



## Parity Consulting Curates Gender Sensitization Program for over 11,000 BMTC Employees

Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) is committed to creating safe spaces for women through their bus depots, stations and in city buses. BMTC partnered with B.PAC and Parity Consulting to conduct city wide gender sensitization training workshops for all its employees including the drivers and conductors. Based on BMTC's requirements, Parity Consulting created R.I.S.E framework, a gender sensitization program to train 11,000 BMTC employees. 50 + workshops were conducted by Sushma Mahabala, of B.PAC and a group of B.CLIP leaders.

The workshops were facilitated in Kannada, the official language of the state, Karnataka.

- R** - Every commuter deserves equal RESPECT
- I** - Taking initiatives to ensure that a BMTC bus is INVITING for all commuters
- S** - Taking ownership of the bus depots, stations, buses in transit and ensuring SAFETY for women commuters
- E** - Ensuring EASE of access for all commuters

## About BMTC

BMTC is an integral division of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) and operates the public transport bus service in Bengaluru.

Number of vehicles	6172
Kms. travelled	11.94 lakhs
Daily bus trips	73775
Daily bus passengers	5.02 million
Staff employed	34786
Bus : staff ratio	5.6

## Core elements of the program

- Be sensitive to the needs of women commuters
- Be mindful that different groups of commuters can have different needs
- Address needs of various commuters proactively
- Understand and identify various types of harassment
- Increase awareness about existing laws on sexual harassment at the workplace
- Pledge personal commitment to create safe travels for all commuters

*“Through the gender sensitization workshop, we wanted to highlight that diversity begets different needs. For instance, even amongst women, a senior citizen may use the bus for a different reason as opposed to a school going girl. Both the passengers are using bus transport for various purposes. The training is structured to sensitize such real-life scenarios,”* says **Abhaya Tatavarti**, who is leading the project on behalf of Parity Consulting.

## Methodology: diverse commuters, diverse needs

One of the key elements of the R.I.S.E framework was to highlight real-life experiences of women using public transport.

Some of the things we iterated were:

- Most women at some point have experienced an undercurrent of constant fear/discomfort in public places
- Proactive safety measures need to be created to build an atmosphere of trust

An integral part of our demographics methodology was to categorize commuters in groups to surface their varied needs. Some of the groups were:

- Children
- College students
- Homemakers
- Workers
- IT professionals
- Senior Citizens
- Expats (those who are not domicile of Karnataka)
- Differently-abled
- LGBT community

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## Project components

- Creating a framework for employees to integrate into their work lives through behaviour seeding
  - Demographic mapping to showcase safety needs of diverse groups of people
  - Sustainment plan to ensure continued engagement
  - Assessment tool to gauge employee understanding
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## Understanding diverse commuters

### School Children

- Students are valuable consumers who use passes subsidized by the Government
- Parents constantly worry about the safety of their children on public transport as they are a vulnerable group
- Children are the future consumers of public transport

### Professional Women

- Women working in both organized and unorganized sectors
- Women working in formal sectors use public transport as an alternate

### Non-Kannada speaking

- Non- Kannada speaking may feel alienated due to a linguistic barrier
- What is perceived as rude behaviour by a commuter may actually stem from fear and discomfort of being unfamiliar with the local language

## Behavior seeding

- Be inclusive of differences in commuters based out of caste, age, gender, language and religion
- Make passengers feel welcome
- Attempt to get trained on basic English language to communicate with the non-Kannadiga
- Recognise the needs of commuters:
  - Who can easily stop using BMTC services
  - School and college students as they will be future customers for BMTC

## Desired outcome from the gender sensitization training sessions

Proactively implementing the RISE framework for every commuter to feel welcome -

- To sensitize employees about gender differences
- To make BMTC buses be an inclusive space
- To create awareness on the Sexual Harassment of Women (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

*"BMTC employees work in high-pressure and high-stress situations. Hence, the context and training pedagogy is different from the ones that work for corporates. The gender dynamics are constantly in flux as BMTC has a highly fluid workplace. BMTC employees need to adapt and anticipate many different and unique situations. Therefore, the level of preparedness required for BMTC training is way higher than corporate training workshops,"* added **Abhaya Tatavarti**.

Parity Consulting executed this program as part of its CSR initiative and importantly to achieve the goal of creating 1 Million inclusive champions.