

India: At a Glance



Gender Moments

Introduction

The Deliver for Good campaign is rooted in the premise that girls and women are key drivers of sustainable development and powerful agents of change. As the local implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) begins, now is the time to ensure that national decision-makers consistently prioritize girls and women – whether in health, environment, or education policies – thereby enabling their potential to impact and improve the economic, political, and environmental situations of their nations. The Deliver for Good campaign partners have selected India, Kenya, and Senegal as focus countries to launch locally-led advocacy campaigns that will keep girls and women at the center of decision-making during the SDG era.

Each Deliver for Good focus country will convene campaign coalitions and define campaign priorities that are appropriate to the local policy landscape. Deliver for Good partners will ensure that the campaign aligns with SDG priorities and perspectives at the country level and focuses on sparking policy action for girls and women.

The following is a summary of the current political landscape and country-based civil society efforts on issues affecting girls and women.

Statistics

Data points that reflect the status of girls' and women's health, rights, and wellbeing

Population, female (percentage of total): 48%¹

Fertility: 2.4 children/woman²

Maternal mortality rate: 174/100,000 live births³ (modelled estimate)

Contraceptive prevalence, any methods: 53.5%⁴

Health facilities with minimum infrastructure (electricity, clean water, and improved sanitation): NO DATA

Child marriage: Married by 15: 18.2%, Married by 18: 47.4%⁵

Is Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting legal, and under what circumstances? Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (prevalence): no data officially reported,⁶ although it is known to be practiced among a small community with a population of one million.⁷ No law specifically prohibits FGM.⁸

Are there laws around violence against women, and what are the penalties? Yes, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act of 2005,⁹ defines domestic violence in Indian law, following international definitions. However, this is only a civil – not criminal – law. Indian Penal Code defines and lays out penalties for various crimes against women,¹⁰ although enforcement is weak.

Female adult literacy rate: 75%¹¹

Women-held registered land titles: <10%¹²

Females age 15+ with an account at a financial institution: 42.6%¹³

Proportion of national parliamentary seats held by women: 11%¹⁴

Use of improved sanitation facilities (overall %): 39.6%¹⁵

Government collecting gender disaggregated data? For how long and at what levels? No robust method for collecting gender-disaggregated data exists, but efforts are underway to strengthen this collection.¹⁶

Political Landscape

India is the largest democracy in the world, with a president as constitutional head of state. India is made up of 29 states and seven union territories.¹⁷ Operating as a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic with a parliamentary form of government, it is equipped with a Council of Ministers – headed by the Prime Minister – which serve as advisors to the President. Each state also has a Council of Ministers who organize to provide advice to the Governor.¹⁸ Parliament comprises the Prime Minister and the two Houses – the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) and the House of the People (Lok Sabha).^{19,20} As of the 2017 election, 11% of India's Members of Parliament are women,²¹ and six of the country's 28 Cabinet Ministers are women,²² as are three of the country's 29 governors.²³

Freedom House has rated associational and organizational rights in India as 10 out of 12, and its political pluralism and participation as 14 out of 16, contributing to an average overall Freedom rating of 2.5 out of 7.²⁴



1993

India ratifies the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women



1994

India participates in the International Conference on Population and Development, and adopts the Programme of Action



1995

India attends the Fourth World Conference on Women and endorses the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action



2001

India establishes National Policy for the Empowerment of Women



2006

India implements the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence, 2005 Act



2013

India passes the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act



2016

India updates the National Policy for Women



However, civil society organizations (CSOs) in India work in an increasingly restrictive environment. According to reports from CIVICUS, the relationship between India's government and its CSOs has recently become strained, particularly those working in politics and rights.²⁵ Moreover, while there is a national law providing for CSO registration, state-level bureaucratic procedures,²⁶ tight restrictions on funding sources,²⁷ and uneven application of reporting requirements²⁸ impede full operations.

India has worked to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into key government schemes at the central and state level. The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), a government think tank, has been tasked to oversee SDG implementation and State coordination, while the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has the role of mapping the indicators within the national context.²⁹ ³⁰The 2017 National Health Policy explicitly lays out the goal of universal health coverage.³¹ In its recent Voluntary National Review, India reported progress on several relevant indicators. The percentage of stunted children has fallen from 48 percent in 2006 to 38.4 percent in 2016, and the proportion of underweight children decreased from 42.5 percent to 35.7 percent in that same period. Between 2006 and 2016, the proportion of deliveries with skilled birth attendants rose from 38.7 percent to 78.9 percent, and infant mortality dropped from 57 per 1,000 live births to 41 per 1,000 live births. Literacy among women increased from 68.4 percent to 55.1 percent between 2006 and 2016.³²

About the Deliver for Good Campaign

Deliver for Good is a global campaign initiated by Women Deliver and partners, that applies a gender lens to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promotes 12 critical investments in girls and women to power progress for all. The evidence-based advocacy campaign calls for enhanced policies, programming, and investments in girls and women. Deliver for Good highlights the ripple effects of investing in girls and women so decision makers understand the central role that gender equality plays in global development efforts.

With nearly 300 supporters in more than 50 countries, Deliver for Good is mobilizing supporters across sectors and issues areas to redefine the narrative around girls and women—from the most vulnerable, to agents of change and critical drivers of progress. The campaign is building a movement to fuel concrete action and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the global and country levels.

ENDNOTES

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- 10 <https://www.icrw.org/files/images/Reducing-HIV-Stigma-and-Gender-Based-Violence-Toolkit-for-Health-Care-Providers-in-India-Annex-4.pdf>
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