

Ms. Lakshmi Puri

Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN-Women

“Why Women Matter”

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Ms. Lakshmi Puri has more than 37 years' experience in economic and development policy-making, as well as in political, peace and security, humanitarian and human rights-related diplomacy. Throughout her career, she has promoted the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda, where Ms. Puri has been actively involved in pioneering efforts to analyze and advocate positive linkages between economic development and gender equality. She has worked on including a gender perspective in trade investment, migration and labour mobility, financial flows, environment and climate change, energy, agriculture and food security, and access to essential services, among other issues. Ms. Puri has also contributed to policy-related research in think tanks, academic institutions and in the context of development banks.

Prior to her appointment at UN-Women, Ms. Puri was Director in the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Islands Developing States and actively coordinated the preparations for the United Nations LDC IV conference held in Istanbul in 2011. Following a distinguished diplomatic career with the Government of India, Ms. Puri joined the United Nations as Director of UNCTAD's largest division and led the work of the organization in making trade work for development. From 2007 to 2009, she was the acting Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD.

Ms. Puri's education is in history, public policy and administration, international relations and law, and economic development. She has a B.A. in First Division from Delhi University and a postgraduate degree from Punjab University, as well as professional diplomas.