



Research Unit  
Press Information Bureau  
Government of India

## From Margins to Mainstream

### *Women's Empowerment in Waqf Governance*

Ministry of Minority Affairs

March 13, 2025

For generations, **Waqf** has helped people by **funding education, healthcare, and jobs**. But many women have not received its benefits because they had limited access to resources and decision-making. The **Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025**, aims to change this. It brings new rules to ensure Muslim women get their **rightful share** of **inheritance, financial support**, and a **stronger role** in **managing** Waqf properties.

One of the biggest changes in the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, is the protection of women's **inheritance rights in family Waqf (Waqf-alal-aulad)**. The bill states that no one can dedicate property to Waqf unless female heirs have **first received their rightful inheritance**. This prevents families from using Waqf as a way to **deny** women their share of property. **Section 3A(2)** makes sure that women are not unfairly left out when Waqf properties are created.

The bill also expands the purpose of Waqf-alal-aulad to provide **financial support** to **widows, divorced women, and orphans**. **Section 3(r)(iv)** allows Waqf funds to be used for their **welfare and maintenance**. This will provide **economic security** to women and children in need, following Islamic principles of welfare and justice.

Another major change in the bill is increasing **women's role in Waqf governance**. It ensures that **two** Muslim women must be included in **State Waqf Boards (Section 14)** and the **Central Waqf Council (Section 9)**. This means women will now have a voice in deciding how Waqf resources are used and managed. Having more women in Waqf governance will help ensure that funds are spent on important needs like:

- **Scholarships** for Muslim girls
- **Healthcare** and maternity support
- **Skill training** and **microfinance** for women entrepreneurs
- **Legal help** for inheritance and domestic violence cases

The bill also focuses on making Waqf fairer by **fixing past inequalities**. By giving women decision-making power and financial security, it creates a more **balanced** and **just Waqf system**.

In addition, the bill promotes setting up **vocational training centers** and **self-help groups (SHGs)** to

help Muslim women become **financially independent**. These centers will offer training in fields like **healthcare, business, and fashion design**, helping women find jobs or start their own businesses.

A key reform in the bill is the **digitization** of Waqf records. Digital records will improve **transparency, prevent corruption**, and ensure that Waqf money is used properly. This is especially important for women, as it guarantees that funds meant for their welfare are not misused.

The Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, is a big step toward making Waqf a tool for social welfare and justice. By securing inheritance rights, helping widows and divorced women, increasing women's role in governance, and promoting economic independence, the bill aims to create long-term gender equality in Waqf administration. These reforms will open new doors for Muslim women, making sure that **Waqf truly supports their progress and empowerment in the years to come**.

### **References**

Ministry of Minority Affairs

**Santosh Kumar/ Ritu Kataria/ Rishita Aggarwal**