

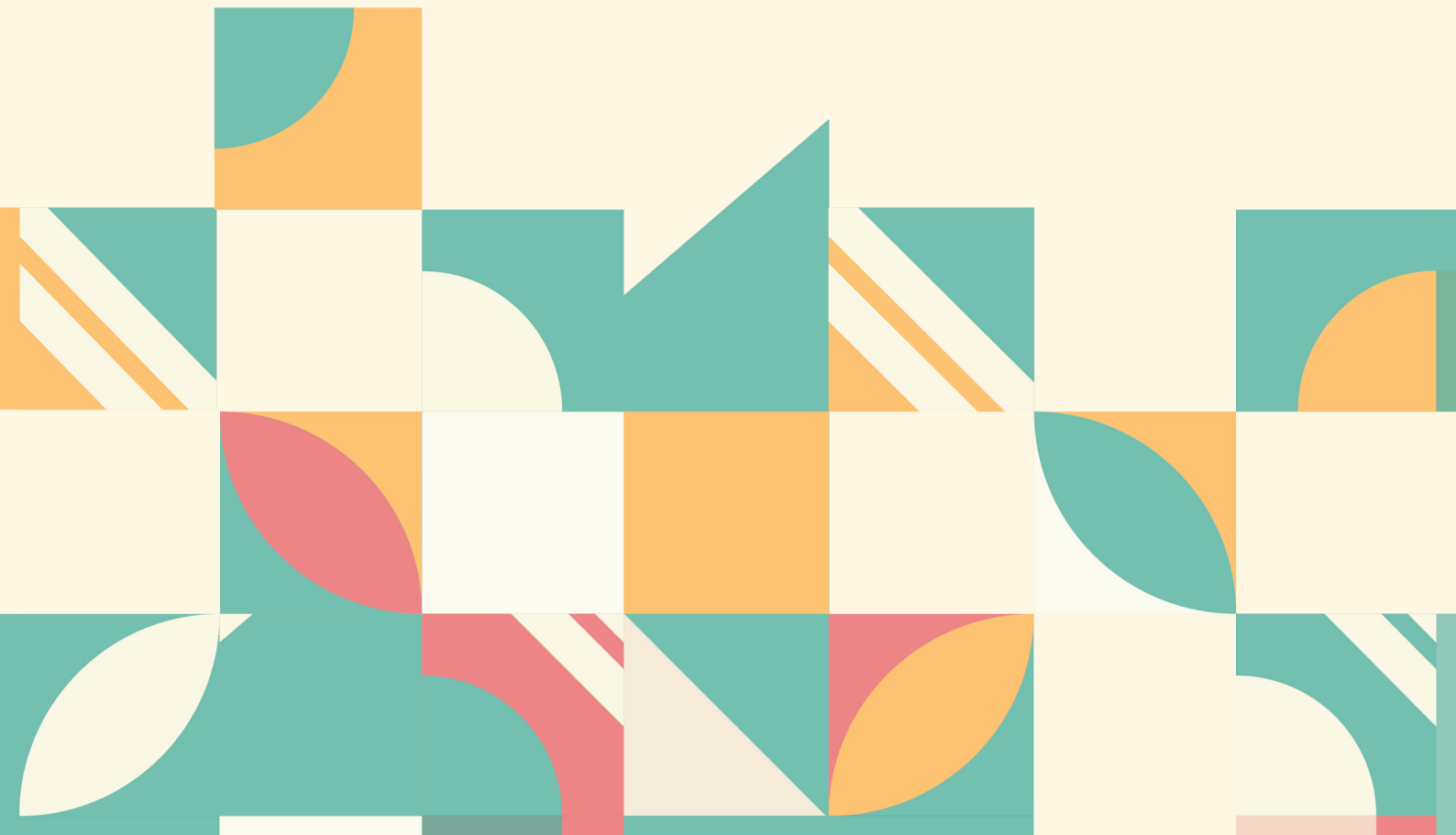


**PACTA**

SOCIAL | IMPACT | LEGAL

2023-2024

# ANNUAL REPORT



# From the Director's Desk



As I write this, I look forward to winding down the year 2023, immersing myself in the esoteric music and dance from the ongoing Chennai cultural festivities. I am aware that much remains to be done, critical projects must be delivered and commitments must be fulfilled.

Yet, I know that to go faster and further in 2024, I must sometimes slow down and stop. The end of the year is a good time to reflect on the year that has gone by. 2023 was another year during which I achieved goals that I set and goals that I never dreamt of. Of course, there are also several goals that I left unachieved or modified for the future.

A few of my accomplishments this last year have been - graduating as an Acumen Fellow, writing opinions in leading dailies and leading my team to secure a state government project. I have learned that to be successful, it is crucial to make space for success to occupy me and not fill myself up with pessimism and anxiety. My faith in perseverance has been reaffirmed, and my commitment to hardwork is strengthened. I have learnt to share my vulnerabilities and that it's an act of bravery to ask for help. Thinking of my learnings, I might be able to fill an entire book with those.

This year has also tested my fabric of ethics - Why do I choose to do this difficult work? Can I be sad or angry or struggle in choosing what's right (over what's easy)? Can I hold tension in the moment without blowing it all up? I have faced all these questions and it has shaped me this year.

My goal for 2024, is to just keep going, with eyes set on uncompromising excellence in the work I do. I pray for strength, good health and mental tenacity to power my endeavours. May the force be with us!

**Nivedita Krishna**  
Founder, Director

“

***I have learned that to be successful, it is crucial to make space for success to occupy me and not fill myself up with pessimism and anxiety.***

”

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# Pacta's Accomplishments in 2023



150+ Contracts for Civil Society



25+ Legal Opinions for Social Sector



Grant Documentation for 10+  
Grant Makers



~ 10 Anti Sexual Harassment  
Workshops



3 + Workshops on Legal &  
Compliance for NGOs



10 Research Studies - Inclusion,  
Philanthropy, Technology & Data



3 Primers for the Social Sector



~20 Publications in  
Mainstream Media



Launched Disability Law  
& Policy Newsletter



Presented research work at  
10+ Conferences

# Pacta's poignant moments from 2023

What a year it has been for us, at Pacta. We began this year, cautiously wading the ChatGPT revolution, wrapping our minds around the leniently worded Data Privacy Bill released for comments and I was looking forward to selection announcements from the Acumen India Fellowship Program. Towards the end of 2023, we were using ChatGPT to debug codes for data analysis, have a proof of concept of a para-legal chat-bot for the social sector and use OpenAI LLM to analyse judgements of quasi legal authorities.

In the last year, Pacta's social sector exclusive legal practice has grown in reach - several of you have reached out to us proposing that we take steps towards building the collective legal and compliance capacity of the social sector. You have trusted us with managing compliance and documentation for your new grant models and programs and for restructuring your CSOs to implement novel governance practices. All your work is towards catalysing social change and we are proud to have a role in it.

In 2023, Pacta played a key role in enabling a family foundation to scale up their grant portfolio, designed documentation for a returnable grant and provided legal muscle for a chatbot on menstrual health. We have organised large compliance workshops to help navigate the amendments under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, and manage compliance under the labour laws and the prevention of sexual harassment act. We have put out NGO friendly primers on the Digital Protection of Data Privacy Act, 2023 and the Social Stock Exchange to demystify corporate and capital market jargon.

**In recognition of our work, Pacta has been added to Bridgespan's Intermediary Database - a curated list of 100 organisations & independent professionals, specialising in offering organisational development support to NGOs.**

On the policy front too, Pacta's reach has grown in the domains of diversity and inclusion, data and technology and philanthropy. We launched our disability law and policy newsletter in June 2023 and have released four issues till date. You have received this with warmth and encouragement, and shown us that good work will speak for itself, and bring more work. Thank you!

**Some of the work that we are particularly proud of is the blueprint for Online Dispute Resolution Model for Persons With Disabilities, (developed in collaboration with the fantastic team at Enable India), a first-of-its-kind report on CSR Funding in the Sports Sector (developed in collaboration with Sports Society Accelerator) that has received several media mentions including from the Ken and a Pan India Research on Challenges to Obtaining the Universal Disability Identity Card (in partnership with wonderful team at Nayi Disha), which has given way to several intimate discussions on the need for policy interventions in the disability inclusion domain.** All these initiatives were self funded, and we did not raise any external funding in the pursuit of this work.

Indeed, we have forged strong partnerships that have opened up funded research opportunities for us, and we remain grateful for those opportunities as well. We are ending this year on a high note, with funded research collaborations from the Government of Tamil Nadu, Zomato, Enable India and Mozilla Foundation.

In all the work we do, we will strive to exceed expectations and will certainly push the limits of meaningful research to shape and influence policy response. In 2024, we hope that we can actively contribute to law and policy making in addition to deepening our existing engagements.



***On that note, I am proud to share with you the work we have done in the last year under the Pacta Law and Pacta Policy verticals. I hope this report provides you with a deeper insight into the various initiatives at Pacta. We welcome you to share your thoughts on how we can support you and your work more meaningfully in the future.***



Wish you and your loved ones, a Very Happy 2024.

Best,  
Nivedita

# Pacta's Charter



  
Incorporation &  
Organisational Set-up

  
Governance  
& Restructuring


## Pacta Law


To provide high quality, affordable, pragmatic legal advisory and strategy support tailored for not-for-profit organisations in India.

  
Employment law

  
Education law

  
Dispute Resolution

  
General Advisory

  
Engineering &  
Construction

  
Diversity, Equity  
& Inclusion

  
Intellectual  
Property Rights

  
Information  
Communication &  
Technology

## Pacta Policy

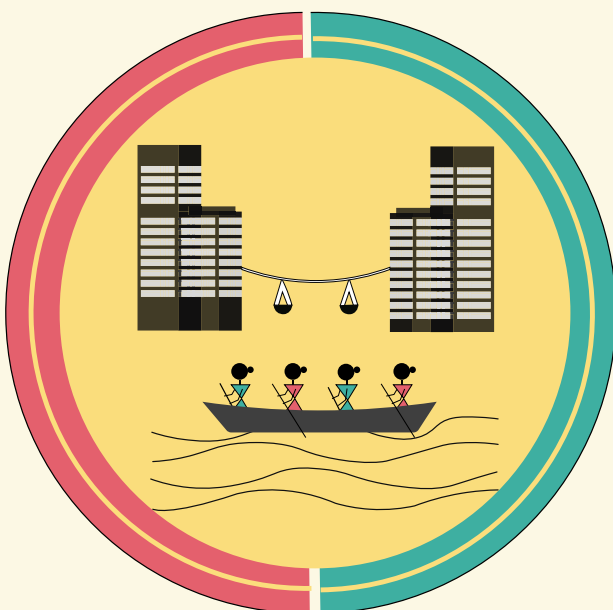
To undertake rigorous self directed and commissioned social science research to strengthen and inform evidence-based policy in India.

  
Diversity, Equity  
& Inclusion

  
Law & Policy  
Implementation

  
Data & Technology

  
Philanthropy



# Pacta's Highlights



Presenting Results of Rapid Assessment of TB & Disability Research in Delhi



Making Sport Work Forum 2023 (Mumbai) in Collaboration with Sport Society Accelerator to Present Findings from a Research Study on CSR Funding for Sports in India

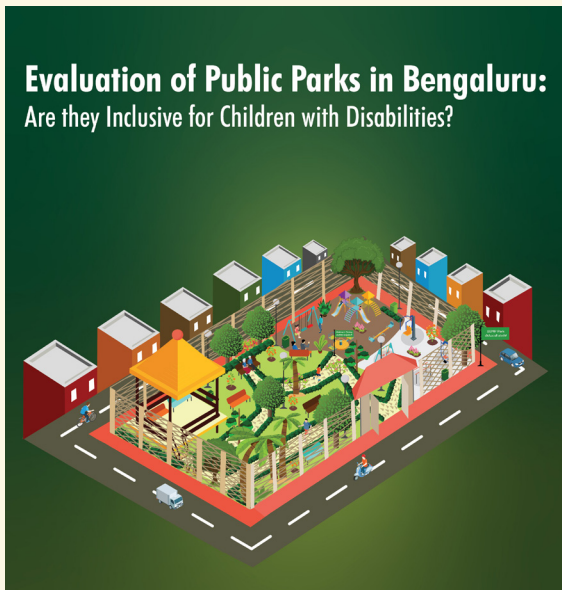


Pacta at ODR Forum 2023 Organised by Agami (Bengaluru) - To develop a blue print for an ODR framework that works for persons with disabilities



Tinkering with AI at OpenNyAI Maker Space, Kochi learning how to use OpenAI LLM for analysing judgements of the Chief Commissioner of Persons With Disabilities





Presented Research on Status of Inclusiveness of Parks (for Children with Disabilities) in Bengaluru City at the Inclusive Cities Conference Organised by the NIUA at New Delhi



Presenting Disability Work in IIM-Bangalore





Featured in Bridgespan's List of 100 intermediaries for the Social Sector



Facilitated FCRA workshop for Key Personnel at M S Swaminathan Research Foundation - 50 attendees







Organised Focus Group Discussions to Raise Awareness of Challenges in Guardianship for Persons with Disability, under Enable India Research Grant

 x 


NGO Trinayani in collaboration with Nayi Disha presents


## Identity is Important - UDID

Join us to uncover the results of a recent survey on UDID application challenges and process gaps.

Moderated by  | In Conversation with:   

**Thursday, 5th October 2023** | 8 pm - 9 pm | Online Event

To register, Scan this Code 



Presented Findings on Strengthening the Data Ecosystem in School Education in India funded through a Research Grant from Aapti-Mozilla Foundation

Presented Research Findings from a Study on Barriers to Securing Universal Disability Identity Card at the Daan Utsav to raise awareness on UDID



Commenced Work on Access to Justice for Persons with Disability to Feature in the India Justice Report, 2024

Research Study on Scalable Model Of Inclusion in Gig Work Platforms - Zomato - NeoMotion- Pacta Research Collaboration

**தடையின்றி,  
தலை நிழிர்வோம்...!!**

**மாற்றுத்திறனாளிகளுக்கான  
சமூக தரவுகள் கணக்கெடுப்பு  
2023**

(செப்டம்பர் 2023 முதல் - டிசம்பர் 2023 வரை)

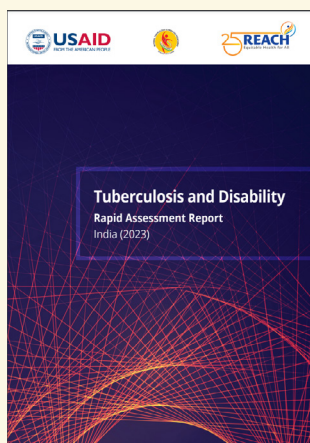


Conducting a Monitoring & Evaluation Study for India's first Social Registry Enrolment Initiative (for persons with disabilities) by the State of Tamil Nadu under a World Bank Project

# Pacta's Projects

## Completed

**Tuberculosis and Disability A Rapid Assessment** *(Commissioned By Reach India under the aegis of the United States Agency for International Development Project)*



People affected by TB often develop impairments and disabilities associated with the disease or its treatment. This is further aggravated by the stigma and discrimination associated with a diagnosis of TB, and the barriers TB patients from marginalised sections of society frequently face in accessing health services.

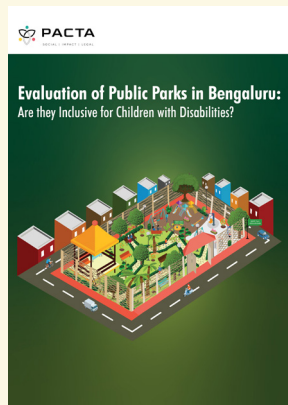
People with disabilities have a higher disease burden for TB, and are excluded and invisibilized in the public health system, making care seeking for TB difficult for persons with disabilities. In this rapid assessment research we were able to contour the nuanced challenges at the intersection of TB and disabilities, and make policy recommendations for strengthening the National TB Program.

**Data Driven Anti-Competitive Practices of Food Services Aggregators in India** *(Self-directed)*



Abuse of dominance as an anti competitive practice has generally been associated with monopolies in the market. Study of cases related to digital platforms before the Competition Commission of India (CCI) indicated that non-recognition of collective dominance, and data as a determinant of dominance of a firm under Indian law lead to low success of cases of abuse of dominance. In this study, we analysed the food services aggregators (FSAs) primarily Swiggy and Zomato, using FSAs as a proxy for any e-commerce platform, assessed their data driven anti-competitive practices and made recommendations to curb anti-competitive use of access to large scale data.

## Evaluation of Public Parks in Bengaluru: Are they Inclusive for Children with Disabilities? (Self-directed)



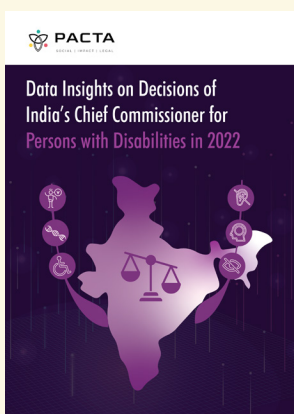
Parks offer children with a space for play and recreational activities. Bengaluru has 1200 public parks. For children with disabilities, play and recreation opportunities are not often available due to the lack of accessible and inclusive spaces. Bengaluru has 4 inclusive parks, but these parks sometimes lack upkeep. Pacta undertook a study to assess public parks in Bangalore on their accessibility and inclusivity for children with disabilities. The study found that public parks are fundamentally inaccessible. Work needs to be done to ensure their accessibility before they are made inclusive for children with disabilities.

## CSR and Sports in India: Emerging Trends and Implications (Self-directed, In collaboration with Sports and Society Accelerator)



Only 1% of CSR funds in India are channelled towards sports. Although the share of the CSR funds has been increasing marginally each year, the allocation for CSR in sports falls significantly behind the substantial contributions directed towards education and health. Our study focussed on the trends and patterns of sports CSR in India for the years 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21. Our analysis of sports CSR funding which included state-wise distribution, contributions by listed vs unlisted companies, comparison of CSR for sports with CSR for education and health and the CSR portfolio of major players in sports CSR has found incredible resonance with the community and has been cited in several major publications.

## Data Insights on Decisions of India's Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (Self-directed)



The Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) is an alternative redressal mechanism for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in India. The Office of the CCPD has taken the initiative to make all the decisions in cases filed before the CCPD available digitally, on the CCPD website from 2019 onwards. This was identified as a valuable opportunity to generate insights into the overall resolution time, the geographic, gender, and disability profile of complainants and provide a view into the nature of disputes that are brought before the CCPD.

## **Strengthening the Implementation of India's National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) - A Policy Memo** *(Self-directed)*

The Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) is a social protection policy providing financial support to Persons with disabilities (PWDs). The policy brief is derived from our budgetary allocation analysis of various central ministries for persons with disabilities which highlighted that IGNDPS had a low penetration. In FY 2021–22, only 4% of all persons with disabilities in India benefited from the scheme. In this policy memo, we highlight the reasons for the limited impact of the scheme for persons with disabilities including high inclusion and exclusion errors, inadequate benefits for the target population, strict document requirements, lack of social audit of the scheme, and provide recommendations to improve its implementation.

## **Disability Budget in India over the Years: Troubling Trends in Allocation and Spending (2023-24)**

*(Self-directed)*



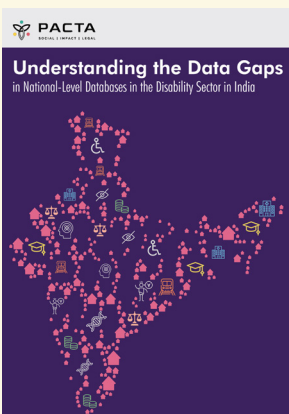
The report was a study of the budgetary allocations and spending patterns for persons with disabilities in India between 2016 and 2024. Currently, only three central ministries have dedicated budgetary allocations for the PwD population, the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE), primarily through the DePWD. The report took a deep dive into whether allocations have increased, decreased, or stagnated. A more granular analysis of scheme-wise allocation and spending was also done which revealed inadequate resources and underspending in certain schemes like SIPDA, among others. The report concluded with a set of recommendations such as curbing underspending, improving implementation capacity, and better budgetary allocations in key areas of health, education, and skilling to ensure progressive policies for PwDs are accompanied by necessary budgetary resources.

## ODR - delivering justice solutions for people with disabilities *(Self-directed in collaboration with EnAble India, Bengaluru)*



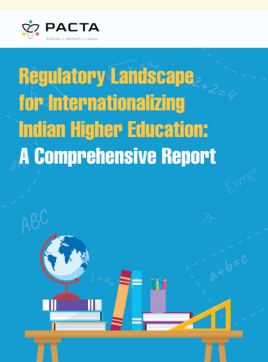
Multiple barriers exist in access to justice for persons with disabilities. Alternate forms of justice delivery have been made available to marginalized groups. Judicial precedents are set and laws are moving towards offering Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), legal aid, and lok adalats, as well as use of online justice delivery solutions. Online Dispute Resolution, a form of ADR, offers a viable justice delivery solution for people with disabilities. Pacta and EnAble India hosted a session with experts to iterate the components of an inclusive ODR system at the International ODR Forum, 2023 by Agami. The paper highlights a blueprint for enabling and creating an effective ODR platform for persons with disabilities.

## Data Gaps in Central-Level data on persons with disabilities *(Self-directed)*



Data is a cornerstone for drafting, implementation and thereof, monitoring of any policy. For people with disabilities, who remain marginalized, the lack of data results in further exclusion. Pacta analyzed the gaps in data at the central level on persons with disabilities and highlighted discrepancies in existing databases. The report also shows a lack of disaggregation by disability in different databases and brings forth lost opportunities to collect data on existing government commitments (such as the SDGs). The report concludes by showing the need for robust data collection practices and continued commitments to update these databases so that “no one is left behind.”

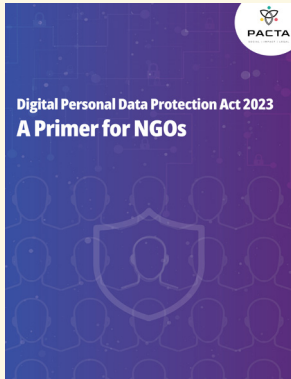
## Regulatory Landscape for Internationalisation of Indian Higher Education: A Comprehensive Report *(Self-directed)*



In 2022 and 2023 the Union Government of India (the Government) is working towards promoting internationalization and mobility in the education sector, aligning with the objectives laid out in the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. The NEP underscores the strategic importance of internationalizing education to enhance the global competitiveness and relevance of Indian higher education. Therefore, the Government has enforced or released four guidelines to lay the foundation for internationalizing Indian higher education. The

report provides a comprehensive understanding of these four guidelines so enforced or released.

## Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023: A Primer for the NGOs



On observing the need and interest of the social sector to understand and navigate the implications of new data protection law, Pacta created this Primer. This Primer is a guide for nonprofit organizations in understanding the application and effects of India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023

# Pacta's Publications

- **[Platform co-ops: Democratising the digital economy](#)**  
*Anagha Sasidharan & Nivedita Krishna | January 20, 2023 | India Development Review*
- **[Data – the pot at the end of the rainbow that no-one is regulating](#)**  
*Nivedita Krishna | January 22, 2023 | The Times of India Blog*
- **[Proposing a CTO for India](#)**  
*Nivedita Krishna | March 6, 2023 | The Times of India Blog*
- **[Not all disabled students in India are treated equally](#)**  
*Deepanshi Sharma, Krithika Sambasivan | March 10, 2023 | India Development Review*
- **[An Exploratory Research Study on The Implementation of 3 Gender Equality Laws In the Corporate Sector In India](#)**  
*Nivedita Krishna | March 21, 2023 | ICSI Journal Vol 53*
- **[India ilnc, game face on](#)**  
*Nandan Kamath & Nivedita Krishna | March 20, 2023 | [11]*
- **[Boardrooms need more women not just for the sake of gender parity but also for India Inc](#)**  
*Nivedita Krishna | April 6, 2023 | ETPrime*
- **[Data & Duopolies: Making A Case For regulating data In The context Of competition](#)**  
*Nivedita Krishna | April 18, 2023 | Medianama*
- **[No budget for persons with disabilities in India](#)**  
*Upasana Nath | April 14, 2023 | India Development Review*
- **[How funding choices can lead to an oligopoly of non-profits, and how to avoid it](#)**  
*Nivedita Krishna | May 18, 2022 | ETPrime*
- **[India has axed queries on disability from key survey – and there's no easy way to fill the data gap](#)**  
*Nivedita Krishna & Upasana Nath | July 1, 2023 | Scroll.in*



- [\*\*Gig workers right's a US- India comparative based on recent developments\*\*](#)  
*Nivedita Krishna | July 12, 2023 | The Times of India Blog*
- [\*\*Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 – A primer for NGOs\*\*](#)  
*Dishari Chakrabarti | August 23, 2023*
- [\*\*The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023: Some relief but many question\*\*](#)  
*Nivedita Krishna | SEptember 3, 2023 | The Times of India Blog*
- [\*\*Where India's disability pension scheme falls short\*\*](#)  
*Riddhi Lakhiani | September 5, 2023 | India Development Review*
- [\*\*Why India needs sectoral regulatory sandboxes for artificial intelligence based solutions\*\*](#)  
*Nivedita Krishna | September 10, 2023 | The Times of India Blog*
- [\*\*Transparency and AI– why is India still hesitating to regulate AI applications?\*\*](#)  
*Nivedita Krishna | November 3, 2023 | The Times of India Blog*
- [\*\*Don't bar kids from playgrounds\*\*](#)  
*Krithika Sambasivan & Upasana Nath | December 4, 2023 | Deccan Herald*

# Future Kaleidoscope

As we stand on the precipice of a new year filled with opportunities, we see ourselves embrace data and leverage technology in our work. In 2024, Pacta is expecting to strengthen the Data and Technology policy vertical. With this, the Pacta Policy initiative will be consolidated into three main initiatives, (as against the currently existing five) namely -1) Diversity & Inclusion (including gender and disability), 2) Philanthropy and 3) Data & Technology. This will allow us to focus our attention and efforts towards building a body of high quality research that would inform and shape policies of the government and programs/ interventions of civil society organisations in these areas.

Simultaneously, on the legal side, we are looking to strengthen our capacity on the taxation and foreign contribution regulation acts so as to serve civil society institutions more meaningfully. We also look forward to supporting NGOs getting listed on the social stock exchange and leverage non-traditional funding structures and sources in their work. We hope to reach even more numbers of NGOs than we already do to extend Pacta's legal and compliance services.

Pacta remains committed to the pursuit of high quality and cost effective legal advisory and policy research services that will serve civil society institutions and inform India's directions of development. We have immense gratitude for all the lessons learnt, kudos earned and opportunities landed, and aspire to remain grounded in humility, and fearless in our work. We look forward to deepening our relationships and working with all of you, even more meaningfully this year.

The Pacta team is looking to pick new challenges to work on in the coming year. We invite you to reach out to us for collaborations and collective action.

After all, as someone recently pointed out, ***"If power had a shape, it would be a circle, not a triangle."***

## Connect with us:

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