



Girls in a Changing Landscape: Urban and Digital Frontiers

The State of the Girl Child in India 2010



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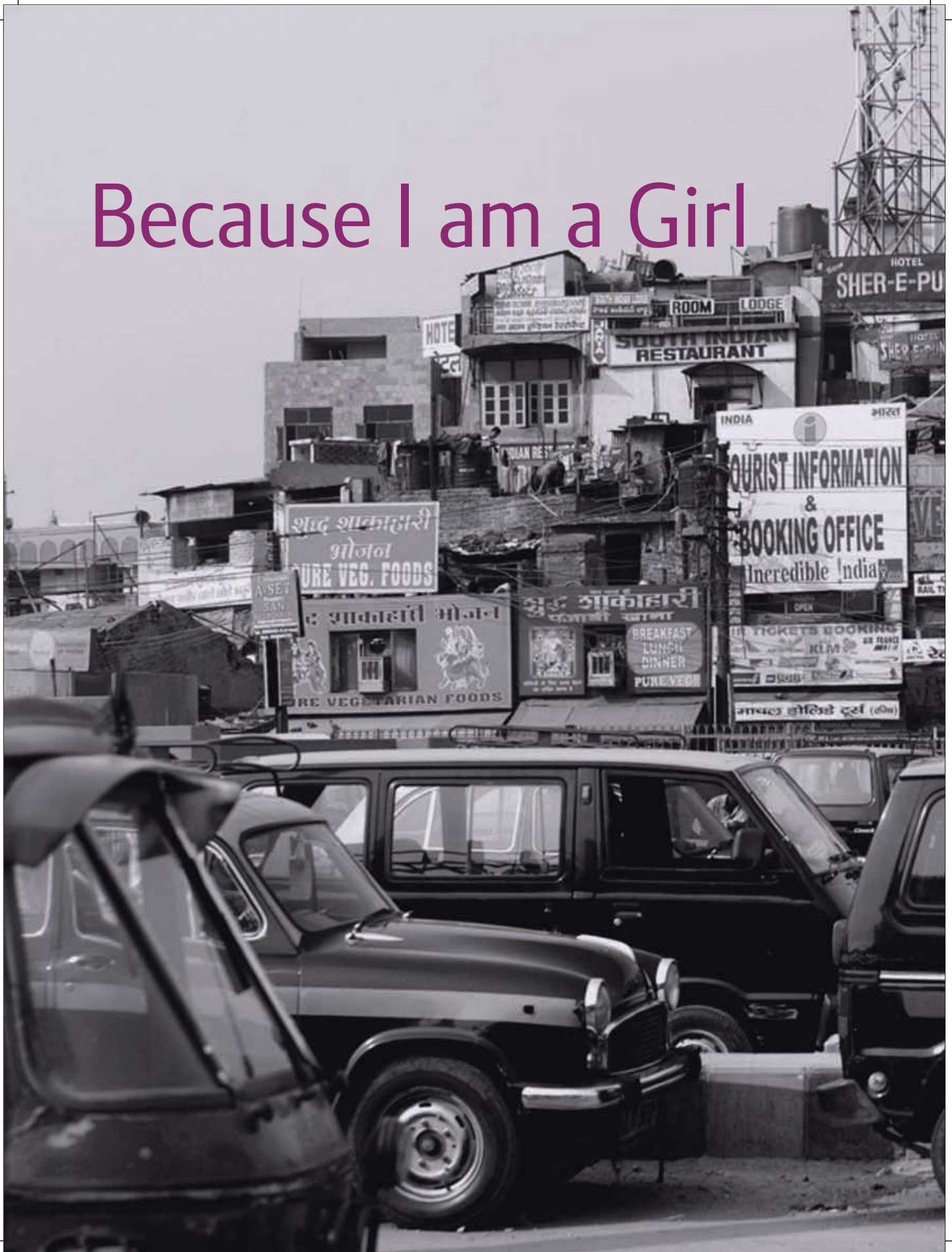
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Girls in a Changing Landscape: Urban and Digital Frontiers

The State of the Girl Child in India 2010

Because I am a Girl





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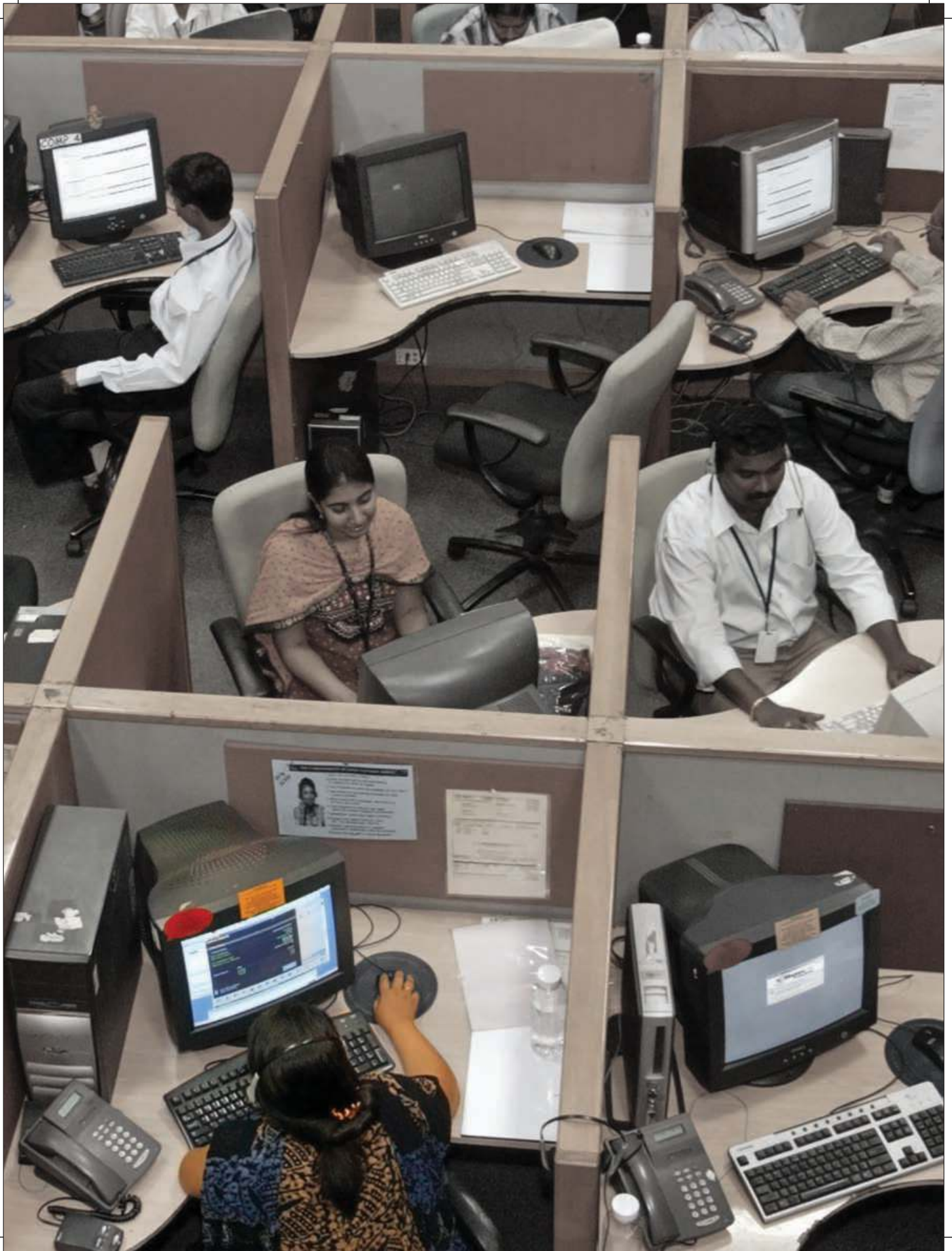
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Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ANC	Antenatal Care
ASK	Association for Stimulating Know-How
BIAG	Because I am a Girl
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
CASP	Community Aid and Sponsorship Programme
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
FGD	Focused Group Discussions
FTP	File Transfer Protocol
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRP	Government Railway Police
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
IT	Information Technology
M.B.A	Master in Business Administration
MMS	Multimedia Messaging Service
NFHS	National Family health Survey
NIPCCD	National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development
RPF	Railway Protection Force
S.E.C	Socio-economic Classification
SMS	Short Messaging Service
TB	Tuberculosis
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization



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Foreword

Women and children especially girls are the worst affected in the process of rapid urbanization in contemporary India. There is every evidence to show that urbanization will grow at exponential rate causing millions in Indian cities and towns living in poverty and vulnerability: having poor access to entitlements like healthcare, education, sanitation & hygiene and housing. This would make their everyday lives, a struggle for sheer survival and dignity.

It is in this context that this report is timely and welcome. In the making of this report across 10 cities in India, 10,000 girls were engaged and shared their voices to make our cities safe and enabling for themselves. It analyses their hopes and aspirations which they resiliently pursue on the face of significant adversities to make most of the opportunities that the city has to offer. It discusses their daily struggles through the medium of case studies and stories in negotiating streets, markets, public transport and public places where many girls face routine harassment.

Further, the report offers an analysis of the experiences and challenges faced by girls in accessing and benefiting from yet another technological revolution of the modern world namely digital technology and cyberspace. Clearly girls are being left out and many who decide to venture in the cyberspace are pushed out through various patriarchal strategies. It is time that the policy makers, civil society and girls themselves stood up to the challenges so that the benefits' of the digital revolution; touch and transform their lives their lives for the better.

Finally, this report is an attempt to reflect and renew our collective commitment to changing the lives and life situation of girls residing in our cities and towns. It seeks to provide us with the girls' perspective of their changing landscape of the digital and urban frontiers. I do hope this document serves the purpose of lifting the debate on urban deprivation with focus on girls in both government as well as civil society spaces fostering their well being as citizens of India.

Shantha Sinha
Chairperson
National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
Govt. of India, Janpath, New Delhi

Preface

This year Plan India's The State of the Girl Child in India 2010 report examines the lives of adolescent girls in two of the fastest growing social action arenas in the world today-the urban environment and the space of internet and mobile communications.

Urbanization in India had been steadily on the increase with an estimated 328 million of India's 1.08 billion population now residing in Indian towns and cities. This figure is estimated to double during the next 25 years. Comprising of a third of the total population, urban India contributes nearly two third of India's GDP. Unfortunately, the unprecedented urbanization has also resulted in significant increase in urban poverty because of slum living and homelessness. Presently, slums account for a fourth of all urban housing.

At another level, new information and communications technologies (ICT) such as the internet and mobiles have seen phenomenal increase in usage. Over 45 million people in India have access to the internet, while the mobile phone subscribers have touched the 600 million mark this year. Together these technologies provide tremendous opportunities for users in terms of access to information and education, but they also leave children, youth and women vulnerable to abuse and crimes. Child pornography, indecent representation of women, cyber bullying, indecent MMS messaging, and stalking are affecting the safety of children, young girls and women.

The State of the Girl Child in India 2010 report is based on the analysis of primary data collected from 10,000 girls in 10 major cities, where we asked adolescent girls their perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of the city life and access to digital technologies. More importantly it contains the aspirations of girls and their recommendations towards a solution for overcoming the problems they face in cities and cyberspace. Through the discussions girls have shared their lived experiences and life stories many of which show their resilience in the face of adversity.

For many girls, adolescence and youth is a period of transition, moving towards independence and making their own decisions about their lives. For others, it is about moving from the control of their father and brothers to the control of a husband. This report seeks to argue that it is precisely at this challenging time of life that girls in the cities as everywhere else need the most support from families, communities and government. They must be listened to by parents and caregivers, brothers and sisters, peers, social activists, teachers and above all by those in the governance who manage our cities, the companies responsible for mobile phones and websites, and the international bodies that agree on legislation in these arenas legislation that often ignores adolescent girls altogether.

We hope that this report will be considered as a call for action by city planners, administrators, the law enforcement, and policy makers to come together with young girls and boys, civil society and child rights and women's groups to make our cities and communication spaces more inclusive. Our adolescent and young girls must have the opportunity and right to participate safely in the exciting and dynamic developments that are taking place in urban India and the world today; and we all owe it to each and every girl child.

Bhagyashri Dengle
Executive Director
Plan India

Because I am a Girl Campaign

Introduction

Because I am a Girl is a campaign launched by Plan to promote girls' rights and lift millions of them out of poverty. Across the world, girls face discrimination because of their gender and age, and this leaves them at the bottom of the social ladder. For example, research has shown that girls are more likely to suffer from malnutrition; be forced into an early marriage; be subject to violence or intimidation; be trafficked, sold or coerced into the sex trade; or become infected with HIV.

The Because I am a Girl campaign is geared towards equipping, enabling and engaging girls of all ages to acquire the assets, skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in life.

Gender gaps inhibit economic growth

Existing gender gaps throughout the world reduce a nation's productivity, lower prospects for poverty reduction, inhibit economic progress and weaken overall governance. Gender gaps remain widespread particularly in the following three areas:

1. participation in decision-making;
2. realization of human rights; and
3. access and control over the resources and benefits of development (including, for example, education or health services).

Women and girls are affected most by these gender gaps; however the costs impact all of society. Evidence demonstrates that societies with persistent and significant gender inequalities are correlated to increased poverty, malnutrition, illness and other challenges. Investment in Girls Yields Real Returns Numerous economic-based research studies have demonstrated that existing gender gaps throughout the world reduce a nation's productivity, lower prospects for poverty reduction, inhibit economic progress and weaken overall governance. Real change cannot occur without significant investment in girls and gender equality. The World Bank's 2007 Development Report shows that investment in young people is critical to further progress in poverty reduction and economic growth. Girls' welfare is fundamental to determining strong economic and social outcomes for communities and nations. Research clearly demonstrates that investment in girls' condition and position yields real returns and should be a top priority for policymakers, program designers and private sector leaders (ICRW, 2008).

The Issues

Global statistics highlighted in Plan's first Because I am a Girl report paint a bleak picture of the challenges facing girls growing up in the poorest parts of the world: MDG goals that aim to halve world poverty are likely to fail girls, Discrimination against girls is harmful to the fight against global poverty, Females make up to 70% of the 1.5 billion people living on less than \$1 a day, 62 million girls are missing out on primary education, More girls than boys die before the age of five in many parts of the world, Birth complications are the leading cause of death for young women aged 15-19, Two thirds of 15-19 year-olds newly infected with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa are female.

The Expected Outcomes of the Campaign

The Because I am a Girl campaign is an ambitious and multi-faceted approach. Plan is attempting to initiate change at a number of levels (i.e. local, national, international) with the assistance of a number of partners. It is a massive undertaking. But what will the end result be? What are we striving to achieve? What will success look like?

Success at a local level: Six indicators are measured throughout all of Plan's programmes (e.g. infant mortality rate, primary school enrolment, etc.). Depending on the country and programme, a number of other relevant

indicators are measured. As a summary, success will be the number of girls in the 26000 communities where Plan works, who: survive beyond age five years, complete school, have access to healthcare and the skills to lift themselves out of poverty

Success at a national level: Measurement of success will be the number of countries which enact and enforce laws to enable girls to survive, be protected and have a say in what happens to them.

Success at an international level: Success will be the degree to which changes to international law take place which enable girls to appeal through UN mechanisms where their countries are unable or unwilling to fulfill their basic rights such as the right to health, education, and survival.

An Eight Point Action Plan

The Because I am a Girl report outlines an eight point action plan in order achieve these results.

1. **Listen to girls and let them participate.** Girls have the potential to articulate and secure their rights. This report has showcased a few of the voices of young women who are emerging from very difficult situations. The voices of girls and young women need to be heard.
2. **Invest in girls and young women.** Adequate resources must be made available at all levels in order for girls and young women to secure their rights. Their needs are often different from those of older women and from boys and men.
3. **Change and enforce the law.** In many countries, discriminatory laws and practices relating to girls and young women prevail. Where this is the case, they should be reformed with a human rights perspective and clearly embedded in community action. Where laws to protect and support girls and young women already exist, they must be enforced.
4. **Change attitudes.** The situation of girls is more likely to improve and at a faster pace if attitudes about gender equality, including those of boys and men, change. As long as women are considered second-class citizens, girls and young women will never be able to achieve their full potential.
5. **A safety net for girls.** The poorest and most vulnerable girls and their families would benefit from comprehensive social support which could include regular and predictable grants, scholarships or stipends to encourage girls to go to school and supplementary nutrition.
6. **Get specific data on girls.** It has become clear during the course of researching this report that more data on girls and young women specifically is urgently needed. Statistics and material are collected either on children or on women in general. National data disaggregated by sex and age has to be collected and used by policy makers.
7. **Take a life cycle approach.** This report has shown that taking a life-cycle approach to improving the rights of girls means addressing discrimination at every stage from birth - or even before birth - until they are grown women. This has enabled us to see the pervasiveness of issues like violence throughout the life cycle of a girl, and to identify the critical points of vulnerability in her life.
8. **Learn, document and share good practice.** The research for this report has shown just how little we really know about the lives of young women and how best to improve them. Systematic documentation and learning on best practice in relation to girls' rights is needed. Subsequent reports in this series will take specific areas and look at them in more detail.

“Real development cannot take roots on a sustainable basis, unless it is inclusive of women.”

- Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, President of India



Executive Summary

The State of the Girl Child in India 2010 looks at two arenas of dramatic change in the 21st Century India its cities, which are expanding every hour, and the global spaces opened up by information and communications technology, where the pace of change is even faster. It is here that adolescent and young girls face the greatest opportunities, as also some of the greatest risks.

Defining adolescence

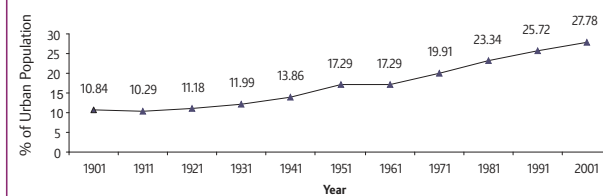
The World Health Organization and other United Nations Organizations define children as birth to 18 years, the adolescence age being between 10 and 19 years old, and youth age as 15 to 24 years. The overlap of the categories reflect the fact that young people's lives, and their physical and emotional development vary hugely, not just by age but in relation to their gender, where they live, their family and community, their income status and several other factors.

Adolescence is a time of significant transition in a girl's life; a period when she moves from the child she has been, to the woman she will become. All girls are different, but there are many experiences and vulnerabilities that they share. This transition is also defined by social, economic, cultural and political contexts. While for many Indian girls, it is a time of moving towards independence and making their own decisions about their lives, for others it is about moving from the control of their father and brothers to the control of a husband.

The State of the Girl Child in India, 2010 report focuses on adolescent girls and young women in the age group 14 to 21 years residing in the 10 urban cities. It seeks to examine girls' perceptions of their environment during their adolescence. It is during this time that they need to be listened to not only by their families, friends and teachers but also by those who run our cities, the companies responsible for mobile phones and websites, and the international bodies that agree on legislation in these arenas - legislation that often ignores adolescent girls altogether. More important there is a need for creating awareness amongst the young adolescents on safety measures so that they may protect themselves in these environments.

Cities and communications technology

While the majority of Indian people still live in rural regions, urbanization fuelled by large scale migration from rural to urban India is a fast growing phenomenon. The country's urban population in 2001 was 26% of its 1.08 billion population. Government data states that by 2030, the urban population is expected to increase to nearly 586 million¹ and by 2015, more than 50 cities are expected to have a population of over a million people. Half of this population will be of girls and women.



Growth in urban population (Source: Census of India 2001, Government of India)

Increasing indebtedness and lack of employment opportunities in rural India, coupled with discrimination and exclusion is compelling people either individually or with their families to migrate into the cities and towns. However the cities' inability to cope with this demand of employment has also seen a parallel rise in urban poverty. About 25% of the urban population is estimated to be poor² defined in terms of both economic and social poverty.

As town and city planners struggle to meet the infrastructure requirements of this soaring population, the cities are also witnessing a growth of urban slums. A more detailed analysis of the trends indicate that India is experiencing the 2-3-

4-5 phenomenon, which means that while there is approximately 2% annual population growth rate; there is 3% annual urban growth rate; with 4% population growth rate in large cities; and 5% annual growth rate in slum populations.

Indian cities: statistical snapshot³

Most Urbanized States:

Tamil Nadu 43.9%; Maharashtra 42.4%;
Gujarat 37.4%

3 out of world's 21 mega cities, in millions:

Mumbai (19); Delhi (15); Kolkata (14)

Large Cities:

68 cities with 1 million+ population

Urban Population:

28% of 1,030 million in 2002

Estimated Urban Population by 2030:

586 million

Percentage of Urban Poor Residents:

About 25%

Slum Population:

About 41 million in 2001

Estimated Slum Population by 2030:

69 million

The fast pace of urbanization has a bearing on all population segments including girls and women. It creates manifold opportunities for girls and women breaking the controls of tradition and ushering modern and progressive thinking and ideas. But on another level, it also creates conditions for exploitation, social exclusion, violence, sexual harassment and other forms of injustices and discrimination.

According to the Crime Statistics of India 2008, of the total 1,95,856 reported crimes against women, 24,756 (8%) were reported from 35 Cities each with a million plus population.

Similarly of the 21,467 registered rapes in India during 2008; 1768 rapes were reported to police in 35 cities with a million plus population. Of the 81,344 cases of cruelty by husbands registered in India during 2008; 11,409 cases were reported to the police in 35 cities with a million plus population.

India has also benefiting from the rapid growth of the Information Technology (IT) sector. Between 2008 and 2010 alone the IT domestic market has grown by 13%⁴. In 19 States there exists new IT policies. Experts estimate that the mobile phone user base in India will touch the 500 million mark by the end of 2010. Of these 500 million users, about 60 million will possess mobile video capability whereas 100 million will opt for music services on their cell phones. Also, India had 35.8 million internet users (excluding visits from net cafes and handhelds), a growth of 17% annually⁵. India's IT growth rate is the third highest in the Asia-Pacific region with only China and Japan surpassing India both in absolute number of users and in growth rates.

A large number of girls and young women now have access to mobile phones and global information systems, putting them in touch not only with their friends but with their peers within India and in different parts of the world. However these technologies have not touched the lives of a large number of girls and young women especially those from the most marginalized groups.

While the internet and mobile telecom have its obvious benefits for the users, they can also potentially create problems particularly for children, girls and women. Cyber crimes such as child pornography, pornography, cyber bullying, indecent and inappropriate MMS messaging, stalking, online harassment, are some of the more common problems that girls and women users of the internet and mobile telephony are increasingly facing.

Cities and ICT offer opportunities to girls

Cities and ICT have the potential to offer girls more opportunities than ever before. Increasing numbers of girls are moving, with their families, to cities where they are more likely to be educated, less likely to be married at an early age and more likely to participate in politics and leisure activities. It is not just the world that is changing; it is also the way that girls and young women see the world and their place in it. This includes the kinds of work that they want to do, their ideas about how women and men should behave, and their dreams for their future. Girls are pushing at the boundaries

that limit their lives, and asking for the same opportunities as their brothers. In both these areas, adolescent girls face bewildering and often conflicting sets of choices as they go about their lives: choices that will affect their own futures, but also the future of the world.

This report is an attempt to document and analyze the lived experiences (both positive and negative) of 10,000 adolescent and young girls about our cities and communication technology. Between June and August 2010, Plan India commissioned a study that looked at the solutions and actions from the perspective of adolescent and young girls to change their situation so as to amplify the benefits and possibilities offered to them by the city they live in and the communication spaces that they occupy. The data for the report was collected from adolescent and young girls in 10 cities

- (1) Delhi
- (2) Mumbai
- (3) Hyderabad
- (4) Pune
- (5) Kolkata
- (6) Bangalore
- (7) Patna
- (8) Varanasi
- (9) Bhubaneswar and
- (10) Ranchi.

In each of the cities girls spoke of what they felt the advantages and disadvantages of living in the city were. Girls told us of their aspirations and the challenges they faced in the city. More importantly they gave solutions as they spoke of their ideal cities

Using the findings of this survey, case studies, girls' voices, expert opinion, the report highlights the positive and negative aspects of these fast-changing spaces and places. It also looks at what adolescent girls need in order to thrive in them, and makes recommendations to those in authority at local, national and international levels.

Chapter 1 looks at one of the major changes that India is experiencing the rapid and exponential growth of its cities. It seeks to search for answers to some of the burning questions regarding the benefits that urban environment holds for girls

and young women. Further it explores the particular needs of girls in cities, their coping mechanisms when their needs are ignored and their rights denied, and their analyses of the 'push' and 'pull' factors that city life offers them. We read of girls telling us why urban life offers adolescent girls both the greatest opportunities and the greatest risks. Risks that for adolescent girls living in slums in particular need addressing urgently. They are neglected by city planners and administrators who could make cities safe for them, let down by the failure to enact or implement legislation that would support and protect them, and exposed by a lack of regulation and enforcement of protection. We look at certain recommendations for city planners, administrators and policy makers.

Chapter Two examines the relations between girls, the internet and other new communications technologies that can be sources of information for them. While technology can be liberating for girls, it may also replace the influence of the immediate family and community to both good and ill effect. The section based on primary data analyses how girls are sourcing information, and their awareness levels of the risks involved with mobiles and the internet. Access to information technology and the media has exposed girls to new ideas and ways of thinking that open up huge possibilities but which their families might consider as progressive and hence against their tradition. The internet creates new intimacies that seem safe, magnifying the power of the peer group and inviting in the stranger.

Adolescent girls need to be able to develop the skills to protect themselves and to distinguish opportunity from threat. Authorities and other 'duty-bearers' must make it their responsibility to make both cities and the internet safe and girl friendly. In both cities and online, adolescent girls need access to information, to education, to safe spaces and to networks.

In **Chapter Three**, we focus on the social category of girls who are most vulnerable in the urban environment namely adolescent girls on the street. It is estimated that girls constitute about 30 percent of street children, which is mainly because they are more vulnerable to being trafficking into forced labour or sex work. Of all those living in the

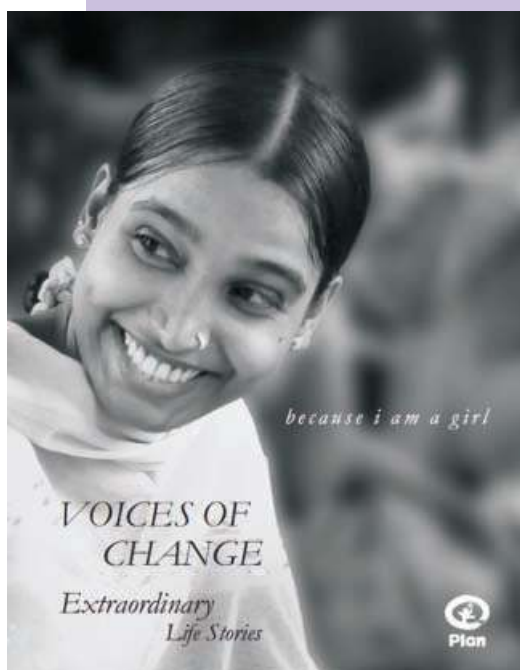
city, it is street girls, particularly adolescents, who are most at risk. A study in India, involving more than 1,000 street girls aged between 5 and 18, found that 68% reported they had been physically abused. Almost half the girls told that they wished they were boys. Further, 16% adolescent street girls faced sexual harassment and abuse and had to rely on street boys⁶ or older men for their protection. Street girls also report not getting much support from the civil authorities or the police, who are likely to abuse them given their vulnerable situation. Justice systems and prisons also treat them harshly, sometimes imprisoning them because they are girls on the street rather than because they have committed a crime. This chapter analyses how street girls view the city and the strategies they use to protect themselves

In **Chapter Four**, we share some programmes that have been carried out by Plan India and its partners in urban slums.

Finally, the report asks those with power to make decisions about adolescent girls' lives to confront, challenge and address the threats that girls and young women face in our fast-changing world. It

shows the importance of investment; both public and private, in order to build girls' capabilities and assets so that they can better protect themselves. It argues that the laws that are meant to protect young women must be enforced. It emphasizes the need to protect and promote girls' rights in cities and online. It makes specific recommendations to those responsible for our cities and those who provide services, be they private sector, non-governmental or international organizations. And it calls for support for girls and young women as they claim their place in the new millennium.

We ignore the dangers facing adolescent girls at our peril. Girls are half the world's future, the citizens who will be running our cities and shaping technology in the decades to come. We owe it to them to ease their passage from childhood into womanhood so that they have the skills and the knowledge to build a better and safer future for us all. We owe it to ourselves and to the future of our world to listen to what they have to say. Girls themselves are telling us clearly what needs to be done.



Voices of Change: Extraordinary Life Stories is a collection of stories about eighteen girls from nine Indian cities. These are deeply moving and inspirational stories in which we hear the voices of girls who will no longer tolerate the oppression that has prevailed for far too many centuries. These girls have overcome the most difficult of circumstances, both economic and social, to forge a new path for themselves, and sensitive and experienced writers have narrated their extraordinary journeys.

These girls now stand empowered by a sense of self worth, dignity and the ability to be financially independent. The time has come for them to be heard, so that others like them, who are caught in the complex bind of tradition and discrimination, will be inspired to take those difficult but necessary steps towards change, and thence, empowerment.

Study on Adolescent girls' views and perceptions on cities and digital spaces

Between June 2010 and August 2010, Plan India conducted the study to elicit the views and perceptions of a cross-section of adolescent and young women on city life and new communication arenas such as mobile phones and internet. The study sought responses from nearly 10,000 girls residing in 10 major cities of India.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the study were:

1. To document the views of adolescent girls' on cities and cyberspace so as to analyse it and amplify their voices such that it is heard by policy makers and city administrators; and
2. To analyse the similarities and differences in the lived experiences of cities and cyberspace in a cross-section of adolescent girls namely those from middle classes, not-so-poor families and the most marginalized girls, particularly street girls and living in urban slums.

Research technique

The study was based on primary data using both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Structured questionnaire was administered to girls for collecting quantitative data, while focussed group discussions (FGDs) were conducted separately with groups of girls and a small control group of boys. Additional, qualitative data on girls was collected through in-depth case studies using a pre-determined checklist. In order to triangulate the primary data conclusions secondary data analysis was conducted through internet, media scan and gender research reports and papers.

Study respondents

The primary respondents for the study included over 10,000 girls in the age group 14-21 years. In total 8578 individual questionnaires were administered to girls along with 150 FGDs and 20 case studies collected. As a control group, 5 FGDs in each of the 10 cities with a total of 500 boys were also included. The study respondents comprised of school and college girls, out of school/ working children, marginalized girls from

slum areas, street children, and socially excluded groups like girls affected with HIV/ AIDS, physically disabled, children of sex workers, dalit and tribal.

Sampling design

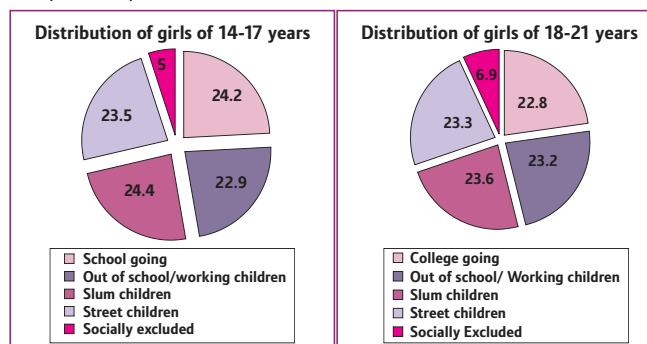
In each city, locations were selected across different socio-economic classification (SEC) zones ensuring geographical spread of the sample and coverage of target respondent groups.

After the locations were finalised, identification of school going and college going girls and boys was done using purposive sampling from SEC A, B, and C zones. In this context, the study received the support of local NGOs for mobilising different categories of the respondents.

Distribution by categories

Figure 1 presents the overall percentage distribution of girls of 14-17 years and 18-21 years by different socio-economic classification. Nearly a fourth of the girls reached by the study were residents of urban slums, living on streets, out of school/ working and school and college going. On the other hand nearly a tenth of the respondents of 14-17 years (5%) and 18-21 years (7%) belonged to socially excluded groups.

Figure 1: Distribution of Girls by Category and Age (Percent)

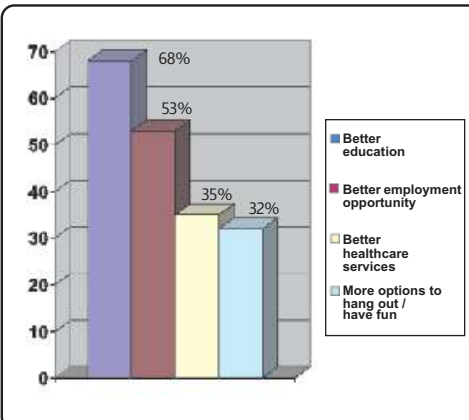


Research Ethics

Adequate care was taken to conduct the research within the internationally accepted standards, particularly those stipulated by the Plan India. All the respondents were provided information on the purpose of the study and informed consent was taken prior to their participation in the study. Also, while reporting case studies the names of girls are changed to protect their identity.

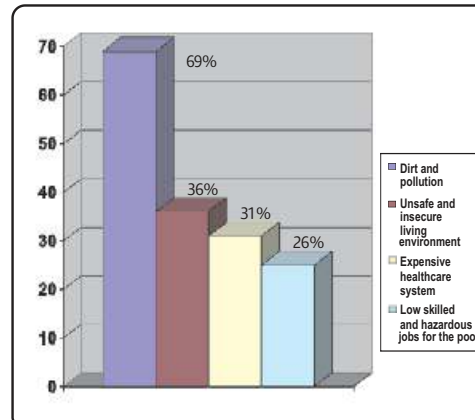
Graphical representation from key findings of the study Adolescent girls' views and perceptions of cities and digital spaces

Perceived Advantages of Living in Cities



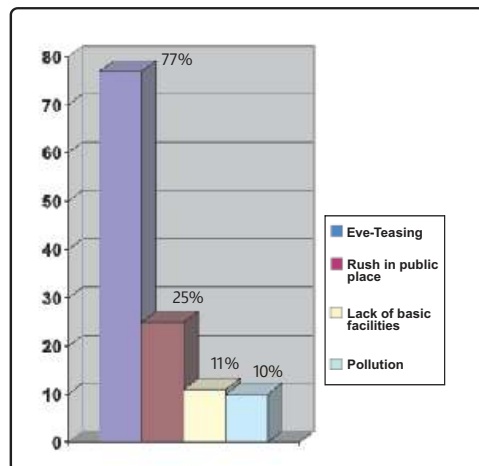
Better opportunities for education and employment were clearly recognized by girls as the key advantages of living in a city. One in every four girls interviewed considered that the city offered better access to healthcare services, and provided the requisite space for girls to leisure activities.

Perceived Disadvantages of Living in cities



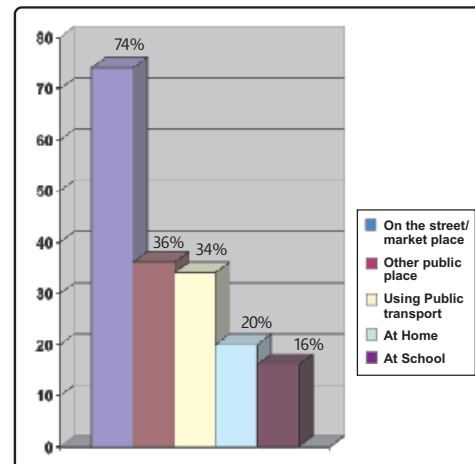
At another level, most girls felt that pollution and lack of sanitation are major disadvantage of city life. More than a third of the girls considered lack of safety as a disadvantage.

Nature of Challenges Faced in the Cities



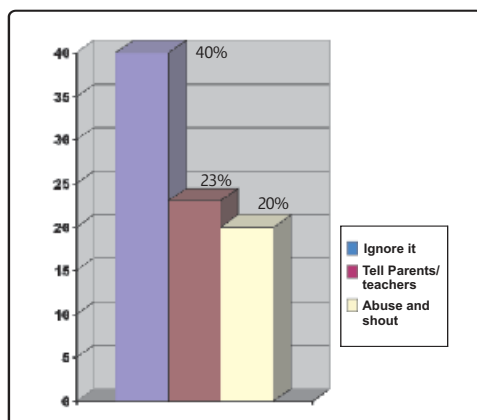
"Eve-teasing" was a unanimous response to the challenges faced. Clearly male attitude needs to be transformed along with increased attention on the issue by city administrators and law enforcement agencies.

Places in The City Where Challenges are Faced



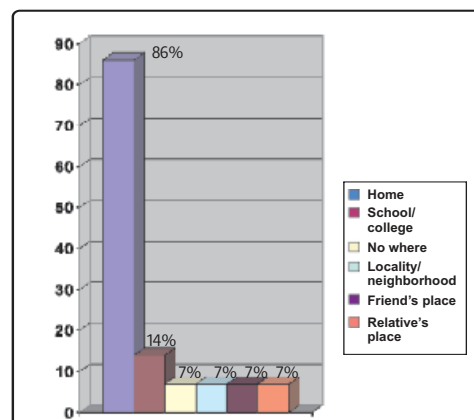
Girls feel most vulnerable in the market, public places and while using public transport. One in every five girls claims that they feel insecure at their home and in schools/college. Civil society and policy makers must seek to further understand and respond to these insecurities.

Coping Strategy Used to Overcome Challenges



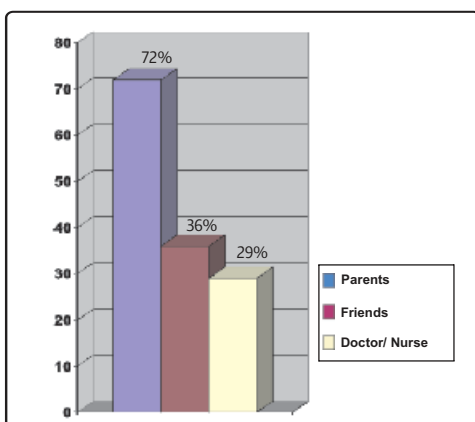
In a society where very few approach the law enforcement agencies to seek assistance, it is not surprising that the common coping mechanism with girls is to “ignore” it. Clearly this brings to fore the need for civil society to create institutions in which girls can repose their confidence and share their problems and challenges.

Places Where Girls Feel Secure



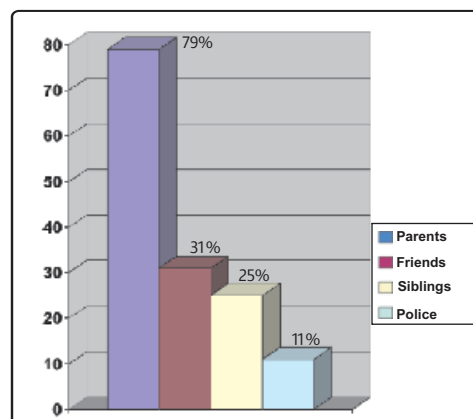
The city may offer myriad opportunities to girls but it is the home where they feel the most secure.

Persons Approached to Discuss Adolescent Health Related Issues



Awareness on adolescent health related issues has a long way to go before it can leave the close environs of a home.

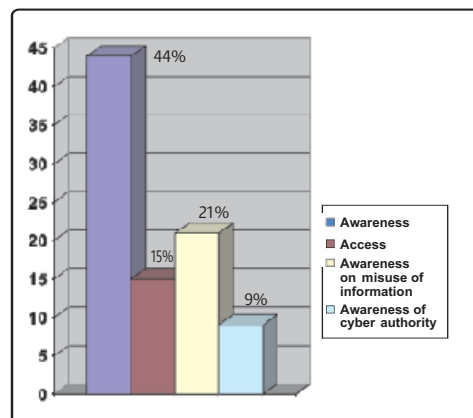
Persons Approached in Case of Harassment



The common perception of the police is far from being a protector and someone who inspires trust.

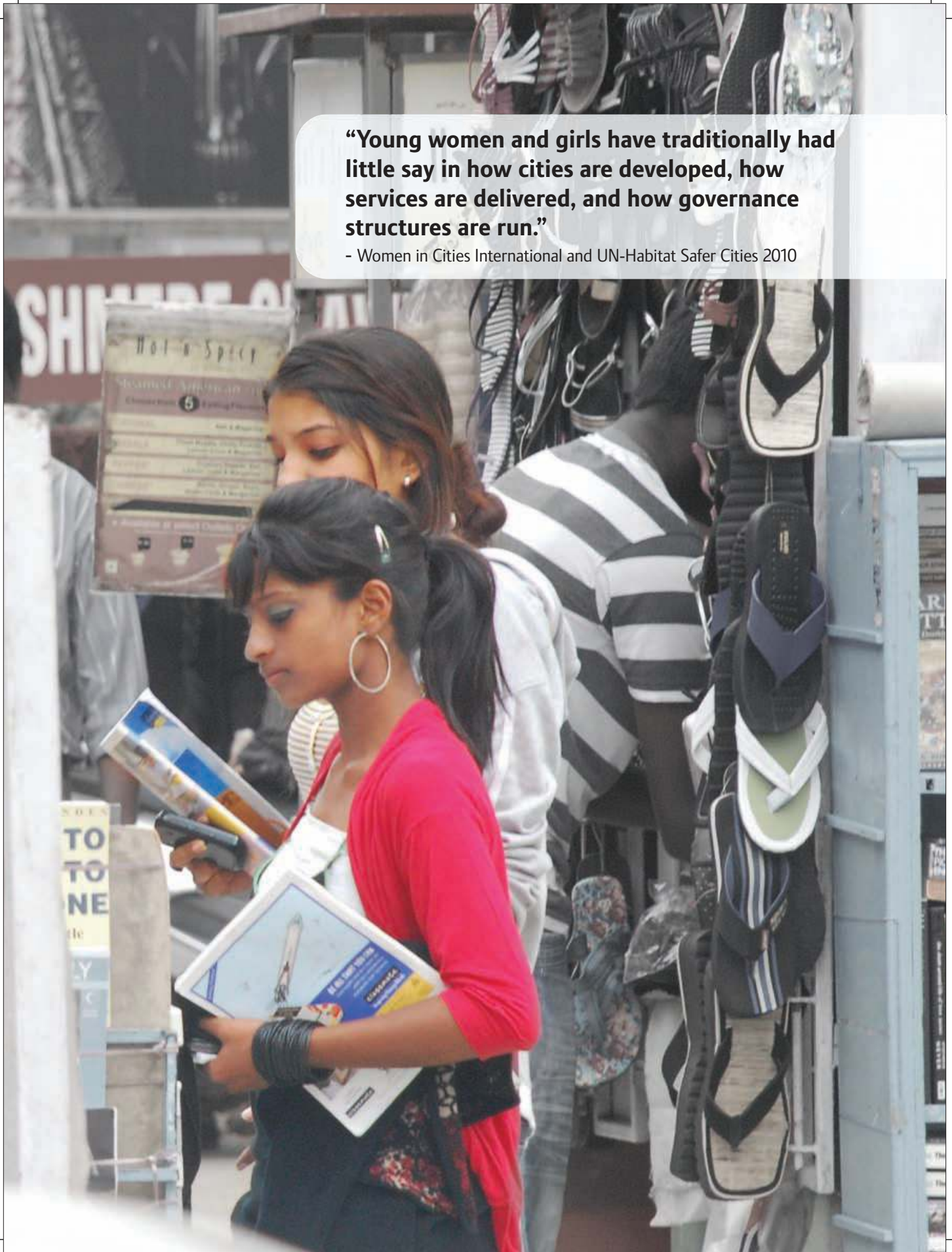
Awareness and Access To Internet

Awareness of the Internet is far more than actual access. While some are aware of its possible misuse of personal information only a very few have any idea about whom to report cyber crimes to.



“Young women and girls have traditionally had little say in how cities are developed, how services are delivered, and how governance structures are run.”

- Women in Cities International and UN-Habitat Safer Cities 2010



1 Balancing aspirations and reality - girls in the cities

Introduction

Compared to other countries, urbanization in India is at a modest 28% but when we look at it in terms of absolute numbers India has a mind boggling urban population of nearly 330 million persons. Another notable feature in the urban story is that urbanization is on a growth curve growing three times faster than the rural population. Government estimates suggest that by 2030 the urban population is expected to reach 586 million which is 41% of the total population. India's cities and towns have also seen an exponential growth in the last century growing from 1911 to 5161⁷.

By 2015 more than 50 cities are expected to have a population of over a million persons. The growing rate of urbanization is a combination of natural growth and rural urban migration. This is a trend that is common with other parts of the world where 60 per cent of urban growth, particularly in mega-cities of over 10 million, occurs due to natural population growth⁸. While many millions migrate, most young people living in a city today were born there⁹. However, what statistics cannot reveal is the diversity of experience of living in a city.

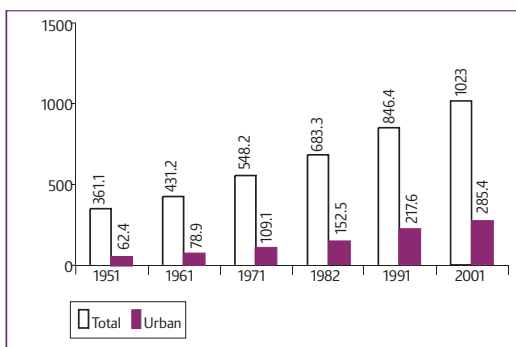


Figure 1.1: Distribution of Urban population to total population (Census 2001)

Urbanization of poverty is a term that is being used to account for the growing number of urban poor who are keeping pace with the growth of the urban population. The number of urban poor in India is estimated at 80.4 to 10 million¹⁰. They account for nearly 25% of the urban population and live primarily in the slums that are growing at a rate of 5%.

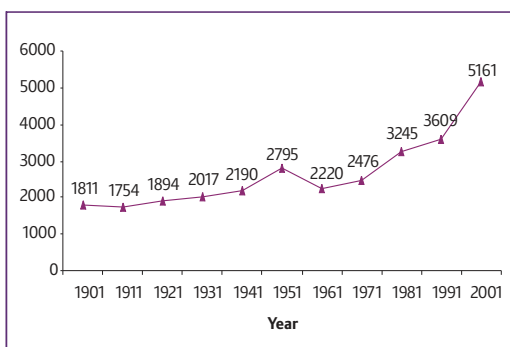


Figure 1.2: Growth in number of cities in India (Census 2001)

The adolescent girl in the city

Regardless of whether she was born in the city or migrated with her family, life in the city has much to offer to the adolescent girl. It provides opportunities for girls and women by loosening the controls of tradition and ushering modern and progressive education and ideas. Compared to their rural counterparts, urban adolescent girls are more likely to be educated and find work, and less likely to marry young in a town or city than in a village. They have more opportunity to interact with boys and to work towards equality and justice.

Table 1.1: Comparative Rural & Urban Social indicators

Indicator	Rural	Urban
Literacy rate	46%	75%
Age at marriage	16.4 yrs	18.8 yrs
Freedom of movement in public places	29%	43%
Exposure to media	55%	87%

However, millions of adolescent girls are not able to access these positive sides of city life. At the point in their lives where they are growing into womanhood they are vulnerable and exposed to various forms of violence and exploitation. This is more pronounced in those girls who are homeless, living in women headed households or without adult protection on the streets, railway platforms or live in poorer parts of the city, especially slums and shanties.

Aspirations and reality

Across the ten cities that were studied as part of this report we found, that “city life” presents a set of distinct advantages and disadvantages. Irrespective of socio-economic group, age, city, the verdict of what works or what does not work was near unanimous.

Perceived advantages of living in a city

The top four advantages, perceived by the girls include:

- better education
- better employment opportunity

iii) better health care services and

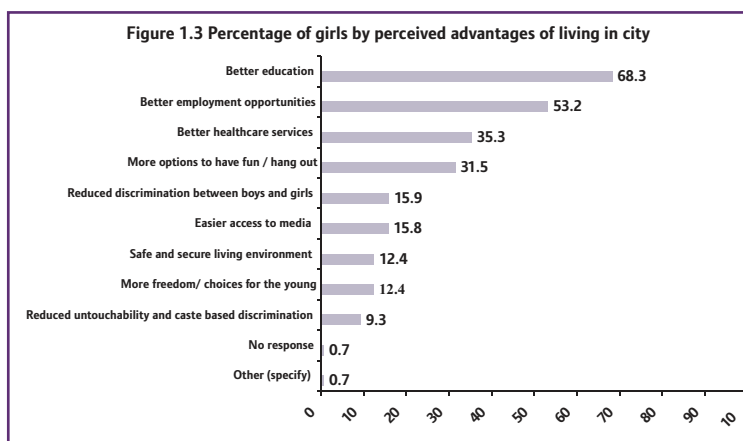
iv) more options to have fun/ hang out.

Reduced discrimination based on caste and gender as also more freedom for boys and girls were also mentioned as advantages by the girls.

However it was precisely these aspects that the girls also had issues with which they presented as disadvantages the interplay of aspirations signified by advantages and the reality that they contend with on a daily basis that they perceive as disadvantages. So while they listed education as an advantage, the stress that the current education system brings about in children was a factor mentioned by some girls. The advantages of employment opportunities is offset by the nature of employment opportunities that are perceived as unsafe and hazardous for the poor and stressful for the rich. Table 1.2 demonstrates some of these dichotomies as perceived by adolescent girls.

“Scope of better education, especially the technical education facility is very good in cities. Better education will lead to better employment opportunity.”

- Across older age group girls



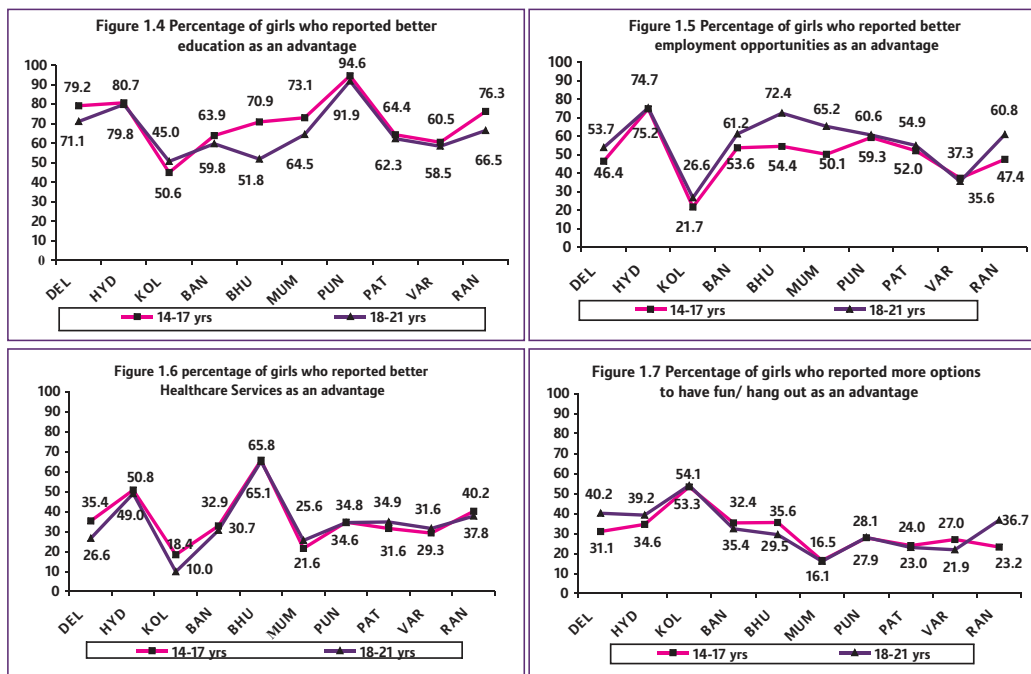


Table 1.2 Advantages and disadvantages of city life

		Key Aspect of City Life-Categories		
%	Advantages		Disadvantages	%
68	Better education	Education	Education system that stresses out young children	13
32	More options to have fun/ hang out	Social Environment	Absence of natural surroundings for young people to have fun	10
53	Better employment opportunities	Employment	Low skilled and hazardous jobs for the poor or often very stressful jobs for the rich	25
16	Easier access to media	Media	Unhealthy lifestyle due to excessive dependence on the media for entertainment	10
35	Better healthcare services	Health Care	Very expensive healthcare system	31
12	Safe and secure living environment	Safety	Unsafe and insecure living environment	36
12	More freedom/choices for the young	Freedom	Excessive freedom without responsibility for the young	12
16	Reduced discrimination between boys and girls	Discrimination	Discrimination between boys and girls	12
9	Reduced untouchability and caste based discrimination		Caste based discrimination is replaced by class based discrimination	9
0	Less polluted air and better environment	Clean Environment	Dirt and Pollution	69
Total N		8578		

When we engage with the evidence on education as the leading advantage cited by 68% of the respondents we find that this average aggregate is shaped by the responses from seven out of ten cities. The variations occur in the cities of Kolkata and among the older girls in Bhubaneswar where only 48% and 52% girls respectively perceived it as an advantage while in Pune it was a high 93%. The perception about better education in city gets pronounced among the younger girls than the older group across the cities. Younger girls appear to be more inclined towards better education as an aspiration, than older girls.

Across different categories of school/ college going respondents and those who belong to socially and economically vulnerable groups including “out of school/working children”, “street children”, “slum children”, “HIV/AIDS infected children”, “physically challenged”, children of sex workers” and “dalits and tribals” we find that both groups reflect almost similar trends in that they also perceive education opportunities to be the best advantage of living in cities.

“Here we have separate schools for girls unlike the villages. Besides this here we are getting free school uniform and books. So it is really advantageous to read in this city school”
- Girl from slum in Ranchi

This interplay of aspirations and reality reflects why in cities like Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Pune and Mumbai we find a close integration between educational and employment opportunities. We may surmise that they are possibly complementing or impacting each other. The same is not true for cities like Kolkata and Bangalore where, what probably influences the perceptions are the array of other advantages that we see emerging from the multiple options the respondents exercised.

In Kolkata the three other advantages are “Easier Access to Media”, “More option for fun/hanging out” and “More freedom/choice for the young”. Even though education has been selected as the dominant advantage, it is probably far below the average aggregate because of the many other advantages that are competing with or complementing education and therefore rate above the average aggregate.

In the case of Bangalore we find that it exhibits the characteristics of both Hyderabad and Kolkata along with employment opportunities, access to media and more options to hang out also figure quite distinctly. From this it is evident that the adolescent perceives the advantage of education from many standpoints.

Ginni (name changed) is 16 years old living in, Timarpur, Delhi. She stays with her parents, brother and a sister. Her father is a laborer and mother works in other people's homes.

According to Ginni, she was very fond of studying since her childhood. Her parents never stopped her from studying but due to misbehavior of the male teachers in her school, she had to leave school. She was studying in Model School. Ginni says that the male teachers in school used to slap girls on the breast and say 'stay away' and often stare at girls. The female teachers too used to pull at girl's uniform belt and beat on private parts. When the school would end, they used to stop girls by saying “this is your punishment and you will go home late by an hour”. Further, the male teachers in school used abusive language and passed personal comments.

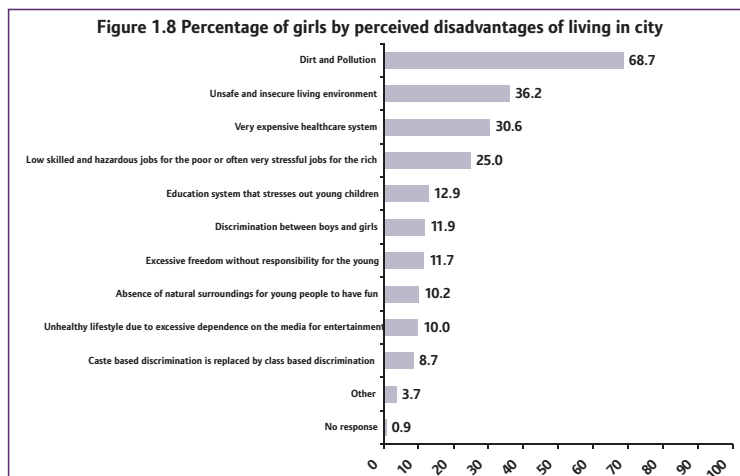
Ginni says that the boys in her school also used to constantly tease the girls in school and pass dirty comments. As a result she dropped out of school in class 8. She says that, “I had a dream of becoming independent by completing my education, hoped to get a good job and support my parents. But I could not study further. I want that the school environment should change so that girls do not face any difficulty in school. There are many girls in society like me who have stopped studying because of harassment by teachers and boys in school. There should be separate shift for boys and girls and there should be no male teachers in girl's school. Girls should be protected from such bad behavior”.

Perceived disadvantages of living in a city

The top four disadvantages, perceived by the girls include:

- i) dirt and pollution
- ii) unsafe and insecure living environment
- iii) very expensive health care system and
- iv) low skilled and hazardous jobs for the poor or often very stressful jobs for the rich.

Once again we find no difference between the two age groups. Even among different categories of respondents, the socially excluded and disadvantaged respondents as well as the more privileged respondents, the perceptions are more or less the same when it comes to education.



However city wise differences come through. Ranchi reveals the highest level of stress related with education. For Hyderabad it is the absence of natural surroundings to have fun. All cities unite in their perception of lack of clean environment as the biggest disadvantage. Very expensive healthcare system is the highest for Kolkata. And lack of safety and insecurity is the highest feature of Delhi. Not all adolescents perceive employment as an advantage particularly in Bhubaneswar and Varanasi. In an unregulated or unprotected environment the advantage of employment opportunities can prove to be double edged with hidden and overt disadvantages. And can also unleash a response that such hazardous and exploitative jobs are inevitable given the city dynamics.

In the words of a Delhi girl,

“Girls cannot go out on the streets in the night. In case there is some work and we need to go out, we cannot think of going out alone. We are always accompanied either by our parents or brother whereas boys don't face this problem. They can go out alone anywhere and at anytime.”

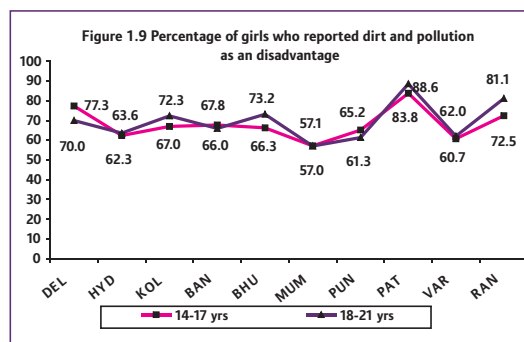
Though not many girls from Bangalore in the quantitative study mentioned disadvantages in terms of security issues, the girls who took part in the focus group discussions raised their concerns for safety and security. One of the participants of group discussion added;

“Crime has increased tremendously in this city. Every other day, we hear of theft, rape, murder. In this situation, any parent would be worried about girls going out alone.”

Besides these, in some of the FGDs girls also reported that the city life has negative impact on girls as well. According to a girl in Varanasi,

“Girls have become very open in the cities. They dress up provocatively, wear jeans, half pants, and tight fitting dresses and entice boys. They are getting influenced from the West. They do this in the

name of freedom.”

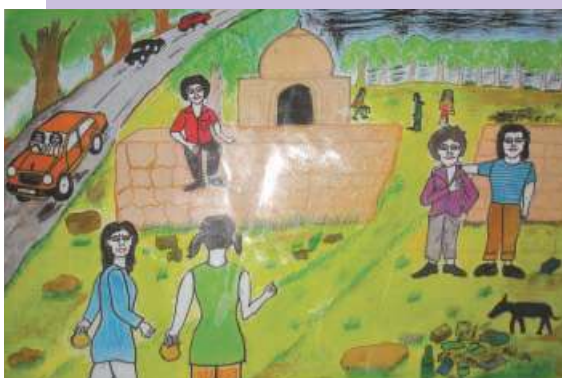


Devi (name changed), 19 year old, is 7th pass and belongs to the Dome community in Varanasi. She stays with her parents and two brothers. Her father is paralyzed and her brothers cremate corpses at the Harishchandra Ghat by the Ganga. While she managed to study till the 7th standard, she regrets that her brothers could not study at all. Her father who used to perform death rituals fell sick and her brothers ended up following their father's footsteps. She says that her studies were done under very difficult circumstances. At school, her classmates did not talk to her and she was treated like an untouchable. Their behavior and this feeling of being ostracized in school made her discontinue her studies.

When two members of Girija Rani Research Foundation visited her locality she shared her experience with them. They advised her and her family to continue going to school. Since the family did not have enough money, they suggested that she attends the English speaking course at the Institute. Subsequently she also enrolled in a Computer learning course and this was followed by a course in stitching and tailoring.

At present she teaches tailoring to other girls in her locality. She says it is only because of the didis and bhaiya from the Research Foundation that she has managed to achieve something in life. Earlier people used to pass dirty comments about her and even the boys used to tease her. She used to think that the root cause of her problem was that she belonged to the Dome community. As a result of this constant nagging and harassment she developed an inferiority complex and started doubting herself.

She says, "thanks to the support of my family, Rupa didi, Sachin bhaiya and Neelima didi, I was able to learn some skills and regain self confidence". Today she is pleased with the fact that she can support her family and live a life of dignity.



Using projection technique

Response to a picture depicting girls going to relieve themselves.

Some of the issues that came up :

Lack of proper toilets: Inadequate numbers, no water, no lights, unclean, in a secluded place away from the living quarters, the boys often throw stones at windows while the girls use the toilets.

Going out in the open: In the absence of toilets, the girls had no option but to go out to relieve themselves. They go in a group of four to five, "taking turns to guard" the others. "Rowdy boys, with not much to occupy them", would normally "sit around passing comments" or generally have "fun at their expense. Possibility of the situation "getting dangerous", if the boys were "drunk, with strangers" or "up to some mischief".

Challenges faced

Table 1.3 presents the type of challenges faced by girls in the city. The analysis has been done for all ten cities together and for socially excluded group separately. Though different types of challenges are faced by the girls in city, eve teasing appears to be the major challenge followed by excess rush in public places. The girls from socially excluded group also reported similar challenges as faced by other girls. The analysis from qualitative data also supports this fact of eve teasing being the most significant challenge that girls mention they face across all the cities and socio-economic groups.

Table 1.3: Type of challenges faced by girls in city

	Percent	
	All cities together Combined	Socially Excluded Group
Eve-Teasing	77	75
Rush in public places	25	19
Pollution	10	9
Water problem	5	5
Inflation is high	4	4
Safety	4	3
Poor toilet facility	3	5
Feel unsafe	3	2
No street lights on the roads	3	1
Wanted to study further but got married early	3	3
Nothing	2	2
Don't know	1	0.0
No response	5	6
Total N	8578	512

The analysis by age groups reveals that more than three fourth girls from both the age groups (77% each) reported eve teasing. The percent girls reporting this in the age group of 14-17 years varies from 54% in Pune to 94% in Kolkata. The corresponding value among the older age group girls varies from 53% in Pune to 97% in Kolkata. This finding is also supported by the qualitative data. In the words of a girl from Kolkata,

“Girls are harassed by rowdy boys everywhere - in the market, walking on streets, going to tuition, in buses. Even men, who are 40 years and above harass girls, we are now used to this”.

According to a physically challenged girl from slums of Delhi,

“This city has no facilities for us. We face major

challenge in commuting. We can't go out alone due to heavy traffic. We feel excluded from other people”.

Facing actual harassment together with fear of harassment across groups with different vulnerabilities forms the biggest threat for the girls. 77% report facing harassment, 32% fear it. The situation appears to be same for all the girls, be it a school or college going girl or those living in the slums or on the streets as also for those who are socially excluded. The biggest challenge of their lives unites the entire group, together in their common binding reality of harassment faced in the public places on a regular basis.

The other challenge is the lack of basic infrastructure, with close to 22% girls across categories perceiving absence of civic amenities

to be another constant struggle in the cities.

In the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with boys, who are treated as the control group in this study, the issue of safety for girls in city came up as a challenge for girls living in the city. A boy living on the streets in Pune said,

“Boys tease girls everywhere it's very common in the city. There's eve teasing, molestation and rape against women. It should not happen, it's actually very bad. Today girls are going ahead in every field, they are not behind anymore.”

According to an out of school boy in Bhubaneswar,

“Nowadays buses are overcrowded, girls are not able to get inside the buses even though they have reserved seats in the bus. Sometimes boys sit on the reserved seats and then fight with girls in buses.”

A boy living in slums in Hyderabad agreed,

“Eve teasing is increasing. Boys forcefully want to establish relationships with girls....due to this crime against women is also on the rise.....boys murder girls over this issue.....sometimes they throw acid on girls.”

One boy living in a slum area in Delhi presented a view agreed upon by other boys in the group,

“Girls should be careful about what they are wearing before going out because their dressing sense is also responsible for boys teasing them...”

(See Annex Table 1.2 for discussions with boys)

One college going girl from Patna said,

“If any girl dresses in a modern way or wears fashionable clothes, boys on the road pass comments and tease her. Sometimes even the neighbors comment about the character of the girl.”

As per a school boy in Kolkata,

“Girls are still facing discrimination in the city based on sex as society is male dominated. Girls are getting good education but after completing their graduation girls are forced to get married by their parents...”

The challenges faced by boys, as reported in the

FGDs include 'making a career' and 'finding a good job', 'problem traveling due to poor transport facilities'. This is also endorsed by the girls, who participated in the FGDs, who felt that 'having a good job' is a challenge most boys face.

Places where girls faced challenges

Analysis clearly indicates that girls mainly face challenges on the street/market places, as about three fourth of the girls from both younger (73%) and older (74%) age group reported so. Besides street/market places, city girls also reported that they faced challenges at other public places (34% among 14-17 and 38% among 18-21) and while using public transport (33% among 14-17 and 35% among 18-21).

One of the street girls opined,

“The biggest problem we face is going to relieve ourselves. There are not too many toilets in out localities. Often we have to go out in the open...we also get teased on the way.”

Coping mechanism

More than 20% girls reported that they do nothing or take no action when they face any challenge in the city. This is true in case of both younger (41%) and older girls (40%). It varies from 7% in Bhubaneswar to 75% in Varanasi. While discussing their coping strategy, a college going girl in Mumbai said,

“Mostly we ignore comments passed by boys. If we will react, they will do it more and we will only face more problem. The best solution to deal with teasing and vulgar comments is to ignore and move on. There is no other solution to this problem.”

A girl from Ranchi cites,

“We don't do anything. We just ignore it. If it is too much and we feel we can't handle it, only then we tell our parents or sibling, otherwise we keep quiet.”

Few girls admitted bringing it to the notice of their parents and fewer still claimed to retaliate by either abusing or slapping the person.

Maitri (name changed) is 20 years old from a poor family. She stays with her family of 6 members, parents, three sisters and a brother. Due to financial problems at home, she and her sister started working as domestic workers at the age of 9. She later worked as an assistant in a tailoring shop. From this income, they maintained their family and also started their mother's treatment. They also ensured that their younger siblings got educated and sent them to school.

According to Maitri, taking advantage of her poor condition one day the owner of the shop asked her to be physically intimate with her. Since she refused, she was asked to leave the shop. She then looked for another job and soon started working in a soap factory. On the very second day a male worker tried to be physically close to her but supervisor came to her rescue. However, a few days later the supervisor raped her. Unfortunately Maitri could not take any action against him as he was very powerful. The man continued to be physically intimate with her. She says that the man also helped her from time to time like helping her buy two sewing machines. Half the money was given by him as a loan without any interest on the amount. Slowly, Maitri repaid the loan and started sewing work. She has now rented a small shop where she stitches clothes. This has also improved her financial situation.

Places where girls feel secure

Analysis reveals that there are only a few places in the city where the girls feel secure, with home being the most secure space. The second most important place where girls feel secure is school/college. This is true in case of socially excluded groups as well.

The most important aspect that needs to be highlighted here is, about one fifth of the girls of 18-21 years, Mumbai (19%) and Patna (15%), reported that they do not feel secure anywhere in the city. One tenth of the girls in Bhubaneswar (9%) and Ranchi (9%) also reported the same. The category wise distribution of these girls indicates that more than 77% of the girls reporting so are street children or from socially excluded categories who feel more insecure as compared to their counterparts in other categories.

The findings from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) among boys show that they generally feel safe at most places in the city and as such don't feel insecure anywhere. In Delhi, however, boys living on the streets reported feeling insecure at times.

During the FGDs the girls were also asked about the places where they feel insecure in the city.

Across all the cities and the socio-economic categories girls reported that whenever they go out of their home, especially market places they feel insecure. They also said that going out during night is risky and they feel unsafe.

Person with whom adolescent health issues are discussed

Person with whom girls claimed to discuss adolescent health issues comfortably are parents/ siblings followed by friends. It is evident that awareness on adolescent health related issues has a long way to go before it can leave the close environs of the home. However, it is a matter of concern that over 5% girls across ten cities reported that they do not share their health related problem with anybody at all.

Person approached in case of harassment

Person whom girls would approach in case of harassment include parents, friends and siblings. About 10% girls also mentioned that they will approach the police. The same pattern also persists among the girls from socially excluded groups.

Awareness of any incident of police support or harassment

Awareness of incident of Police help/support seems to be very poor among the girls across the cities with only about 6% of the respondents claiming awareness of any such incident. However, in Bhubaneswar, 20% of girls across age groups claimed knowledge of an episode where the Police came to the aid of an individual. The analysis further reveals that across the country, the school/college going girls, girls with higher educational levels and girls staying at boarding/hostels are more likely to be aware of such incidents as compared to the disadvantaged girls. A school going girl in Ranchi said,

“I was coming back from tuition with my friend when some boys started teasing us. They were passing comments and whistling at us. I got very angry and complained to the policeman standing near the market. He immediately went to the boys and shouted at them and asked the boys not to repeat it....the boys ran away from there...we then thanked the policeman.....he was very nice.”

Awareness of any incident of harassment by police was lower. Only 2% claimed to know of any such incident.

Awareness of Civil Rights

The findings for all the cities together reveal that the city girls are mainly aware of six different rights as a citizen of India. These include:

- Right to education (62% among 14-17 and 54% among 18-21)
- Right to freedom (50% among 14-17 and 52% among 18-21)
- Right to employment (38% among 14-17 and 42% among 18-21),
- Right to safety (29% among 14-17 and 30 % among 18-21),
- Right to equal opportunity for boys and girls (24% among 14-17 and 26% among 18-21),
- Right to food (24% among 14-17 and 21% among 18-21).

A large variation could also be seen across the ten

cities in terms of percent girls reporting the above mentioned six rights. Besides these six rights, about one fifth each in Hyderabad (24%), Bangalore (20%) and Patna (18%) also reported the right to property. This is true across both the age groups.

Conclusion

While it is believed by some that the cities are more progressive in that there is less gender and caste based discrimination and more freedom, challenge faced in the city like harassment are significantly high. The disadvantaged group in particular is further pressured by the unhygienic living conditions, insecurity coupled with an expensive health care system. Girls across the cities suffer harassment by men; eve teasing being the biggest challenge. This when coupled with lack of infrastructure like adequate toilets, street lights, water, proper housing and electricity further aggravates their ordeal. As if inefficiency of administrative machinery was not enough, the patriarchal system is such that many of girls feel insecure even at home and at school/college. In a society where only a very few will approach the police to seek assistance in case they are being harassed, it is not surprising that the most common coping mechanism is to “ignore” it. The common perception of the police is far from being a protector or someone who inspires trust. It is indeed a sad commentary on the lives of young girls in the cities that many do not feel secure anywhere.

However, it is interesting to find that not all disadvantages are being perceived with the same intensity in every city but what emerges is that in spite of all its limitations, the cities are being seen as offering greater and newer opportunities. However, the challenge of accessing and leveraging these opportunities is equally strong and formidable. The future of cities to a large extent depends on how the Government engages with the adolescent girls to help them realize their fundamental rights by maximizing the opportunities and minimizing the risks for all girls in cities, especially the most vulnerable, those living in slums or on the streets.

Plan International's 8 point Call for Action on Girls' Rights in the City

Plan International has developed an eight point Call to Action on Girl's Rights in the city as a way to create a new normative framework of rights for girls in urban spaces. This builds on the United Nations' articulation of the Right to the City which emphasizes the goals of liberty, freedom, participation and diversity and also upon the voices and perspectives of the adolescent girls themselves.

1. All girls should have the right to access safe education in the city
2. All girls should have the right to be free from violence in the city
3. All girls should have the right to secure and decent housing
4. All girls should have the right to move safely in the city
5. All girls should have the right to affordable and accessible services in the city
6. All girls should have the right to age-appropriate and decent work in a healthy urban environment
7. All girls should have the right to safe spaces in the city
8. All girls should have the right to participate in making cities safer, more inclusive and more accessible.

UNCRC relevant articles

CRC Article 28: Education. Children have the right to education. Primary education should be free and compulsory. Secondary education should be accessible to every child. Higher education should be available to all on the basis of capacity. School discipline shall be consistent with the child's rights and dignity.

Article 19: Protection from abuse and neglect. Children shall be protected from abuse and neglect. States shall provide programmes for the prevention of abuse and treatment of those who have suffered abuse.

Article 40: Administration of juvenile justice. Children in conflict with the law are entitled to legal guarantees and assistance, and treatment that promotes their sense of dignity and aims to help them take a constructive role in society.

Article 27: Standard of living. Children have the right to a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Parents, within their abilities and financial capacities, have the primary responsibility to ensure that the child has an adequate standard of living. The State's duty is to ensure that this responsibility is fulfilled.

Article 34: Sexual exploitation. Children shall be protected from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

Article 24: Health and health services. Children have the right to the highest possible standard of health and access to health and medical services.

Article 32: Child labour. Children have the right to be protected from economic exploitation, from having to participate in work that threatens their health, education or development. The State shall set minimum ages for employment and regulate working conditions.

Article 31: Leisure, recreation and cultural activities. Children have the right to rest, leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.

Article 15: Freedom of association. Children have a right to meet with others, and to join or form associations.

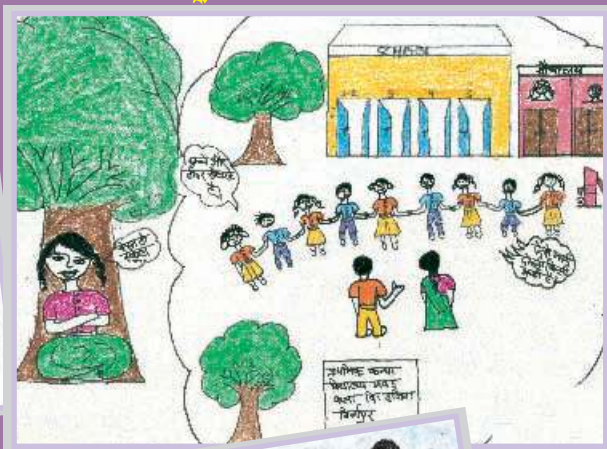
Article 12: The child's opinion. Children have the right to express their opinions freely, and have their opinions taken into account in matters that affect them.

Plan's charter is supported by Women in Cities International.

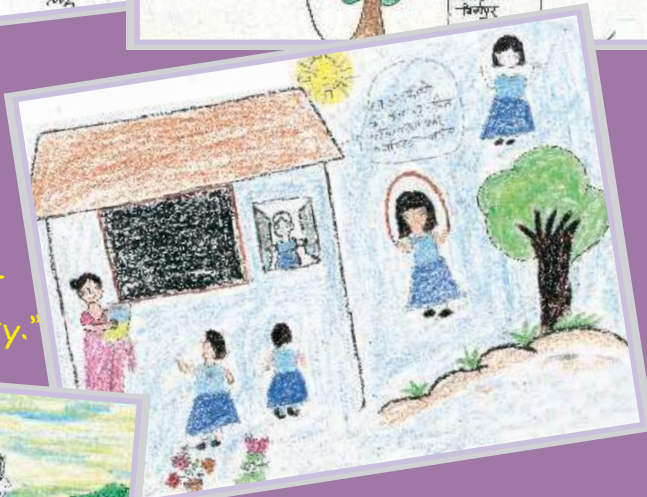
My Ideal City



The girl being teased finds support from a passer by.

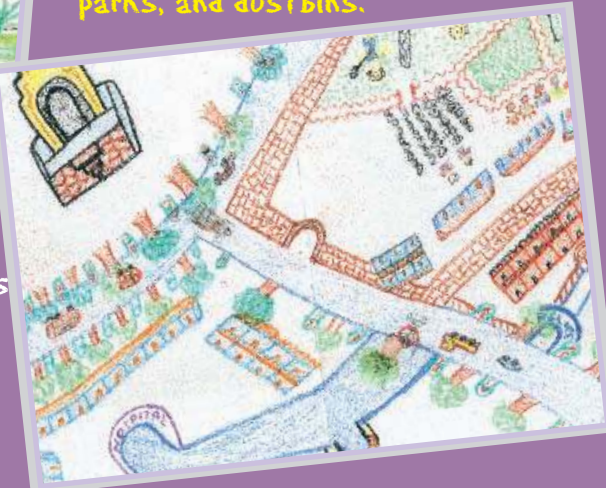


"No eve teasing and violence against girls so that we can also go around alone without fear of being harmed in a city."

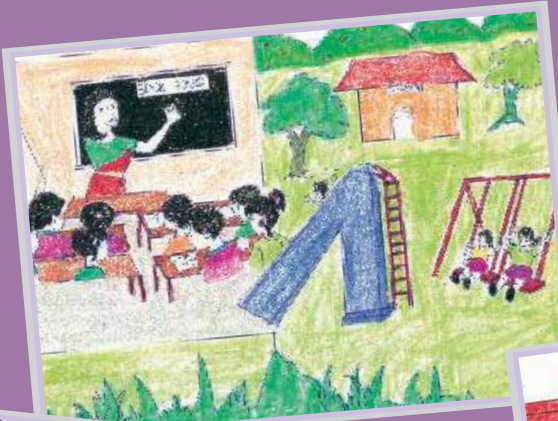


"My ideal city must provide safe and secure environment for girls along with clean and uncontaminated atmosphere with lots of trees, parks, and dustbins."

"Adequate and clean water supply through pipelines provided to all so that no one is forced to waste time and energy collecting the day's supply of water."



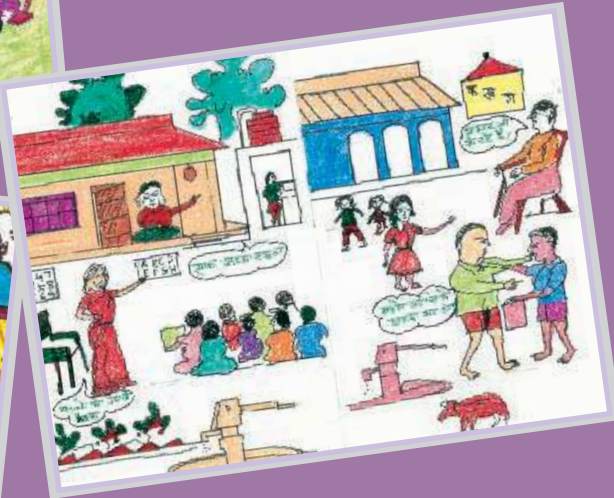
All the drawings have been made by children.



"City with no gender discrimination, giving equal opportunities to boys and girls would be my ideal city."



"Good administration, good employment, good education and protection in public places with no sexual harassment will make an ideal city."



"A city without filth and dirt strewn all over the place that leads to sickness and disease."

"Responsible and understanding police that will ensure that girls are not bothered unnecessarily and action is taken against the offenders so that they do not repeat it and other potential offenders also get warned by it."

What good cities deliver

SAFETY AND SECURITY

BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE


ACCESS TO EDUCATION

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

ACCESSIBLE ICT



Girls being teased, do not find support even from the police.

A photograph of a woman in a red and white striped shirt looking down at her smartphone. She is walking on a busy street with buildings and a car in the background. A man in a tan shirt is walking away from the camera to the left. A white car is partially visible on the right. The background shows a mix of old and new buildings, with some signs in Telugu. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

“The so-called digital divide is actually several gaps in one. There is a technological divide great gaps in infrastructure. There is a content divide. There is a gender divide, with women and girls enjoying less access to information technology than do men and boys. This can be true of rich and poor countries alike.”

Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations¹¹

2 Adolescent girls and communications technologies- access, opportunities and protection

Introduction

During the past decade, communications technologies have revolutionized and changed the way billions of people work, communicate, network, and spend their leisure time. Young people are using Information Communication Technology (ICT) to access information, educational achievements and employment opportunities. ICT offers flexibility in time and space, which can be of particular value to young women and girls who may face social isolation, particularly in developing countries. It can also be effectively utilized for peer networking which is critical to empowerment of adolescent¹² girls. However there is a darker side to it in terms of the potential for exploitation and harm that it exposes the children to. Adolescent girls and young women are prime targets for new methods of exploitation, including trafficking, via the internet, mobile phones and other communications technologies.

Defining ICT in the Indian context

ICT includes the whole range of technologies used for communication, from the telephone and radio to the latest social networking technologies. The World Bank definition is: “the hardware, software, networks, and media used to collect, store, process, transmit, and present information in the form of voice, data, text, and images.” This technology is changing all the time. In recent years or even months, there has been increasing convergence of computer based, multimedia and communications technologies for example, the ability of mobile phones to be used much like a computer.

The ICTs in India have traced a remarkable progress in the country since the last decade and created employment opportunities in areas such as telecommunications, banking, education,

health and business. On the administrative front, ICT facilitates through e-governance, the promotion of responsive, accountable, and effective government and administration and increases awareness about the rights and the duties of both the government and citizens. It fosters socio-cultural development and the concept of global village and borderless society by enhancing the promotion of social cohesion, harmony and integration, spread of education and knowledge through distance learning in a cost effective manner. The estimated share of ICT services to total GDP (Gross Domestic Product) has increased from 3% in 2000-01 to 6% in 2007-08¹³. In 2008-09 the production by the ICT sector was estimated to have reached Rs. 3682.2 billion during the year, at a healthy growth rate of 24%¹⁴.

In India, women occupy nearly 20 per cent of the professional jobs in the software industry, including at technical and managerial levels. They are also well represented in what are known as BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) industries such as call centres. However women as in the other sectors still have not broken the glass ceiling. Many of these positions are at the entry level. By and large women are not engaged in the hardware sector of this industry.

Cell phones and the internet are probably the fastest growing technologies, connecting millions of people across the world. There are 500 million mobile subscribers¹⁵ in India covering about 26% of the population. The share of internet users in India is a more modest 46.5 million users. For both the technologies, the urban coverage is far greater than the rural coverage (urban users account for 88% for mobiles and 84% for internet). Women account for 21% of all regular internet users.

Currently, ICTs are being used in innovative and unanticipated ways in a number of different

contexts. ICT users are now encouraged to interact in the physical world with individuals they have met in the virtual world. Blogs, Twitter, Facebook are tools that represent a shift in how information and media are produced and shared, and offer all of us, including young people, the social space to engage on-line rather than simply receiving a broadcast.

Relevance of communication technologies for adolescent and young girls

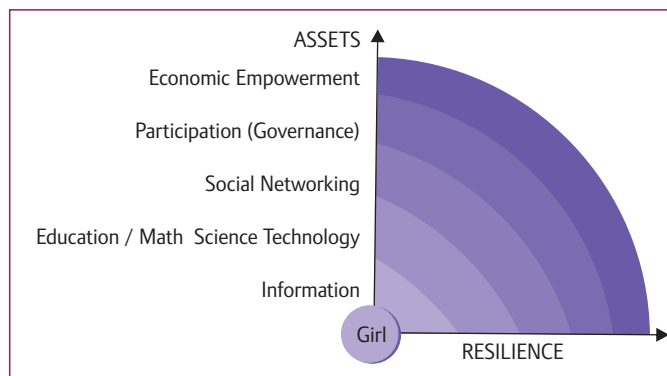
As many technologies become cheaper and easier to access, even in the most remote rural areas of developing countries, it is crucial that adolescent girls and young women as well as young men are able to benefit from their use. This means not only having access to the technologies, but to the skills and expertise to be able to use them to full effect and to know how to keep safe while doing so.

The empowering possibilities that these technologies provide adolescents and young girls are tremendous. In many ways, technology has facilitated girls' abilities to do what they were already doing: connecting, learning and sharing. ICTs have also increased their opportunities to do these things and to interact beyond their immediate communities.

Reasons why new communication technologies are important to adolescent girls.

- Information - build skills and knowledge on subjects such as HIV/AIDS.
- Communication - to keep in touch with others, which reduces their isolation.
- Education - further their education.
- Participation in governance - take an active part in their communities and countries.
- Employment - in order to have the skills to find work.
- Building self esteem - learning to use these technologies can build self-esteem.
- Keeping safe

However girls choose to use ICTs, they have the opportunity to build their skills through these technologies. Technology can also be used as a specific tool for overcoming some of the main challenges that girls face when entering adolescence. Overall, the skills that adolescent girls can develop through and with ICTs build their resilience, allowing them to mitigate some of the challenges posed by puberty. This gradual process is shown in the following diagram¹⁶.



Access to technologies can help progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), counter gender inequality and build adolescent girls' assets.

The dark side of cyberspace-how technology is increasing exploitation

New communication technologies can also have negative consequences as they increasingly provide strangers with access to a girl's personal space and allow for exploitative practices that can harm girls in faster and more immediate ways than ever before. On line patterns of behaviour are only a reflection of the way that society operates off-line and adolescent girls are vulnerable to on line exploitation for the same reasons they are vulnerable to offline harm. Exploitation and sexual harassment of young women is easy, anonymous and largely untraceable via the internet, and is thus an obvious tool for perpetrators to use. The internet creates new intimacies that seem safe, and so adolescent girls have become prime targets for new methods of harassment, including trafficking via the Internet, cell phones and other communications technologies. For instance,

mobile devices allow users to upload photos or videos instantly. The possibility of snapping a degrading photo of a young girl and disseminating it widely is an immediate and frightening reality. For all victims, including girls, the recovery from the trauma of being exposed in such a way is even harder because they never know on whose computer screen the images of their exploitation will turn up.

A deficit in support and response to these abuses is effectively increasing the level of trauma. The speed of change and the fact that young people are now moving in a world that their parents have little knowledge of also means that they have little protection from abuse.

In developing countries, poor girls who have no access to the internet are still potentially vulnerable. For example, their photos can be taken and posted up on the internet without their knowledge and without them having access to a computer themselves.

The digital revolution and the digital divide

The spread of such technologies globally has been phenomenal. But both internet and mobile phone use vary enormously from country to country. Millions of people are still missing out on the technological revolution and all the benefits.

The **Vienna Forum on Human Trafficking** identified various forms of technology which offer access to girls by traffickers and other perpetrators of abuse. These include:

- Newsgroups: sites for exchange of information can be misused to find young women to exploit and to upload and download illegal pornography.
- Web message and bulletin boards: exchange of information misused by sexual perpetrators: similar to newsgroups but can be private and password protected.
- Websites: can be misused as venues for distribution of pornography, maintained recreationally for profit. Pornographic images are created through online stalking, where stalkers befriend girls in chat rooms and ask them to take pictures of themselves. 'Page-jacking' involves misdirecting or trapping people onto pornographic websites.
- Web-based chat rooms (including live video chat) and new social media networking tools (Facebook, MySpace, Craigslist) are an especially dangerous and commonly used method for girls to come into contact with traffickers or other perpetrators of abuse. No messages are archived or stored, and no log files are maintained.
- File Transfer Protocol (FTP) is a way of exchanging files on the internet and used to exchange child pornography. It allows users to have direct access to another's computer hard drive to upload and download files.
- Search engines: misused by criminals to find illegal content.
- Peer-to-peer networks and file swapping programmes are used to find and download files on online networks and misused to share illegal material. Transmissions are not logged or traceable.
- Mobile phones, are also increasingly being used to abuse and bully, especially if they also include access to the internet.

Compiled by Plan International, BIAG report, 2010

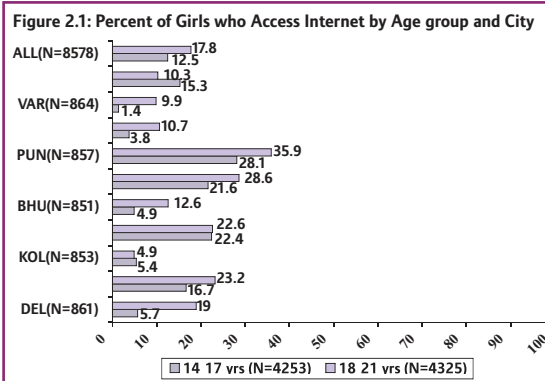
Giving rise to the phenomenon called 'digital divide', The adoption of these technologies has varied hugely, not only from continent to continent and country to country but between rural and urban areas, from the richest to the poorest sector of the population, between young and old and between the sexes.

Findings of the study

The study conducted by Plan India with adolescent girls and boys examined two of the key communication technologies - the internet and the mobile cell phone - the access that adolescent girls have to these technologies and their awareness of both the opportunities as well as the dangers of using these technologies. We see that technology especially the internet has still not touched most of the population of girls especially among the more disadvantaged groups. A mere 4 per cent of girls on the street have heard of the internet. Girls in formal education systems like schools and colleges were more aware of the internet and used it regularly compared to those who were out of school or on the streets.

Key findings of the study

- Television remained the primary source for gathering information among most girls in all the cities 84% percent of girls using the television to gather knowledge. This is followed by sources such as Newspaper and Radio. The usage of mobiles and the internet to gather knowledge is still low.
- Awareness about the internet is higher than the access to this medium More than two fifth of the girls interviewed were aware of the internet. The level of awareness however varied across the ten cities. However awareness about the net was low in Patna and Varanasi with only one tenth having awareness of this medium. In Hyderabad for example while over 74% of the girls were aware of this media only 23% were accessing it. Access to the to internet among all the girls ranged between 13% in the age set of 14-17 years and 18% among girls of 18-21 years. Across the cities, it ranged from 5% in Kolkata to 36% in Pune.
- Education levels play a role in girls' awareness of



this media with the study showing higher internet awareness reported among school and college going girls. Both quantitative and qualitative findings showed higher internet awareness and access among school going and college going girls. The awareness of internet is also higher among unmarried girls. However, this awareness has not reached the most marginalized groups. Barely 4% of girls on the street had awareness of this medium.

- Girls access the internet primarily in schools and colleges. With regard to the frequency of accessing internet result shows that about half of the girls access internet at least once in a week. Accessing internet at cyber café is highest in Kolkata (65%) and lowest in Bhubaneswar (5%). Pune recorded the highest access of internet at cyber café (72%) while Delhi recorded the lowest (24%). One fourth of the girls access internet at home.
- Almost all the girls who did access the internet reported that getting information for education is the main advantages of internet use followed by entertainment. The trend persists across all the socio-economic categories and cities.

“Internet is so important these days, everything is done online from courses, sitting for exams, looking for career options. One can also choose a life partner through sites like shaadi.com.”

- a girl respondent in Mumbai

Uses/Advantages of the internet as perceived by girls

- Information for education, project making, question papers, checking results, filling forms online
- Access to national and international news, sports news
- Downloading and listening to music, watching movies and games
- Social networking be in touch with peers
- Long distance communication
- Look for employment possibilities, looking for houses etc.

- Less than one fifth of the girls mentioned that they were aware of the potential harmful effects of using the internet. Girls who access the internet are more aware of the possibilities of online abuse. The highest level of awareness about the possibilities of online abuse was among girls in Mumbai while the lowest was among girls in Varanasi and Bangalore. School and college going girls, unmarried girls were more aware of possible harms of using the net compared to the other groups
- Nearly two thirds of the girls cited misuse of personal information as a possible harm with others mentioning access to porn sites, harassment and misuse of webcam in cyber café. Other harms reported include pop up sites and negative influence on girls.
- A very small percentage of girls were able to recall any personal knowledge of such instances of harms.

In the qualitative findings also girls cited misuse of personal information or photos and access to porn sites are the topmost harms.

“Anybody can misuse personal information or photos and blackmail girls. This happens a lot on social networking sites like Orkut and Facebook. A girl's photograph can be accessed from these sites and morphed and circulated all over the internet”.
- a girl respondent in Kolkata

“Webcams at cyber cafes are also dangerous. While chatting through webcam, girls photograph

can be taken and passed around. One has to be very careful as it can create a lot of problems for girls”.

- a girl respondent in Pune

“Internet is a waste of time. Nowadays girls spend long hours chatting on the internet. It seems like it has become an addiction with the young girls and boys. Its use should be restricted as it can also disturb the studies”.

- a girl respondent in Patna

The girls who were aware of incident of misuse of photos/videos on internet reported incidents which occurred with their friends and themselves.

- Barely 10% of the girls were aware of the authority to which cyber crime is reported. When asked further girls Police, cyber café owner, cyber crime cell and parents as the top four authorities to report cyber crime. Girls in Bangalore and Delhi also made references to the cyber crime cells Other authorities cited by girls are school/ college authority, Human Rights Commission, Concerned authorities of the site, administrator/ management at the work place.

The measures suggested by the boys and girls for protecting girls from harms include:

- 'parents need to keep a watch on the online activities of the young users',
- 'not sharing personal information online',
- 'not putting up photographs online',
- 'having a security password to ensure the account is not hacked into',
- 'reporting to police about the harm and misuse of information' etc.

Reasons cited by girls on the usefulness of mobile phones

- easy and faster communication',
- short messaging service (SMS),
- 'it helps in identifying location and people',
- 'unlimited free calls' and 'access to internet'.
- Entertainment
- For emergencies

Girls felt that having a mobile would help them keep in touch with their parents in case of any emergencies. The usefulness of mobile phones for the safety of girls was also emphasized by the boys who participated in the Focus Group Discussions.

“Delhi is unsafe and our parents worry a lot when we go out. If we are getting late, stuck somewhere or in any trouble, we can inform our parents through mobile phones and be in touch”
- a girl respondent in Delhi

“Cell phone is very helpful for girls....they can call their parents in case there is any emergency. It can protect them from danger...they just have to call and help will be there for them....”
- a boy respondent in Kolkata

•One third of the girls across the cities reported having received obscene calls or messages. And these were cited as the number one disadvantages of using the mobile phone by two thirds of the girls. Nearly 75 % of the girls from Bhubaneswar reported having received such calls followed by Hyderabad (65%)

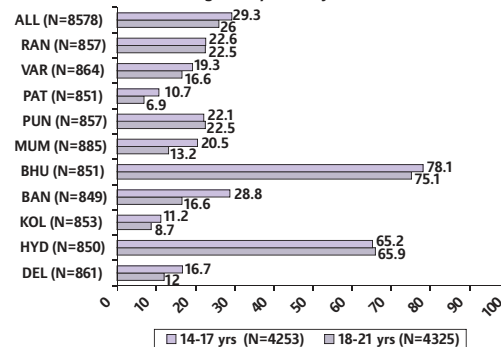
•One fourth of the girls also suggested that mobile phones could cause health and radiation problems. Other reasons included getting addicted to mobile phones and waste of time, the expenses. In Varanasi and Ranchi, girls across both the age groups cited security issue as one of the major disadvantages of mobile phones these days. Misuse of the phones by terrorists as well also cited as a disadvantage by some. Another common response is misuse of photos.

Misuse of the mobile phone as cited by boys and girls across the cities

“Boys can take girls photos and circulate among their friends. We have seen many MMS cases where boys circulate vulgar pictures of girls and then blackmail them.”
- a girl respondent in Bhubaneswar

“Sometimes girls receive dirty/obscene messages on the phones. One of my sister’s friends also used to receive it sometime back. It became very bad and she used to feel awkward in that situation. After a while, it stopped on its own but my friend used to feel very harassed because of this.”
- a boy living in slum in Bhubaneswar

Figure 2.2: Percentage of Girls facing Obscene Calls or Messages by Age Group and City



“Crime can also be done through mobile phones. It has become a huge weapon for the terrorists these days. With one button they can blow off a building, or a train. This way mobile phones can be dangerous for public security.”

“Mobile phones can be dangerous as its battery can blow off in our hand. People have died because the battery has exploded. People have to be careful not to speak on the phone while the battery is being charged.”

As technologies become cheaper and easier to access, even in the most remote rural areas, it is crucial that adolescent girls and young women, as well as young men, are able to benefit from their use. This means not only having access to the technologies, but the skills and expertise to be able to use them to full effect and to know how to keep themselves safe when doing so.

Barriers - what is keeping adolescent girls from accessing communications technologies?

Adolescent girls' access to technology is limited by the societies, communities and families in which they live. In a patriarchal society, it is men who control technology, whether this is 'new', such as computers and mobile phones; or 'old', such as radios and televisions.

In schools, boys both outnumber girls and tend to dominate access to computers. When they don't have equal access at school, girls may be less confident than boys when it comes to going into IT jobs, because they don't feel they have the same skills and knowledge as the young men competing

Pooja (name changed) lives in Parvati Payari in Pune with her parents and two siblings. Her father owns a vada pao kiosk and her mother sells vegetables. She has studied till class 9. She feels that they were a happy family and used to spend a lot of time together.

One day a boy named Raja came to stay in their neighbourhood. Soon he started frequenting their house. Pooja recounts "Usually Raja used to drop me whenever I went out. Gradually we both became good friends. He started giving me gifts". One day he asked Pooja to go to a hotel with him. She says "I thought we were going for tea and snacks, so I agreed. First we had snacks, then he ordered cold drinks". They both had cold drinks but after a while she felt sleepy. When she woke up she found herself alone in a hotel. Shocked she came home.

After two days Raja came again to her house and asked her to come out to talk to him. When she came out, he showed her a recording on his mobile phone, which was of the day they had gone to the hotel. Pooja says, "It was my porn recording which he made when I was unconscious in the hotel. I was terribly scared and shocked at seeing the recording".

After that day he would threaten her into having a physical relationship with him or else he would show the recording to everyone in the locality. "I was afraid due to fear of public disrepute and so I agreed".

The exploitation continued for many weeks. One day a social worker came to her locality inquiring about problems people faced in the locality. When she came to their house, Pooja shared her problem with her in private and requested for help. The social worker asked Pooja to inform her when the boy called her next.

After two days Raja called her again and asked her to meet him at a hotel. As directed, Pooja informed the social worker. Upon reaching the hotel, the boy again tried to take advantage of her. At that time the social worker came into the room with two policemen and arrested the boy and deleted her recording from his mobile phone. Pooja says, "Now I am out of that hell thanks to the social worker. I am very grateful to her. I go to school daily and live my life happily with my family".

- With close to six and a half million mobile phone connections, India is one of the World's fastest growing and biggest mobile phone markets. The menace of MMSs through online postings of young girls makes them easy targets and very vulnerable. Unfortunately, the positive effects of technology have not reached those parts where it is used to exploit girls and to

for the jobs. Being in charge of tools and technical skills has always conferred power on the user; power that is men's not women's. The fact that technology is seen as high status and women as low status may mean that men and boys are given access where girls and women are denied it.

Keeping girls safe are our laws keeping up with technology changes

It is obvious from the findings of the study that there is a singular lack of awareness among adolescent girls about the potential of the internet for online abuse.

Article 67B of the newly amended Information Technology Act (2008) makes transmitting, downloading pictures of children depicting children in obscene or indecent or sexually explicit one million rupees. India has also set up cyber crime cells in many states. However there is a need to strengthen legal instruments and use existing legislation effectively to ensure that adolescent girls are protected from on-line abuse.

Greater knowledge about ICT-related sexual exploitation and violence against girls is needed, and more emphasis on prevention and stronger international standards is critical. Girls need to be empowered to use the new communications technologies safely, on their own terms and in ways which promote their development and build their future.

"There need to be stringent laws to deal with cyber crimes so that young girls are protected."
- College going girl in Bhubaneswar

"Girls should not put up any material online which can be accessed or downloaded. They should be particularly careful about putting up photographs."
- College going girl in Kolkata

Article 67B of the newly amended Information Technology Act (2008)

- (a) publishes or transmits or causes to be published or transmitted material in any electronic form which depicts children engaged in sexually explicit act or conduct or
- (b) creates text or digital images, collects, seeks, browses, downloads, advertises, promotes, exchanges or distributes material in any electronic form depicting children in obscene or indecent or sexually explicit manner, or
- (c) cultivates, entices or includes children to online relationship with one or more children for and on sexually explicit act or in a manner that may offend a reasonable adult on the computer resource: or
- (d) facilitates abusing children online: or
- (e) records in any electronic form own abuse or that of others pertaining to sexually explicit act with children

shall be punished on first conviction with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to five years and with fine which may extend to ten lakhs rupees and in the event of second or subsequent conviction with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years and also with fine which may extend to ten lakh rupees:

provided that provision of section 67, section 67A and this section does not extend to any book, pamphlet, paper, writing, drawing, painting, representation or figure in electronic form -

- (i) the publication of which is proved to be justified as being for the public good on the ground that such book, pamphlet, paper, writing, drawing, painting, representation or figure is in the interest of science, literature, art of learning or other objects of general concern: or
- (ii) which is kept or used for bona fide heritage or religious purposes

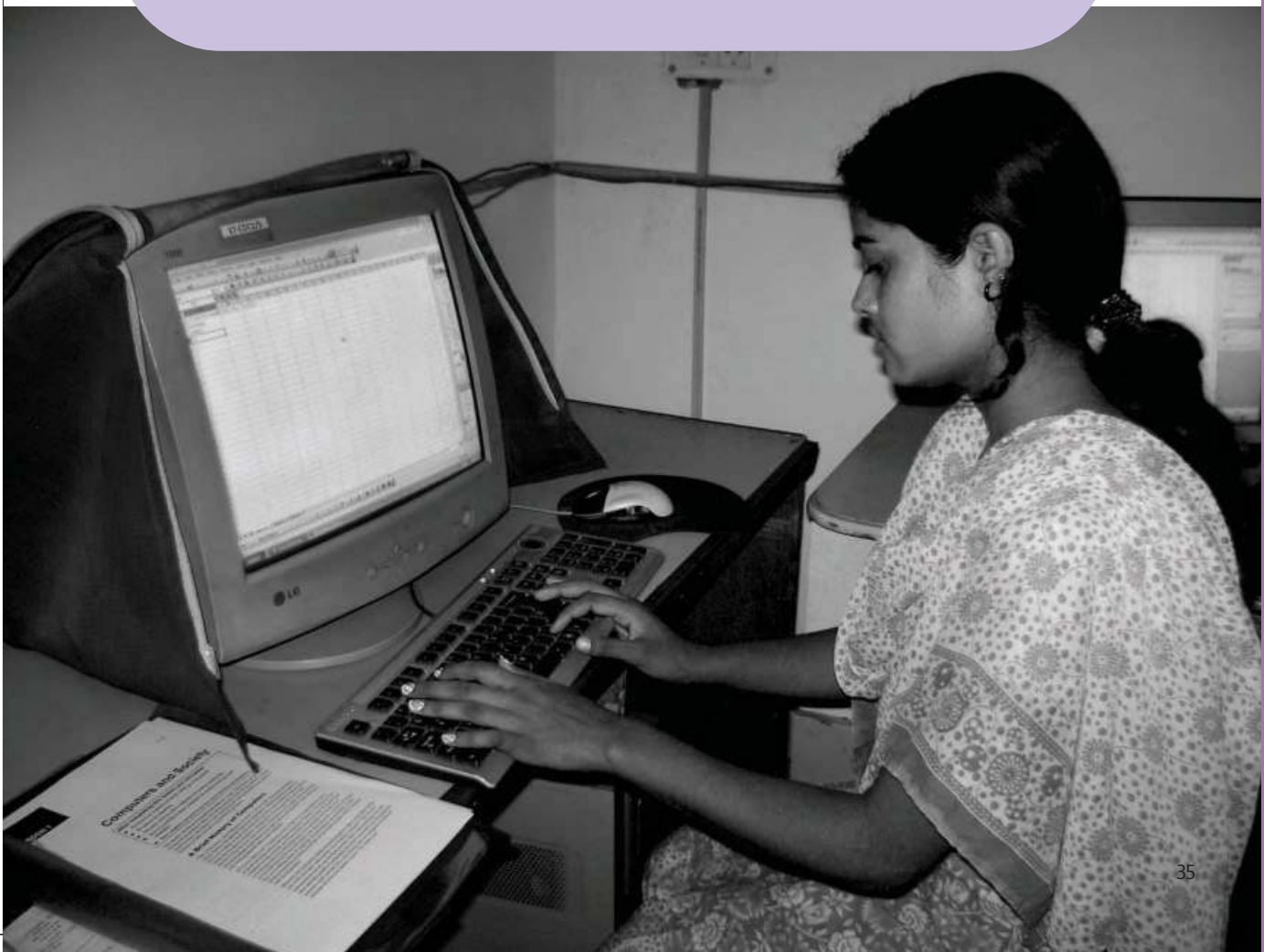
Explanation - for the purpose of this section, "children" means a person who has not completed age of 18 years.

Summary and recommendations

It is necessary that girls and boys have access to ICT and are given every opportunity to use these technologies to their, and their countries', advantage. Information leads to knowledge and knowledge is power. It is necessary that this power is accessible to all children whether rich or poor, girl or boy. Girls must be encouraged and given opportunities to look beyond internalized traditional gender roles and develop their own knowledge and perspectives for them to be genuinely present in the spaces offered by new communication technology. Equally it is important that girls are protected online and be given the information and tools to mitigate the risks and potential for abuse in these spaces mitigate those risks. There is a need for more research linking adolescent girls and ICTs the ways the girls and young women are using ICTs to ensure that they

are benefiting as much as possible; the best ways they can protect themselves; and how perpetrators are using technologies to exploit girls and young women.

Careful and consolidated effort by international institutions, private sector businesses, schools and families could ensure that girls build the skills they require to take advantage of these possibilities, while mitigating the increasing risks. The important role ICTs will and are playing in ensuring adolescent girls can access quality education, sexual and reproductive information and future employment opportunities cannot be overstated. These technologies are the future and they are here to stay. The only question remains-will the world work together to ensure that the violence and exploitation adolescent girls are vulnerable to in everyday life is not translated and exacerbated on-line.





3 Hidden in plain view- the adolescent girl on the streets

Introduction

The term children in difficult circumstances subsumes within itself various categories. Most of these categories themselves are not neatly compartmentalized; hence a working child could also be a child of the streets and may face additional difficulties being a girl. The coping strategies and the interventions that we need to design for children in difficult circumstances will hence differ according to the kind of risks or vulnerabilities that these children face. In a discussion paper “Each and every child” it has been stated that, “In reality there is no one definitive list of children in especially difficult circumstances or vulnerable children that is appropriate for all situations. The children whose rights are violated vary by locations and over time and need to be identified according to location and local context. In addition many children experience multiple problems and belong to more than one category or move between different categories”¹⁷.

What then are the distinguishing characteristics that these children have? These children across the different categories are children whom institutions and infrastructure fail to reach to. These institutions may be public institutions like the schools, or families and communities. Since institutions fail to reach out to these children, these children also fall out of the loop of the “mainstream” society. The difficult life experiences that these children experience stem from poverty, social exclusion, “relationships of violence”, conflicts and natural disasters, being affected or infected with HIV/AIDS. In the paper “Each and Every Child” children in difficult circumstances have been defined as, “Those children whose quality of life and ability to fulfill their potential is most affected due to the violation of their rights caused by:

- Extreme poverty
- Violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Exclusion and discrimination by society
- Catastrophic events such as conflicts, disaster or AIDS pandemic”¹⁸.

Street children

Street children form the largest number of children within the category of children in difficult circumstances. There are no Census data on the number of street children in India or in the world. However experts estimate the numbers to be in the range of 100 to 150 million world wide, with some researchers claiming their numbers to grow upto 800 million by 2020. India is projected to be the country with the largest number of street children with UNICEF maintaining the figures at approximately 11 million boys and girls¹⁹.

We have three of the most rapidly growing cities in the world with more than 5000 smaller cities and towns and the number of street children is estimated to grow exponentially due to this rapid growth and urbanization. Rapidly growing cities may represent deteriorating living conditions but also throw up opportunities. For street children and communities where they come from they represent a way out of poverty, caste, gender based discrimination and dysfunctional families.

The mobile nature of the children and their invisibility to government bodies mean that estimating their number is a difficult task that perhaps the government agencies are willing to undertake.

However street children do not form a homogeneous category. The United Nations defines street children as, “girls and boys for whom street has become their home and/or their source of livelihood and who are inadequately protected or supervised by responsible adults”²⁰.

Plan's position paper on street children states, "Street children are not a homogenous group and the way that they use the street varies from child to child and by the same child over time. The relationship of children to 'the street' is therefore a dynamic one but may be broadly categorized as follows:

- Children spend significant amounts of time on the street but live with their families, usually in urban slums, on the street or other public spaces.
- Children live and work on the streets but maintain some contact with their families who may live in the same city, other cities or in rural areas.
- Children live and work on the streets but have not contact with their families."²¹

Majority of the street children in India fall into the first two categories.

Relationship with the streets- findings from previous studies

Where do street children come from? Some of the studies focusing on Delhi one of the biggest North Indian cities shows that street children mostly come from adjacent states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar²². Here it is important to remember that these states also score the lowest on several human development indicators.

This can be substantiated for instance from Plan's own program intervention in Delhi. The data from repatriation of lost, missing and trafficked children who have a likelihood of ending up on the streets shows that 40 percent of the children come from U.P. It is important to note that even though states like Haryana are closest to the capital, they contribute little to the street children population due to their proximity to the capital. However it is important to note that poverty is secondary to dysfunctional family dynamics when it comes to forming a push factor for these children. Dysfunctional family dynamics comes from factors like coming from a single parent household or living with relatives. However what remains to be explored is the relationship between poverty and dysfunctional family dynamics.

Some of the push factors that lead children to a live on streets were enumerated in a recent study

conducted by Plan India, titled "Street children in Delhi: A participatory situation analysis". It was found that other than poverty and dysfunctional families other environmental factors push children on to the streets. These include bad experience with schooling, shrinking livelihood and land holding in villages, search for freedom, and the glamour of city life for example the urge to visit sites like Taj Mahal in Agra.

Mr. Sanjay Gupta, Director, CHETNA states, "In our ten years of work with street and working children we have witnessed presence of girls on streets. These girls are on streets due to many reasons. They are dumped near religious place in early age as parents prefer boys, these girls are given shelter by street families and forced to work or beg when they grow up. The girls at young age (14-17) are lured by boys with false commitment to get marry and hence girls leave their homes. Many girls are trafficked from one place to another to work as domestic help are left on street if there is a fear of police raid etc. These girls then take shelter with street families and in return they work to earn bread and butter for this family. Girls from nomad community are forced to beg on streets by parents in the cities as in Hindu tradition giving alms to girl will help you overcome your sins. Girls from migrant families work along with family members as rag pickers and casual labors."

Girls on the street

Girls are very often the most invisible category of street children. Even though girls access the streets as often as boys they do not do so as independent actors. Even though girls often face circumstances that are far more challenging they do not leave homes as much as boys do. As our repatriation data from the Dreams on Wheels project shows only 16 percent of the girls were found to be lost, missing or runaways in the stations.

In the current study we found that 38 percent of the girls interviewed were completely homeless. This shows that girls who access the streets do so even while they are attached to their families and communities. This is corroborated by the implementation data from the Dreams on Wheels project again. For instance in contact points where children are from communities adjoining to

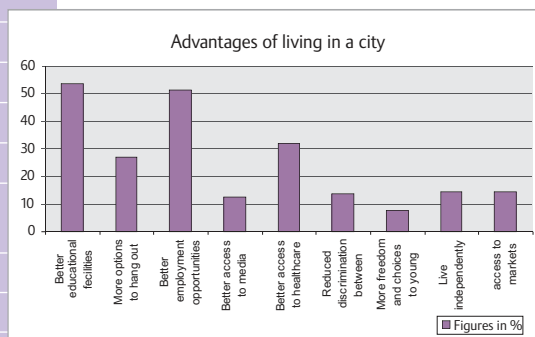
railway station, the number of girls registered in the non formal education points surpasses the number of boys. Such contact points include Okhla Flyover, Okhla Mandi, Sansi Camp (Faridabad). The girls here not only come to the station to work in the market activities but also fill water, pick waste.

For these girls being attached to their families and community does not guarantee safety from sexual harassment. Abuse and exploitation is common with girls in places like Nizamuddin Station, Jama Masjid etc. In a sample study conducted by ASK it was found that only 55.2 percent of street girls knew about HIV and AIDS and methods to protect themselves.

Negotiating the street: Challenges faced by girls on the street

Being a girl on the street however is not only about a tale of abuse and exploitation in the hands of men and boys. Girls face multiple violation of their human rights including their right to survival education, and health. Our study shows that about 18 percent of the female street children interviewed were illiterate and only 28.18 percent had reached middle schools. It is ironical hence that 53.38 percent of the girls stated that cities provide for better educational opportunities and 51 percent of them felt that cities provide better employment opportunities.

Advantages of living in a city	Figures in %
Better educational facilities	53.38
More options to hang out	27
Better employment opportunities	51.24
Better access to media	12.35
Better access to healthcare	32.023
Reduced discrimination between girls & boys	13.7
More freedom and choices to young	7.66
Live independently	14.49
access to markets	14.49

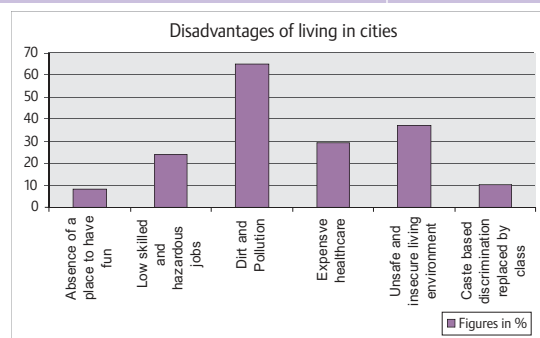


Twenty year old Meena (name changed) has studied till Grade 5. She dropped out of school, because it was quite far from her village. She used to work in the fields in the village and help her father. It was during this time, that she fell in love with a boy from her village who used to work in Delhi. Meena left home with him and came to Delhi. However once they reached Delhi, he abandoned her. Meena was pregnant. To her this closed the option of returning home for her, as she knew that her parents would not accept her back into the family.

Meena left Delhi with her child and arrived at Varanasi and started living on the railway platform. She met Raja who supported and protected her. Streets are no longer a home for Meena and her child. Meena currently lives with her husband and child near the Varanasi station. Her husband works in a hotel near the station and she sells chewing tobacco, tooth brushes etc. Even though Meena has moved on in her life she feels that girls need steady jobs which will ensure that they lead a life of respect and dignity.

Only 26 percent of the girls felt that cities provide them with better opportunities to hang out. Only 14 percent of the interviewed girls felt that cities provide more independence, 37 percent of the interviewed girls stated that one of the major disadvantages of living in the cities is that the living environment is unsafe and insecure. For these girls access to public places is the key to their daily lives as they spend most of their time on the streets working or otherwise. Hence it is disturbing to note that public places are seen as sites where they face most challenges. About 72 percent of the girls reported to facing challenges while negotiating market places and streets. This was followed by railway station and hospitals where 36.7 percent of the girls reported have been harassed. The public transport networks are also seen as sites where girls reported to being harassed.

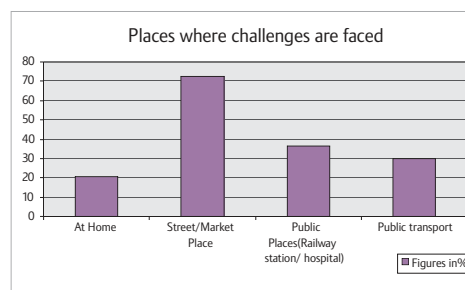
Disadvantages of living in a city	Figures in %
Absence of a place to have fun	8.51
Low skilled and hazardous jobs	23.9
Dirt and pollution	64.89
Expensive healthcare	29.33
Unsafe and insecure living environment	37.15
Caste based discrimination replaced by class	10.26



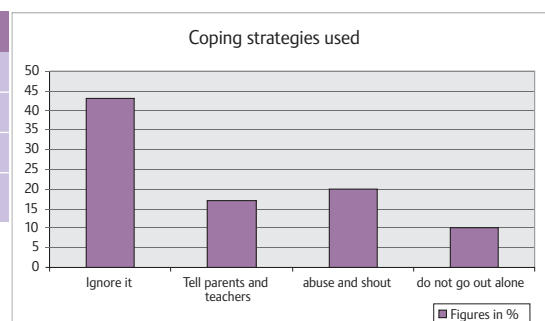
Since girls on the street live on the fringes of the law, harassment by police is common. About 95 percent of the girls reported to having no awareness of a situation where police comes to the aid of street children or lends a helping hand.

Girls therefore do not see police as an institution responsible to ensure their safety in public places and streets. Other coping mechanisms are actively used. As with other categories of girls interviewed in the study girls from the street (43%) said they ignore the teasing and harassment. The active coping strategies used by them include not going out alone (10%), telling parents and teachers (17.08%) and abusing and shouting (20.06%) to call for attention.

Places where challenges are faced	Figures in %
At home	20.7
Street/ Market Place	72.55
Public place (Railway station/hospital)	64.89
Expensive healthcare	29.33



Coping strategies	Figures in %
Ignore it	43.13
Tell parents and teachers	17.08
Abuse and shout	20.07
Do not go out alone	10.2



The other perceived disadvantage that girls reported were that cities provide opportunities to work only in unsafe and hazardous professions (24 percent) for the poor. Considering that most street children do not get the opportunity to go to schools or mainstream institutions the only occupations that seem open to these girls are unsafe and unskilled. This further contributes to low income subjecting them to live in areas where the levels of hygiene are low. 65 percent of these girls reported that their living environment is dirty and polluted.

What girls aspire for

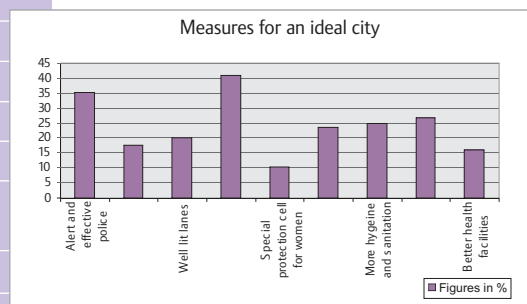
The aspiration of these girls for an ideal city reflects the challenges that they want to do away with from their daily lives. Since harassment in public places emerge as a major concern, the

wishlist of the girls for an ideal city includes:

- Alert and effective police (35.4 percent)
- Better housing(40.98 percent)
- Stringent and speedy punishment for offenders(23.45 percent)
- Well lit lanes(20 percent)

Other aspirations that girls have include better training and educational facilities (27 percent), better access to cheap and effective health care (16 percent), better sanitation and hygiene facilities (24.75 percent).

Measures for an ideal city	Figures in %
Alert and effective police	35.4
separate transportation	17.48
Well lit lanes	20.07
Better Housing	40.98
Special protection cell for women	10.25
Stringent and speedy punishment for offenders	23.45
More hygiene and sanitation	24.75
Better education and training facilities	26.89
Better health facilities	16.18



Our commitment

There are no specific policies in India that cater to the street children. The blanket Juvenile Justice Act reaches out to all children “in need of care and protection” and those who are “in conflict with law”. However even a cursory glance at the status of implementation of the act in Delhi shows that the coverage under the act is pretty poor. Thus even though Delhi has 9 administrative districts, there are only 4 Child Welfare Committees (CWC) and 2 Juvenile Justice Boards (JJB).

As shown by our study, girls from the street place great importance on shelter. However the number of shelters for girls even in the capital city like Delhi is grossly inadequate. Considering that the CWC registers approximately 2-3 cases every day, there are only 2 homes exclusively for girls. As is evident, for girls on the street lack of shelter is the source of all exploitation.

Thus as an immediate call for action, providing shelter and protection should be priority. Our commitment to these girls calls for making public spaces and streets safer and friendly towards girls and young women. It also call for making our cities truly a land of opportunity by providing opportunities for education and proper healthcare for all girls, even those who fall out of the loop of mainstream institutions.

As schools log in to digital learning, online assessment the rage

KAROOISHA MUZAPPAR
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

With technology making inroads into classrooms and bringing a complete change in pedagogical methods, the Internet has become a key tool for learning.

newspapers and learning become very textbook-oriented. There is a need to think beyond the textbook. Online checking of homework by teachers has also helped reduce teachers' stress.



DPS-RK Puri took to online assessment of holiday homework last year. "We have a portal where students upload their projects and teachers check it online," teachers can also grade the student's work on their respective profile on the website.

Students, too, are happy with the online assessment process. "Even average students are making more progress," she says.

Earlier, staff rooms were always full of notebooks, project files of homework. The evaluation process was time-consuming. Now, online checking saves time and involves less paperwork," she adds.

"Holiday homework and projects often burden students, we need to make it fun process."

Students, too, are happy with the online assessment process. "Even average students are making more progress," she says.

AT LAST! Women to the fore

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's empowering initiatives for Bihar's women and girl children have catapulted him to the ranks of, perhaps, one of the foremost reformers of this century. If the reservations for women in panchayats put them on seats of power, the schemes for the girl child have helped them get back to school and arrested the dropout rates. The state today believes, that an empowered woman and an educated girl child, make for an educated and empowered state.



Udaan model of teaching for girls

Staff Reporters
NEW DELHI: Giving wings to the imagination of adolescent girls, letting them take flight from the darkness of illiteracy to the clear, bright sky where they successfully soar, Class N' Udaan within a short span of 11 months, is no mean feat.

Udaan, a learning programme designed for girls in the age group of 10 to 14 years, is the brainchild of CARE India, an NGO working in the field of elementary education, does just that. With a focus on adolescent girls who have dropped out of school, Udaan aims to bring them back to school and help them complete their education.

प्लान इंडिया ने टूल किट निकाला

बच्चों पर केंद्रित डिजिटल प्लान ऑर्गनाइजेशन 'प्लान इंडिया' ने स्कूल में हिंसा रोकने के लिए एक पहल की है। इसके लिए संस्था ने शिक्षाविदों के उपयोग के लिए 'पॉजिटिव डिस्प्लिन मैनुअल' नाम से एक टूल किट जारी की है। यह प्लान इंडिया के 'लर्न विद फन' कैंपेन का हिस्सा होगा। इस कैंपेन का उद्देश्य ऐसा वातावरण तैयार करना है, जिसमें स्कूलों में किसी भी प्रकार की हिंसा की जगह न हो। इस टूल किट को पिछले दिनों दिल्ली के हैबिटेड सेंटर में 'नैशनल कमिशन फॉर प्रोटेक्शन ऑफ चिल्ड्रन' की बैठक में सांख्यिकीय और सांख्यिकीय डेटा के आधार पर तैयार किया गया है। इस टूल किट को 2015 तक 2000 स्कूलों में पहुंचाने का योजना है। इस मुहिम के लिए 'वॉलेंटियर्स' को तैयार किया गया है, जो उत्तराखंड, उत्तरांचल, बिहार, आंध्र प्रदेश, नई दिल्ली, पंजाब और राजस्थान के स्कूलों में संपर्क करेंगे।

Victim of domestic abuse, she tells them how to fight

Richa Chitambar / New Delhi: Thirty-six-year-old Kamlesh is reminded of the mental torture she suffered for nearly 10 years after marriage every day as she counsels victims of domestic violence. The pain only strengthens her resolve to fight against the social evil. "You commit a crime against yourself. If you accept it silently it is important to say 'no I will not take it'," she tells a group of young women.

Associated with Centre for Social Research (CSR) for the past 10 years, Kamlesh has been instrumental in rehabilitating hundreds of domestic violence victims. And even as Kamlesh does not hold any degree in human rights issues, students from various universities in Delhi immerse in her to learn the art of counselling.

"I have been through the situation they are facing today. I know the agony. Most women who approach us want the criminal to end, but are not willing to give up the relationship. There are human emotions. Books can't teach you the art of counselling. One gets to learn only through real life experience. And you learn to deal with each case differently," said Kamlesh.

Her day starts with a visit to the slums near her office in South Delhi. But the emphasis is on an equal number of cases come to her from middle-class and upper-middle-class families. "It is a shock to see violence cases from a middle-class family. And it is very difficult to achieve reconciliation in these cases," she said. The women from the slums are much more vocal in their opposition to such acts. "They stand up and come to the rescue of the victim. Women from the middle class of society raise their voice to stop domestic violence."

The biggest challenge before her is to rehabilitate women back in their families. In cases where a reconciliation is not possible, she helps the women get divorced. "If a woman is harassed, it must be solved. We always try to counsel the woman and her in-laws. We regularly visit them."

At the end of the day, Kamlesh draws a line and says, "I am a counsellor, not a judge. I am not here to judge anyone. I am here to help them."

'Save daughters of India'



पॉजिटिव डिस्प्लिन मॉड्यूल

बच्चों को स्कूलों में हिंसा मुक्त माहौल और शिक्षा देने के लिए इंडिया ने पॉजिटिव डिस्प्लिन मॉड्यूल नाम से एक टूल किट लॉन्च की है। इस टूल किट को 2015 तक 2000 स्कूलों में पहुंचाने का योजना है। इस मुहिम के लिए 'वॉलेंटियर्स' को तैयार किया गया है, जो उत्तराखंड, उत्तरांचल, बिहार, आंध्र प्रदेश, नई दिल्ली, पंजाब और राजस्थान के स्कूलों में संपर्क करेंगे।

Call to save the girl child

Celebrities join hands against female foeticide

NEW DELHI: Media personalities on Wednesday took time out from their fashion commitments to the extent support to the cause of the girl child and women awareness about FFS.

Smiling at the launch...

Another girl killed

HOPES DASHED Five family members arrested for murdering girl, who married a Dalit boy in Feb

NEW DELHI: A girl who had married a Dalit boy in February was found dead in a well near her village in Haryana. Five family members were arrested in connection with the murder.

INNOCENT DALIT WOMAN RAPED KILLED IN CASTE LOVE STORY

Kapil Datta
CHANDIGARH: A Dalit woman was gangraped and murdered in April 18 in Jalandhar area. The crime is being looked at as a caste love story. The victim was a 22-year-old girl who was in a relationship with a boy from a higher caste. She was gangraped and killed by four men.

Schoolgirl gangraped in Greater Noida

Lalit Kumar / Greater Noida: A 14-year-old student of a public school was gangraped by three boys in a field near her school. The victim was a girl from a lower caste who was in a relationship with a boy from a higher caste. She was gangraped and killed by three boys.

Girl alleges parents forced her & sister into 'perverted acts'

Smriti Singh / A 19-year-old girl has alleged that her parents forced her and her sister into 'perverted acts'. The girl is currently in a mental hospital. Her parents are accused of forcing her and her sister into sexual acts with a man.

Court waives attendance gap for pregnant students

Hareesh V. Nair / NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Tuesday directed the Delhi University (DU) to waive the attendance gap of two law students who were in an advanced stage of their pregnancies.

Mothership is not a medical condition. To punish a woman for becoming a mother would surely be the mother of all ironies.

JUSTICE H. BANERJEE / The court order in which the judge has directed the DU to waive the attendance gap of two law students who were in an advanced stage of their pregnancies.

Boyfriend killed for being

Pooja Khosla / GUJARAT: It wasn't their love but money in their bank accounts that was the catalyst in the murder of a girl who had married a Dalit boy in February. The girl was killed by her boyfriend.

Girl Was Christian, Man Hindu And Married; Strangled When Found To

New Delhi: A day after a man and his friend were arrested for the murder of the man's daughter and her male companion, police said the accused Edward (33) and his security guard friend Reshmi Joseph (58) killed the two on the spur of the moment after they found them in a compromising position.

The murders were reported from New Friends Colony on Saturday morning and the deceased, identified as Hari Lal (30) and Vinod (22). The two bodies were found, covered with tarps, in a park near Shukla Market in B-block, New Friends Colony. The victims' identities could not initially be established but with the help of SIM cards recovered from Hari Lal's wallet, the police managed to zero in on them.

The two accused were produced before a court on Monday and were sent to judicial custody.

"They were strangled to death by the girl's father and his friend," said additional commissioner of police (north-west) Virinder Singh Chahal. Lal, a Hindu, was a resident of Jalandhar, while Bimal, a Christian, was from Wazirpur, near Bhatinda. During the 1980s, the Sikh community in Punjab was targeted by the Indian government for its role in the separatist movement. Many Sikhs were killed or injured during this period.

Investigations, the 530 calls were analyzed for stored numbers and the subscriber's (Harjit) details were obtained. "We found the boy belonged to Jalandhar, his family rushed in the capital and identified the body. The woman was identified as Binmal," added Chahal.



wanted to ask for permission to marry. "Bimal's family is Lal, who offered the family a lakh to marry Bimal. It was against the marriage because Lal was from a different community and was already married," said a son.

On July 10, around 10 p.m., Reuben told him his daughter and Hari Lal were in the servant quarters on the second floor.



TRAGIC END: Victims buried in which the couple was killed

When Bimal cried out for Edward and Benben strayed Bimal with a handkerchief said police.

"The duo then burnt stoic and the handkerchief and disposed them of. They then threw the body into the boundary wall.

"Lal was already married to Poonam from Jalpaiguri and had a three-year-old son. He was working in a factory and had come to Delhi in search of a job."



Top Left) and Matt Laid (left) and the
(below)

Step

teen

EXPAT'S H
Belgium after

NEW DELHI A man who was identified as a suspect in the assassination of the Indian prime minister, Indira Gandhi, has been taken away from a hospital by other police officers. Unarmed, he was taken to the police station.

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over
HONOUR 18-yr-old
r being promised

Singh, accused of raping a Brazilian
Patiala House Courts on Wednesday

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lured to India from
marriage to boyfriend

The student, being pro-
SECURITY PHOTO

subject 100A,
was arrested
reports confirmed
had been raped on
has been remain-
in police custody
the landlord said the
I was looking for a
voluntarily. After said
by at F-48H for free-
man searching for con-

S Rape Haras

READY First
women at v

**Man
rape**

the victim. "I was raped, I had sex with the man to avoid jail," she said.

Next, dry, the accused again.

He also shocked and afraid did not know when to add.

On 27, when the accused and her again that he was coming over to the flat she told him that she would go with him to the police station. She has been prosecuted by the North West.

...sexual
...ssment

KEY FEATURE

held on allegations

...a resolution in
Pune (Delhi),
that the accused,
Kumar, took her to
a restaurant in
and Vihar last night
and had sex with
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consented to get her
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EXPAT'S HONOUR 18-yr-old lured to India from Belgium after being promised marriage to boyfriend

EXPAT'S HONOUR 18-yr-old lured to India from Belgium after being promised marriage to boyfriend

Rape, sexual harassment at par in new bill

READY First ever legislation
women at workplace goes to Cabinet



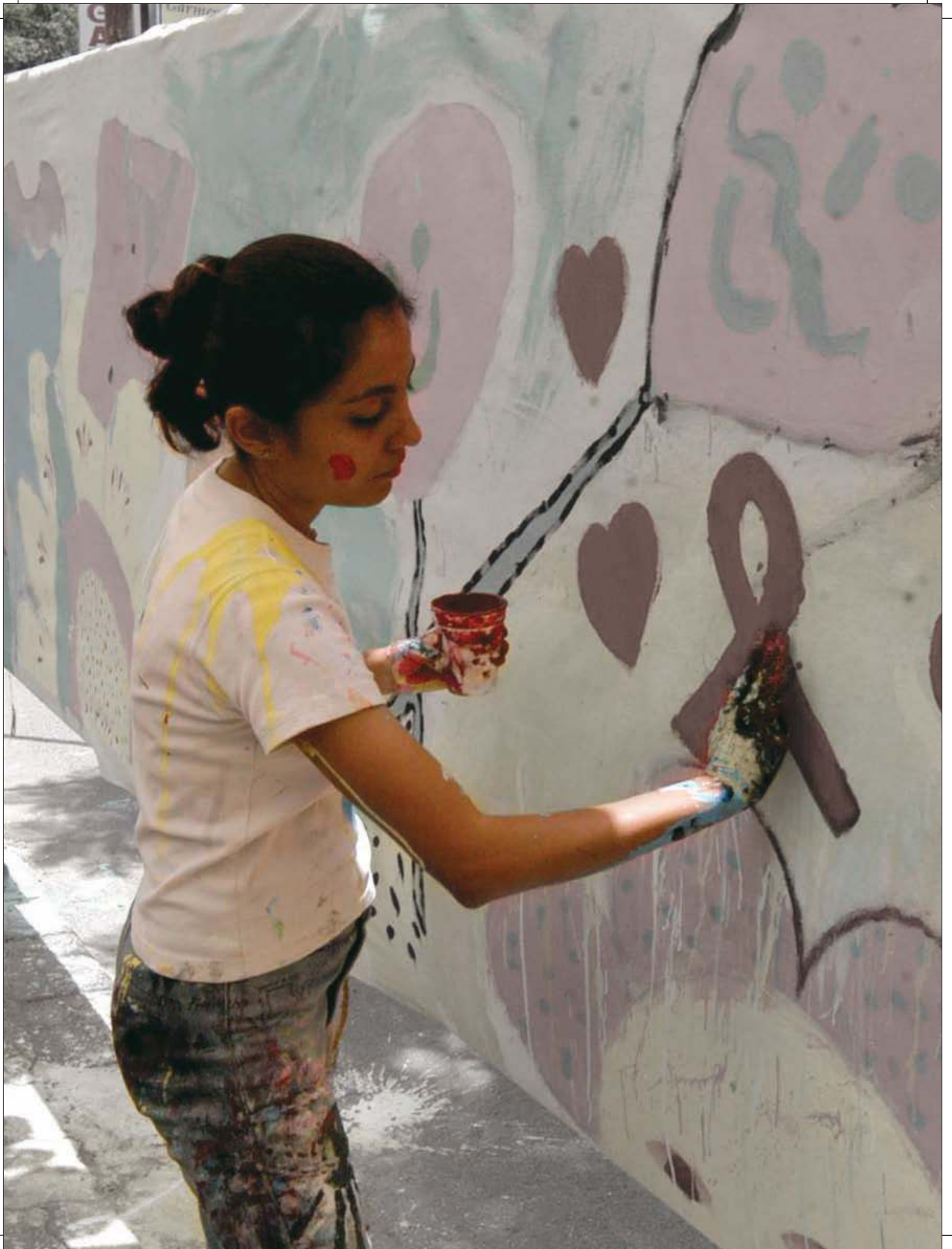
The news reports were from - Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Mizoram, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. The dominant issue tracked was gender based violence which included social policing (honor killing), public safety, right to basic facilities, gender disparity, right to decent housing, education and cyber crime.

Trafficking: Most of the coverage was on police raids and the rescuing of girls and women. There were also alarming reports on how girls were being trafficked from Kalagaon in Assam, Bhubaneswar, Pune, Chennai and Delhi. DNA reported from Berhampur, Orissa that the trafficking of women was on the rise in Kandhanmal.

reported on a survey which said that poor infrastructure (including poor or missing streetlights), unusable pavements, lack of public toilets, open use of drugs and alcohol were major reasons for the lack of safety. According to a study published by the Hindustan Times some of the most well-off parts of India Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Western Uttar Pradesh - have the worst ratings in terms of the female security index.

task without the support of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan team leaders who were brought in by NCPCR.

Cyber Crime: The Times of India, Mumbai, reported the formation of cyber police, a unique initiative which has deployed 100 students in various colleges who will inform the police if they notice any cyber crimes in their college premises. Cyber cops are also involving parents and teachers to make them aware of the possible dangers children and young adults are exposed to while using new-age technology.



4 Plan India's programs for girls in Delhi, Hyderabad, Pune and Mumbai

Plan's urban programs in partnership with local NGOs are now 30 years old. In India, Plan's first program was initiated in 1980 in partnership with Community Aid and Sponsorship Programme (CASP) in the slums of Mumbai. Subsequently more programmes were initiated in Pune, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Bhopal, and Delhi and more recently in Hyderabad. In partnership with local NGOs, Plan India's programs use a life cycle approach, to engage with children with special focus on girl children and their rights. In the past 30 years, Plan's programs directly influenced lives of more than 100,000 girls in these cities.

Girls in urban slums

Girls in urban slums face problems of lack of space, opportunities for development, freedom and realization of their basic rights. Girls are discriminated against by their families, lack access to nutritious food, regular schooling and opportunities and space to play. They are unsafe at home when both parents go out to work. At a time when they are supposed to study and play to grow healthy, they take care of younger siblings and household chores in parents' absence. They lack information and knowledge about their growth and reproductive health. They lack access to sanitation facilities, face eve teasing and other forms of abuse and exploitation. These circumstances often lead to low self esteem, morbidity and lack of voice in the family and community decisions which affect their lives.

Creating an enabling environment for Girls

Behavioral change

Our work begins with engaging with communities and parents, community leaders, teachers and neighbors to change attitudes towards the girl

child. Parents are engaged to accept and understand that giving opportunities to the girls is essential because that is the only way to empower and equip them to contribute to family and society. Gender sensitization programs are run for boys and male members of the family to facilitate their participation in girl's protection and empowerment.

Empowerment of women volunteers

The strategy that has worked best in our urban programs has been the identification of young girls and old mothers from the same community as change agents. All Plan programs have engaged community level young girls and women to work as change agents for empowering girls. Through motivation, training and engagement these volunteers have taken the message to the community. The key subjects, that are tackled through these awareness, sensitization and knowledge building programs, are: gender discrimination, importance of education for girls, the problems and legal implications of female foeticide and infanticide, age at marriage, importance of financial independence of girls, importance of information about reproductive and sexual health apart from the opportunities to develop and grow as girls. This strategy has resulted in sustained change processes at community even after the phase out of Plan programs in many of the communities and slums.

Over the past several years Plan's programs in four cities, worked with more than 1,00,000 parents directly through its sensitization and awareness programs and has been able to bring a change in their mindset towards their girls. This is a major factor behind the delayed age of marriage and improved percentage of girls enrollment in schools in these areas. Thousands of girls and women have become role models in their communities.

Empowerment through children's clubs

Children's clubs provide an opportunity for girls to come together, connect with their peers, learn, discuss and enjoy growing as girls. The club members act as the representatives of the girls of community. They are trained in leadership skills and using various media tools to express themselves and their concerns. The production of an animation film on the lives of girls in slums for example is a wonderful media to promote change. The programs have developed a cadre of young girls as advocates for change.

Access to education

Another key area is to ensure girls' access to formal government schools. Generally, the girls in these slums either do not go to schools or do not continue education after Grade 3. The most common reasons are workload at home or because it becomes unsafe and non productive to go to school due to lack of facilities and quality of education or lack of future use of education. Usually, girls drop out from school, sit at home, take care of younger children, do embroidery or take up a job of domestic worker in the neighboring posh colonies. To address this issue, Plan programs prepares them to join the regular schools through accelerated learning centres, facilitate their admission in regular schools, work with teachers to create an enabling environment and follow-up on their progress. The work with parents plays a very important role. Plan also runs preschool for younger children for their optimum care and development and also to relieve girls from their caretaking task and attend to their study.

From 2001 to 2007, Plan has managed to get over a thousand out of school girls enrolled in primary and secondary schools in just three projects in Delhi, Yaserada Pune and Hyderabad were enrolled in schools.

40% of girls are currently enrolled in or have completed post primary education in the CASP program areas of Madanpur Khadar and Sapera basti in South Delhi. Over 48% girls have complete high school (regular and private

candidates) in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts where Plan works.

Under the inclusive education program of CASP-Plan in Delhi, we have been able to work with more than 100 girls with special needs ranging from visual impairment, mental retardation, physical handicap, and multiple disability. Through the Plan programme, these girls now not only have a better quality of life and position in family and community but also have a better future.

Empowerment with life skills

Plan programs have specific interventions to empower girls with life skills especially in the development of problem solving and interpersonal skills for building their mastery over their environment and take charge of their own lives. Skill sets such as information gathering, analysis, finding alternatives, negotiation skills, assertiveness and advocacy, provide girls with the tools to negotiate spaces and create opportunities for themselves. in the difficult patriarchal setups

Over 1300 girls have been provided training in leadership and personality development in Delhi and Pune . Some of these girls are now working with programs as facilitators and mentors for the children clubs that they were part of just years ago.

Over the past 7 years in two areas of Delhi, CASP-Plan has worked with hundreds of girl peer educators to inform other girls about reproductive and sexual health issues. These girls have reached with more than 2000 girls at different point of time to inform and create awareness about correct and scientific information about feminine hygiene and maternal health.

Vocational skills and placement

Plan programs complete the empowerment process by assisting girls in enhancing their vocational skills and also improving the employability of the girls through market feasibility studies and direct engagement with employers. The skills range from designing, stitching garments, embroidery, beauty culture, office assistance, book keeping and accounts, skilled governance of household as professional

Empowering Girls



domestic help, sales, marketing, hospitality and other such service industry related jobs.

Since 2002 Plan programs in Delhi and Hyderabad have provided training for more than 1200 girls in various vocations with 70% of them using these skills in raising income of their families.

Mumbai - Goregaon, Ghatkopar (1980- 1995)

The first Plan India program was initiated in Mumbai slums in partnership with local NGO CASP. During that time government schemes and programs for children and women were not very visible and focused. Plan was running sponsorship programs in these slums of Mumbai. Books and uniforms were distributed to children. There are many individual examples of girls from these families where parents were uneducated but with Plans' support the girls became teachers and doctors and are still practicing in the same community.

Pune - Yerwada Slums (1990 - 2001)

In Pune city, Plan covered the Yerwada slums over a period of 10 years in partnership with CASP. The program had direct sponsorship based aid and support for the families of enrolled children and its direct approach changed the future of girls for better. The program influence lives of more than 3000 girls. 1200 girls were trained in leadership and personality development.

Plan's training programs developed the community in various areas like education, health, clean environment and livelihood. The training skills to manage domestic jobs skillfully and with quality got better salaries and quality of life for 90% of the women in the community.

Roma a sponsored child from Yerawada slum gave credit to Plan saying "I'm now perusing to be a sports teacher. It is all because of my involvement in children's clubs and various activities which gave me the confidence to be unique and do things differently.

"I am P.Vijaya Vani, When I was studying in 8th standard I had an accident and my hand was fractured. Because of the complexity of the fracture I had to go through two operations. This was a big blow on my studies. Due to lack of attendance I was removed from the school and hostel. This was a double blow for me. The pain of the fracture and the depression I got due to loss of my studies made me sad. There was no school left in the town where I did not go with a request to let me continue my studies but was rejected by every one as it was middle of the school cycle. I had to stay at home for that year. I heard about Teen Channel program from CAP Foundation through one of my friends. That was my last hope. I went there and told them about myself and they gave me admission. It was the happiest moment of my life. I did my best and passed 10th standard and achieved 515 out of 600 marks in 2007. After that I completed intermediate with 95% marks."

It was a moment of pride and achievement for this daughter of a watch man. She says this result was possible only due to the concentrated efforts of her facilitators of Plan."



5 Recommendations

The report highlights the unprecedented opportunities that cities and expanding cyberspace offers to transform the lives of girls and women. Also, it presents, from the girls' perspective, the many challenges that they face in their efforts to benefit from these opportunities. Today more than ever before, we need a national consensus between the government and civil society including the NGOs, media and businesses, to engage in a collective and collaborative project of ensuring girls in our cities are able to access and enjoy their Constitutional rights and entitlements.

Some of the specific recommendations that the report offers to respective duty bearers are:

a. Make our cities safer for girls and women by:

- i. Ensuring that more women are employed in law enforcement at all levels of the hierarchy
- ii. Ensuring that urban areas have Police Stations and Outposts that are wholly managed and represented by Policewomen and girls and women residing in slum populations are aware and effectively supported by law enforcement.
- iii. Safety and security guidelines and standard operating procedures are mandated for market bodies, chambers of commerce and public transport authorities so that girls and women accessing them are effectively protected from incidents of eve-teasing and molestation, and those who perpetuate such criminal acts are effectively prosecuted.

b. Provide better infrastructure to make the experience of living in cities less challenging for girls:

- i. Better sanitation facilities: Separate toilets for girls with water, lighting, not too far from their living quarters, well ventilated which are cleaned regularly
- ii. Separate transport for girls to move around freely in the cities
- iii. Clean living areas with regular cleaning and removal of garbage
- iv. Well lit streets and public spaces to reduce incidence of harassment and aid mobility of girls

c. Create better access to girls in schools and institutions for higher education by:

- i. Setting up special public transport for girls and women so that they are able to access their educational institutions without fear and harassment. Already good practices to this effect exist in some of the cities like Delhi and Mumbai which can be expanded to cover all cities and services.
- ii. Creating more educational institutions only for girls so that they are able to make the most of the opportunity for learning in particular higher learning that urban environment offers. Here it needs mention that in a patriarchal family environment and prevalent safety and security situation which exists in our cities, many parents and care givers of girls do not encourage them to travel long distances for educational purposes.
- iii. Appointing more women teachers in schools and colleges would ensure that the special needs of girls, in particular adolescent girls are understood and adequately responded to by the institution. This enables the girls to build trust and confidence in the institutions ensuring continuation of her studies for more number of years.

- iv. Enhancing the quality and number of water and sanitation facilities for girls in schools and colleges, that is increasingly recognized by girls as one of the key barriers to them accessing and continuing with their education. Many girls drop out of school and colleges because they do not have access to private sanitary spaces and often these spaces are shared with boys and men which is a risk to their privacy.

d. Create more employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for girls and women in cities and through use of information technologies by:

- i. Building more Vocational Training Institutes that are offering special courses to address the training and entrepreneurial needs and aspirations of young girls and women.
- ii. Reserving 50% of government developed market places and shops for use by only women entrepreneurs so that families have an incentive to promote economic activities that are owned and managed by young girls and women. In this context, there would be a need to amend the banking rules so that women entrepreneurs have access to soft loans for setting up their own businesses.
- iii. Ensure implementation of the Vishakha Guidelines given by the Supreme Court of India to tackle the problem of sexual harassment at work places. Also, city administrators would need to expand the ambit of the anti-sexual harassment law to include medium and small business and informal labour wherein young girls and women are employed in large numbers and experience high levels of sexual harassment.

e. Make ICTs accessible and safe for girls by:

- i. Ensuring the implementation of the existing cyber laws so that girls and women who face problems while accessing ICTs can gain quick grievance redressal and offenders punished.
- ii. Creating internet-based information kiosks in cities that has relevant and updated content on girl's and women's issues e.g. feminine hygiene, special laws and policies for girls and women, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, and likes. This would enable girls and women to better engage and access technology for their own transformation and at no additional cost.

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Annexure

Support System Available for Girls

Table 1.1 Persons whom Girls will Approach to Discuss Adolescent Health Issues

Persons Whom Girls will Approach	Percent										
	DEL	HYD	KOL	BAN	BHU	MB	PUN	PAT	VAR	RAN	ALL
14-17 years											
No body	4.8	0.5	1.2	6.8	35.3	7.9	2.8	0.5	8.6	2.6	7.2
Friends	44.3	53.9	15.3	37.5	32.3	30.6	37.1	24.0	19.1	26.3	32.0
Parents	79.9	97.6	93.2	49.7	18.1	76.1	83.7	87.9	78.9	55.3	71.9
Look up on the Internet	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2
Spouse	1.2	1.4	2.8	3.5	0.9	0.7	0.5	4.3	2.3	2.2	2.0
Books/ Magazines	1.0	0.2	2.4	5.1	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.9
Boyfriend	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.6	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5
Doctor/ Nurse	5.7	86.4	22.4	11.9	0.9	22.7	36.2	18.1	5.0	25.1	23.3
NGO/ NGO worker	0.2	0.2	6.8	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
School/ Teacher	4.5	4.8	0.7	1.6	0.7	5.3	1.4	2.6	0.2	1.7	2.4
DK/ CS											
Others *(Relative)	4.3	1.9	0.0	0.2	0.2	6.5	1.9	3.6	6.8	5.7	3.1
No response	1.4	0.0	0.0	20.3	17.0	10.2	1.2	1.7	3.2	29.9	8.5
Total N	418	419	424	429	430	431	423	421	440	418	4253
18-21 years											
No body	6.1	0.0	1.2	1.7	0.5	7.3	2.3	0.5	5.2	3.0	2.8
Friends	49.4	53.8	22.1	37.4	74.6	36.1	37.1	24.4	19.1	38.3	39.2
Parents	60.0	97.0	83.9	62.1	75.8	63.2	76.3	68.4	70.3	57.2	71.3
Look up on the Internet	3.6	0.7	0.2	1.0	2.1	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.9
Spouse	12.4	13.7	13.8	21.9	19.0	12.6	8.8	27.7	20.3	18.9	16.8
Books/ Magazines	5.0	0.9	2.3	7.9	3.3	0.7	0.0	0.2	0.9	0.5	2.2
Boyfriend	3.4	0.7	0.2	1.2	12.4	2.4	1.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	2.2
Doctor/ Nurse	21.7	86.1	33.1	20.7	15.7	31.9	43.1	23.3	13.4	51.3	34.1
NGO/ NGO worker	1.1	0.2	6.1	1.2	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.5	1.1
School/ Teacher	2.3	2.3	0.2	1.9	0.5	1.5	1.8	1.9	0.7	1.4	1.5
DK/ CS											
Others *(Relative)	1.4	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.5	10.1	1.4	4.7	8.0	4.8	3.2
No response	1.1	0.2	0.2	4.8	0.5	5.5	1.8	1.6	2.6	7.7	2.6
Total N	443	431	429	420	421	454	434	430	424	439	4325

List of Cyber Crime Cells in India

Mumbai

Assistant Commissioner of Police
Cyber Crime Investigation Cell
Office of Commissioner of Police office,
Annex -3 Building,
1st floor, Near Crawford Market Mumbai-01
Contact Details: +91-22-22641261
+91-22-22630829
Web site: <http://www.cybercellmumbai.com>
E-mail id: officer@cybercellmumbai.com

Chennai

Assistant Commissioner of Police
Cyber Crime Cell Commissioner office
Campus Egmore, Chennai- 600008
Contact Details: +91-40-5549 8211
E-mail id: s.balu@nic.in
For Rest of Tamil Nadu
Address: Cyber Crime Cell, CB, CID, Chennai
E-mail id: cbcyber@tn.nic.in

Bangalore

(for whole of the Karnataka)
Cyber Crime Police Station
C.O.D Headquarters
Carlton House, # 1, Palace Road
Bangalore - 560 001
Contact Details:
+91-80-2220 1026 +91-80-2294 3050
+91-80-2238 7611 (FAX)

Delhi

Superintendent of Police
Cyber Crime Investigation Cell CBI
5th Floor, Block No.3, CGO Complex,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 3
Contact Details:
+91-11-4362203, +91-11-4392424
Web site: <http://cbi.nic.in/> E-Mail: cbiccic@bol.net.in

Pune

Assistant Commissioner of Police
Cyber Crime Investigation Cell
Police Commissioner Office of Pune
2, Sadhu Vaswani Road, Camp
Pune 411001
Contact Details:
+91-20-2612 7277, +91-20-2612 8105 (Fax)
Website: <http://punepolice.com/crime branch.html>
E-Mail: punepolice@vsnl.com

Hyderabad

Cyber Crime Police Station
Crime Investigation Department
3rd Floor, D.G.P. office
Lakdikapool, Hyderabad - 500004
Contact Details:
+91-40-2324 0663
+91-40-2785 2274
+91-40-2329 7474 (Fax)
Web site: <http://www.cidap.gov.in/cybercrimes.aspx>
E-mail id: cidap@cidap.gov.in, info@cidap.gov.in

Thane

3rd Floor, Police Commissioner Office
Near Court Naka,
Thane West,
Thane 400601.
Contact Details: +91-22-25424444
Web site: www.thanepolice.org E-Mail:
police@thanepolice.org

Gurgaon

Superintendent of Police
Gurgaon

Gujarat

DIG, CID, Crime and Railways
Fifth Floor
Police Bhavan
Sector 18, Gandhinagar 382 018
Contact Details:
+91-79-2325 4384
+91-79-2325 3917 (Fax)

Content source : India Cyber law

Address of CBI Cyber Crime Cell

Supdt. of Police, Cyber Crime Investigation Cell
Central Bureau of Investigation
5th Floor, Block No.3, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road,
New Delhi - 3
Phone: 4362203, 4392424
Email: cbiccic@bol.net.in : Web: <http://cbi.nic.in/>

The Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals are eight goals set by the United Nations in an attempt to eradicate extreme poverty by 2015. The data below indicates, the following data shows India's performance on these goals against specific indicators (Data sourced from NFHS 3)



Goal 1 Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Proportion of girls under 5 who are underweight
(Under 3 years)

Rural: 36.4

Urban: 49



Goal 2 Universal Primary Education

Girls gross primary school graduation rate
(Completed 5-7 years of education)

Rural: 17.5

Urban: 14.9



Goal 3 Gender Equality

Proportion of girls aged 15-19 years married by age of 15 years (NFHS 3)
(Percentage of women married by the age of 15-19 years)

Rural: 32.5

Urban: 14.5

Female transition from primary to secondary education
(Completed 12 or more years of education)

Rural: 13.5

Urban: 30.5

Estimated female earned income (NFHS 3)
(Percentage of women who have control over spending their cash income)

Rural: 21

Urban: 33.3



Goal 4 Child Mortality

IMR, Proportion of young women aged 20-24 years that have achieved atleast secondary education IMR, (NFHS-3)

(Rate of prevalence)

Rural: 62.2

Urban: 41.5



Goal 5 Maternal Health

More than 4 ANC visits

Rural: 27.7

Urban: 62.4



Goal 6 HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases

Ratio of young women to men living with HIV/AIDS

(Percentage of women and men living with HIV/AIDS (NFHS 3, Age group 15-49 years)

Rural (Men): 0.32

Urban (Men): 0.41

Rural (Women): 0.18

Urban (Women): 0.29

Prevalence of TB amongst women per 10,000 of the population

(Rate of prevalence)

Rural: 371

Urban: 247

Table 1.2

Boys respond to the life of girls in the city (from the study ‘Adolescent girls’ views and perceptions on cities and digital spaces’)

Primary research conducted under the campaign, Because I am a girl included focus group discussions with a control group of five hundred boys. Across the ten cities, five FGDs were held in each city, a total of fifty FGDs. These were held with boys from the slum areas, out of school boys, street children, and children belonging to the socially excluded category.

Advantages of living in cities for girls and the positive changes in their lives

- Increased literacy and options of getting a good education, separate, all girls schools and colleges
- This leads to better employment opportunities
- There are good markets, shopping malls, ATMs and hang out places for the girls to enjoy themselves
- They have better options of transport, seats in buses and metros, compartments in trains which aids mobility
- They also have good health facilities
- Along with all these facilities there is better internet accessibility to keep in touch with the world outside
- More interaction with boys, more candid about their relationships, can marry the boy of their choice

In conclusion, boys believed that girls in cities appear to have become more self-confident, modern, fashionable and financially independent and they are in a position to demand more freedom than they would get in rural areas.

Disadvantages of living in cities for girls and the negative changes in their lives

- City life has its own disadvantages that range from pollution, accidents, water logging, filthy water, bad roads, congested markets, high prices in the city, increasing politics in all fields
- Cities may appear to be less gender discriminatory but it still persists, many girls are not allowed to work even after studying, are married off early and are not allowed to go out much
- They may also misuse their freedom and adopt Western culture in their dressing (wearing short and revealing clothes), mannerism (smoking and drinking) and how they treat their elders
- In order to support their lavish and hectic lifestyle sometimes they are tempted to take the wrong path

To conclude, boys felt that sometimes the girls take undue advantage of this freedom and are becoming self-centred, brash and "too advanced" moving away from the traditionally held values of being self-effacing and demure.

Challenges faced by girls living in cities

- Eve teasing is the biggest challenge that girls face in the cities. In public places, markets, while using public transport etc. girls are easy targets as it is crowded. It becomes even more pronounced when they go out in the dark or are alone
- Mostly girls ignore the comments made by men and very few retaliate
- Sometimes the boys are provoked by the clothes worn by the girls or how they behave in public (laughing loudly and drawing attention)

- Girls are also harassed at the work place and are often paid less
- Free interaction with men can lead to a heart break and if the girl is intimately involved she may end up committing suicide

It may therefore be said that boys also agree with the opinion held by girls that the primary challenge they face in the city is being harassed by boys/ men. The fact that most girls do not react has also been mentioned by a majority of them. The onus of being teased has been put on the girls themselves, dressing and behaving in a provocative manner.

Way to overcome challenges faced by girls living in cities

- More police protection should be provided to girls especially in the night. All women police stations with more women police force will be safe for girls. Girls must mind their dressing style to avoid being teased
- The need for better transport facilities for girls so that they are not troubled due to the crowds

It was believed by boys that an alert police force that takes quick action against offenders needs to be put in place to make life safer for girls in the cities. However, they also added that girls need be less flamboyant in their dressing to not attract too much attention.

Uses and harms related to mobile phones and internet

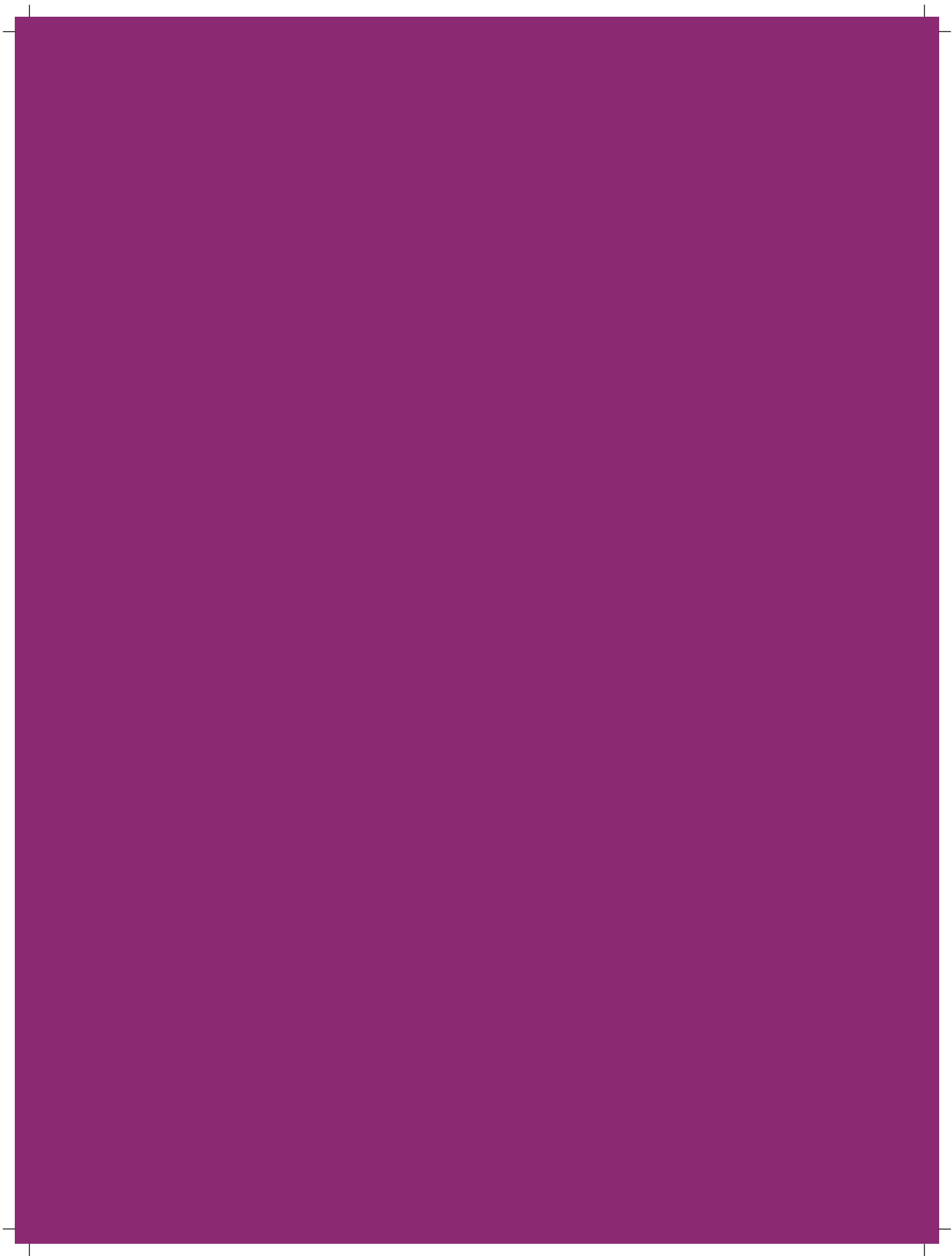
- Biggest use of the mobile phones is for security purposes so that girls can be in touch with their family. Some mentioned how this also allows the girls to have relationships with boys. Obscene calls and MMS are believed to be the more threatening aspects of mobile phones
- Internet access has increased and it was felt that girls used it primarily for entertainment, gaining knowledge, information, career enhancement and also for matrimonial purposes. The more dubious aspects of cyber technology were believed to be the misuse of personal information, uploading photographs and taking advantage of a girl.

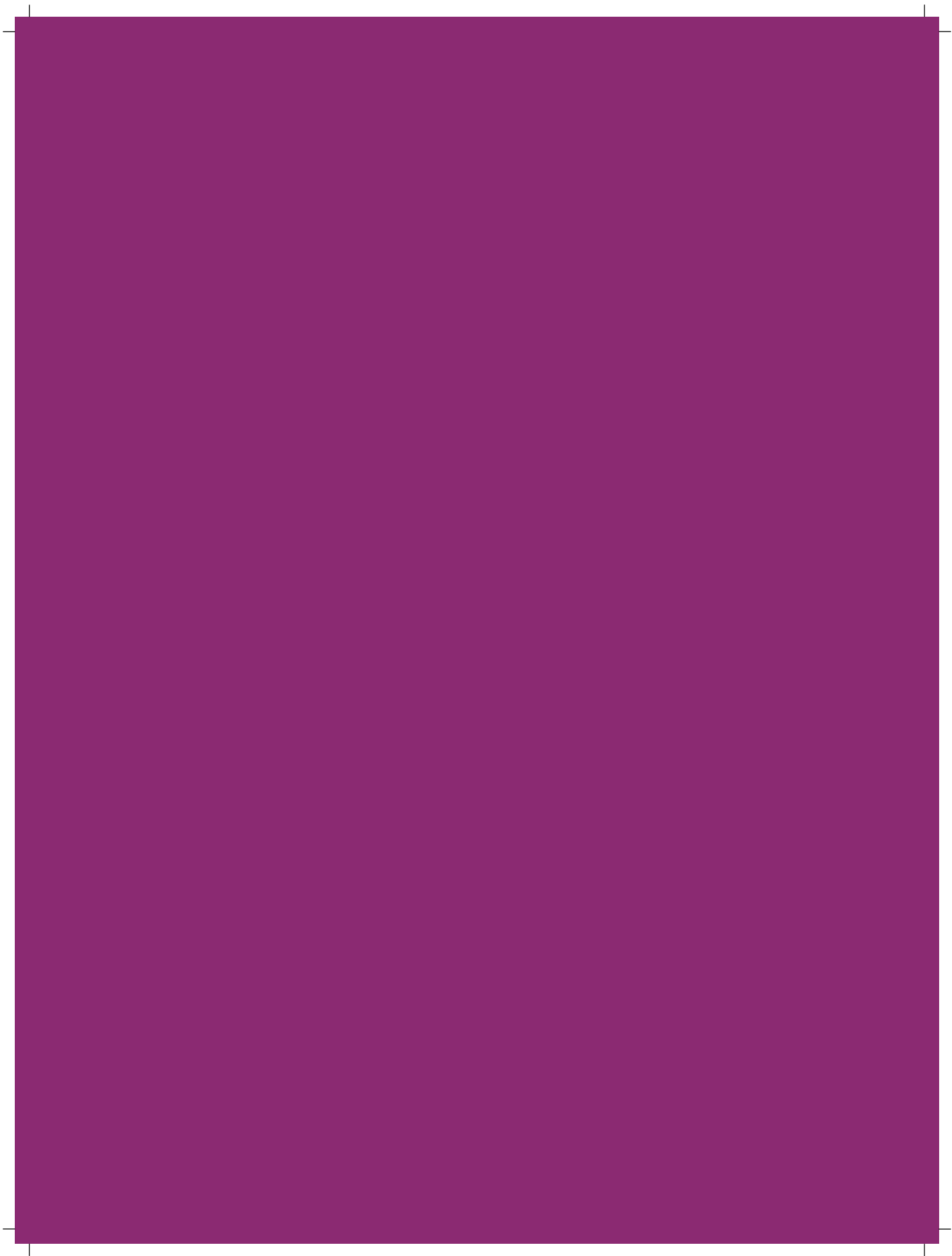
While the boys seemed to think that girls can use internet to their benefit, they were fairly vocal about how this information can be misused to take advantage of the girls. The statement can be interpreted either as a threat or their genuine concern.

Challenges faced by boys

- As for the challenges faced by the boys themselves pressure of getting an education and increasing competition to get a job were the greatest challenges
- According to some poverty and the very fact of living was seen as a challenge

Boys felt that competition and making a career, earning and providing for the family were the big challenges that they faced.





About Plan India

Plan India is a nationally registered child centred community development organisation. For over 30 years, Plan and our partners have helped communities throughout India to help themselves, so that children have access to their rights including the right to protection, basic education, proper healthcare, a healthy environment, livelihood opportunities and participation in decisions which affect their lives. We encourage children to express their views and be actively involved in improving their communities. Plan India currently works in 11 states in India and has impacted the lives of over a million children.

Plan India's rights based approach helps bring lasting improvements to the lives of vulnerable children and their communities in India, including children living on the streets and those living in urban homeless families; those with disabilities or affected by HIV; those who are exploited and trafficked; the children of sex workers; and child labourers. Plan India also works to help girls overcome the disadvantage and discrimination they face in everyday life within most communities.

Plan India is committed to the principles of child rights and equality, and we work to develop the capacity of civil society to meet their own needs by replicating successful development models.

Plan India is part of Plan International, one of the world's largest community development organisations. Plan's vision is of a world in which all children realise their full potential in societies which respect people's rights and dignity.

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