

Dr. R. Nandini
Chairperson, GRG Educational Institutions &
Managing Director, Chandra Group of Companies
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India



Dr. Nandini hails from an illustrious entrepreneurial family in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. As the Managing Director of the Chandra Group of Companies, with over 1,000 employees, she manages diverse businesses including textiles and automotive. As the Chairperson of the GRG Educational Institutions, she chairs 10 centres of academic excellence, from primary and secondary schooling to doctoral programmes and beyond with 13,000+ students, 1500+ faculty and staff.

Her deep passion and a compassionate eye for the underprivileged and her contribution to improving the academic standards and women empowerment has been an inspiration to many. Besides her active role in business and education, she has been actively involved in rendering laudable service to the society through promotion of human welfare as a philanthropist.

As the Chairperson of the 65-year old GRG Educational Institutions, Dr. Nandini has been instrumental in women empowerment and providing opportunities for less-privileged sections of the society. The PSGR Krishnammal College for Women (KCW), the flagship Institution of GRG, has been ranked #4 among colleges in the country in the NIRF2023 list of the government of India and is accredited by NAAC with A++ grade. KCW is a UGC-certified “College of Excellence” since 2016.

Besides providing quality education, she has focused on contribution to society by helping over 1,000 women every year through women Self Help Groups, skill development of rural women, vocational training, support for girls in sports, and geriatric care for senior citizens. Her urge to uplift the socially and economically backward people has led to the establishment of the GRG Memorial Higher Secondary School at Vazhaithottam, a tribal village in the Nilgiris. This school serves over 750 tribal children with free education. She also established a Rural BPO Centre in the area in partnership with a global bank to provide employment opportunities to the tribal girl children. Over 125,000 girls have so far benefited from education provided by the GRG Institutions in Coimbatore.

As the Honorary Secretary since 1998 and the Chairperson since 2010 of the Coimbatore Branch of the Indian Red Cross Society, Dr. Nandini has pioneered many initiatives to help the needy. These include Project DEAF (Detection of Early Deafness and Prevention of Future Dumbness) and *Thalir*, a Community Care Home for 33 children whose parents are infected with HIV/AIDS virus and unable to care for them. The District Disaster Management and Response Team was set up in 2011 and has rendered yeoman service to people affected adversely by natural disasters. She also established a Special School for the Speech and Hearing Impaired Children, where about 60 children are imparted education from Pre-KG to

Class X. The Red Cross is also coming up with a new project – “DANA” (a 24/7 Blood Bank) at Koundampalayam, Coimbatore.

As the Joint District Director of the Women's Voluntary Service (WVS) in Coimbatore since 2002, Dr. Nandini has helped in enlisting women volunteers to work for the progress of the poor and marginalised sections of the society. The WVS currently runs and manages a Special School of Differently Abled Children and a Vocational Training Unit “Madhuram” for them.

She is the Secretary of the Coimbatore District Welfare Association, which runs a home for underprivileged senior citizens and a Day Care Centre for senior citizens, “Adaravu”.

Dr. Nandini is actively engaged with the Nilgiris Biosphere Nature Park (NBNP), a 90-acre Botanical Garden near Coimbatore, focusing on conservation, education and research of the fauna and flora of the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve (NBR), also disseminate environmental education and sharing knowledge to around 12,000 school and college students and general public in a year.

She has been closely associated with the activities of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) as the Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu State Council, Chairperson of the National Higher Education Conclave, Chairperson of the Southern Region Education Sub-Committee, Chairperson of the Coimbatore Zone, and Chairperson of Southern Region of CII IWN (Indian Women Network). She is currently the Chairperson of CII Southern Region and Co-Chair of the CII National Council Task Force on Rural Development and Migrant Labour.

Dr. Nandini is a past member of the Board of Governors of NIT, Tiruchirappalli. She is also on the Board of Magna Electro Castings Limited, the Vice Chairperson of the Governing Body of The Golden Jubilee Biotech Park for Women Society, Chennai, and serves on the Board of Directors of Cognizant Foundation, the CSR arm of Cognizant Technology Solutions. She serves as an Independent Director of Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited (A Government of Tamil Nadu Enterprise). She serves as one of the Trustees of Meenakshi Educational Activity Trust, Pollachi and one of the Trustees of UYIR (Movement for Road Safety). She has been nominated to be a Goodwill Ambassador for the plastic free Tamil Nadu Project Board. Dr. Nandini serves on the Board of Trustees of Siruthuli, an outstanding environmental initiative in Coimbatore. She is a member of Investment Committee, Green Climate Fund, Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund Management Corporation Ltd.

Recognising her immense contribution to the fields of education and community service, Dr. Nandini was conferred the Doctorate in Literature (Honoris Causa) degree by the Bharathiar University, Coimbatore in 2011. She is the recipient of the *Kongunadu Sadhanaiyalar* award conferred by Nachimuthu Industrial Association, Pollachi in 2008 for outstanding contribution to industry, education, and social service, *Pinnacle of Excellence* award conferred by Rotary Club, Coimbatore in 2009 and *Pannmugha Thirumagal* award given by Shri Ramakrishna Tapovanam, Thirupuraithurai in 2016.