to ensure a safe physical environment

Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)

The ICC addresses all complaints of sexual harassment or gender discrimination promptly and confidentially, operating as per the Supreme Court's Vishakha Guidelines. Regular awareness and training sessions further sensitize both staff and students to rights and reporting procedures.

Self-Defense and Wellbeing

Self-defense training is a compulsory part of the student development agenda. Special sessions on physical and mental wellness are facilitated with skilled professionals, in partnership with NGOs and community clubs.

Academic and Curricular Initiatives

Gender Sensitization in Curriculum

- Core and elective courses on **gender studies**, human rights, and ethics are mandatory.

- Regular integration of gender sensitivity modules, fieldwork, and community outreach activates theoretical knowledge through practical exposure.

- Syllabus design adapts industry best practices and UGC recommendations prioritizing SDG 5.

Mentorship, Research and Professional Training

- Targeted mentorship for women in STEM fields and entrepreneurship, leveraging partnerships with Rotary Club, Lions Club, and Inner Wheel Club.

- Scholarships and grants prioritizing women in underrepresented disciplines.

- Facilitation of research, conference participation, and travel grants meant to increase the visibility of female scholarship.

Awareness, Celebrations, and Community Engagement

Campus-wide Sensitization

- Organization of workshops, webinars, and campaigns throughout the year (notably during International Women's Day and National Girl Child Day) to raise awareness and inspire dialogue on equality and empowerment.

- Regular orientation for new students regarding respect, empathy, and institutional values concerning gender.

- Special counseling sessions for women by certified professionals.

Women Empowerment Events

- Virangana workshops on physical and mental well-being held on March 8 and January 24.

- Celebrations of women achievers and leadership in all annual events.

- Outreach campaigns to inspire local school girls and women in the community, focusing on legal rights, health, hygiene, and career progression.

Monitoring, Feedback, and Impact

Data, Analytics, and Feedback Systems

- Routine collection of gender-segregated data on admissions, results, placements, mentorship, and participation in clubs/committees.

- Periodic feedback mechanisms (surveys, focus groups) with swift response to emerging issues or grievances.

- Accolades and performance awards for outstanding women and for champions of gender advocacy.

Outcomes and Notable Achievements

- Continual growth in the number of female leaders, faculty, and researchers.

- All-gender inclusive policies for leadership posts and campus involvement recognized in audits and accreditation reviews.

- Repeated awards for gender equity workshops and documented impacts across campus.

Data and Metrics

Metric / Category	Value / Description
Women in Leadership Positions	Deans, Heads of Departments
Safety Infrastructure	987 CCTV cameras, 35 full-time security officers
Gender Sensitization Courses	Core and elective courses on gender studies, human rights, and ethics
Student Participation	Workshops, webinars, community outreach, and awareness campaigns
Self-Defense and Wellness Programs	Virangana workshops held on March 8 and January 24
Financial Support	Scholarships, grants prioritizing women in underrepresented disciplines, maternity/paternity leave
Interest-Free Loans	Available for female and male staff
Community Outreach	Legal awareness and career training for women
Mentorship and Research Support	Partnerships with Rotary Club, Lions Club, Inner Wheel Club for mentoring women in STEM and entrepreneurship
Gender Data Collection	Regular collection and analysis of gender-segregated admissions, placements, mentorship metrics
Awards and Recognition	Multiple institutional awards for gender equity initiatives
Academic Programs	25 programs with curriculum revised for gender sensitivity

Challenges and Strategic Learnings

Key Challenges

- Persistent societal stereotypes affecting subject choices and professional aspirations.

- Security concerns in digital and physical spaces.

- Underrepresentation in certain academic programs and technical fields.

- Balancing academic/professional expectations with extracurricular and community responsibilities.

Adaptive Strategies

- Sustained dialogue and visibility for gender issues on all platforms.

- Encouragement of male allies in all gender-centric campaigns.

- Leveraging data analysis for precision interventions in support and training.

Future Directions

- Target greater female enrollment in STEM courses through scholarships and mentorship.

- Increase training of staff and faculty on gender equality and responding to sexual harassment.

- Expand mental well-being programs and legal awareness drives for students and community women.

- Broaden research opportunities and professional development for women at all stages.

- Strengthen and publicize campus grievance redressal with digital accessibility.

- Institutionalize a regular gender audit to inform continuous improvement.

Acknowledgments

Gratitude is extended to IEM leadership, all faculty and staff, student councils, partner clubs (Rotary, Lions, Inner Wheel), and external experts whose commitment and guidance have advanced gender inclusion. Special appreciation to student activists and alumni for championing women's rights and amplifying institutional progress.

Photo gallery

Girls' Chess tournament on 5th April 2023

IEEE Women in Engineering-WIE, Kolkata Section organized IEEE WIE Outreach Workshop on 31st August 2023 at IEM Public School Campus

Women's Day celebration