



Government has adopted multi-pronged approach to address the educational, social and economic empowerment of girls

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The Government gives utmost priority to the safety, security and empowerment of girls in the country. To this end, the Government has adopted multi-pronged approach to address the educational, social and economic empowerment of girls.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme was launched on 22nd January 2015 to help address Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of empowerment of girls and women over a life cycle continuum. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme has transformed from a policy initiative into a national movement by mobilizing various stakeholders, including government agencies, communities, media, civil society and the public at large. This movement aims not only to address immediate concerns related to sex ratio and gender-based discrimination but also to foster a cultural shift towards valuing the girl child and ensuring her rights and opportunities. The scheme focuses on creating mindset and behavioural changes towards the girl child by informing, influencing, motivating, engaging, and empowering all stakeholders.

In order to enhance the ease of living for the girl child and women, particularly in the rural areas of the country, under the Swachh Bharat Mission more than 11.8 crore toilets have been constructed. Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY) is a small savings scheme designed to secure the future of girl children, offering a high interest rate. Samagra Shiksha is an integrated scheme for school education from pre-school to class XII, supporting the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020 and the Right to Education Act, 2009. It emphasizes early childhood care and education, foundational literacy and numeracy, a holistic and inclusive curriculum, enhancing learning outcomes, bridging social and gender gaps, and ensuring equity and inclusion at all education levels.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme seeks to bridge gender and social category gaps in school education by providing residential schooling facilities for girls up to Class XII. Under the scheme, the girls in the age group of 10-18 years from Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Class (OBC), minority communities, and BPL families are covered.

The Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG) has been subsumed under Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 w.e.f. 01.04.2022. The targeted beneficiaries under this scheme are girls in the age group of 14 – 18 years in the Aspirational Districts and all North Eastern States.

Vigyan Jyoti Programme encourages girls to pursue education and careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) fields to improve gender balance. It targets meritorious girls from Class IX to Class XII and includes student-parent counselling, career counselling, additional academic support classes, tinkering activities, special lectures, visits to scientific institutions, labs, industries, and science camps and workshops.

With the objective of ensuring economic independence for girls, including single girl children, the Government has launched the Skill India Mission to provide comprehensive skill development and vocational training. Government has also set up the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana across the country. Under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY), skill and vocational training is provided to women.

Further, PMKVY 4.0 prioritizes and provides special focus to projects that emphasize women as primary beneficiaries. This inclusive approach ensures significant representation and benefit for women in skill training programs across the country.

Deendayal Antyodaya Yojna – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), under which women self-help groups are changing the rural landscape for employment and self-employment. Similarly, National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM) is for urban areas. Besides, there are schemes like the Stand-up India, Start-up India, Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), for providing employment/ self-employment and credit facilities. Majority of the beneficiaries under these schemes are women.

In 2017, the Maternity Benefit Act was amended to increase paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for the first two children. This Act also provides for paid maternity leave to women workers and crèche facility within prescribed distance in all establishments having fifty or more employees

Stand-Up India Scheme launched on 05.04.2016 with the objective to facilitate loans from Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) of value between Rs. 10 lakh and Rs. 1 crore to at least one Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST) borrower and one Women borrower per bank branch for setting up greenfield enterprise in manufacturing, services or trading sector including activities allied to agriculture. The scheme has been extended up to the year 2025.

There are schemes like Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana and Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) which have been launched for helping women set up their own enterprises.

In order to bring women in the mainstream of political leadership at the grass root level, Government has reserved at least 33% of the seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for women through the 73rd amendment to the Constitution. As per available data, there are more than 12.06 lakh Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) in PRIs, which is approximately 49.75% of the total elected representatives.

The greatest leap forward for women empowerment and representation of women in the highest political offices in the country has been the notification by Government of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023 (Constitution One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023 on 28th September, 2023, for reservation of one-third of seats for women in the House of People (Lok Sabha) and in the State Legislative Assemblies including Legislative Assembly of NCT of Delhi.

Mission Shakti aims at strengthening interventions for women safety, security and empowerment.

Mission Shakti comprises of two verticals 'Sambal' for safety and security of women and 'Samarthya' for empowerment of women. The 'Sambal' has components of One Stop Centre (OSC), Women Helpline (WHL), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) and Nari Adalat (Nari Adalat). The 'Samarthya' has components of Shakti Sadan, Sakhi Niwas, Padhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), Palna and SANKALP: Hub for Empowerment of Women (SNKALP: HEW)

The Government of India has adopted a comprehensive and integrated approach to empower girls and women and to end gender discrimination through a wide spectrum of schemes and initiatives. These measures collectively aim to ensure safety and security, improve employability, promote entrepreneurship, and create an enabling environment for women.

As per the latest report of Health Management Information System (HMIS) of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) at the national level has increased from 918 in 2014-15 to 929 in 2024-25.

Further, the Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 is administered by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) to regulate the use of technologies with the potential for detection and disclosure of the sex of the foetus. This Act was enacted for the prohibition of sex selection before or after conception, and for regulation of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for the purposes of detecting genetic abnormalities or metabolic disorders or chromosomal abnormalities or certain congenital malfunction or sex-linked disorders and for the prevention of their misuse for sex determination leading to female foeticide and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The PC&PNDT Act is a central legislation implemented uniformly across all States and UTs to curb gender-biased sex-selective practices and promote a positive environment for the girl child through gender-sensitive policies, awareness generation, and legislative measures.

The measures taken by the Government to ensure effective enforcement of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PC&PNDT) are as below:

- Supporting the States/UTs for sensitization and capacity building on PC&PNDT Act.
- Under the National Health Mission (NHM), MoHFW provides financial support to the States/UTs to strengthen implementation of the PC&PNDT Act.
- Support is being extended for Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and advocacy activities aimed at fostering behavioural change and promoting gender equality.
- The MoHFW has constituted a 'Nodal Agency' as per the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court to monitor and facilitate the removal of online advertisements violating the provisions of the Act
- Regular review and assessment through various institutional mechanisms like Common Review Mission visits, Inspection & Monitoring visits are carried out by Centre, States and Districts so as to further strengthen the ground level implementation of the PC&PNDT Act.

The detailed information related to PCPNDT is available in the Annual Report 2024-25 of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare at the link mentioned below:

<https://mohfw.gov.in/?q=en/publications-12>

This information was given by the Minister of State for Women and Child Development Smt. Savitri Thakur in Lok Sabha in reply to a question today.

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