



SPECIAL EDITION

CELEBRATING UNFPA INDIA @50 YEARS

ON TRACK: Issue #5

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The Honourable Health Secretary, **Shri. Apurva Chandra** congratulates UNFPA for completing 50 Years in India

**“As we celebrate 50 years,
let’s embrace a Viksit
Bharat where every
individual can live a life of
dignity and choice”**

Andrea M. Wojnar
UNFPA India Representative &
Country Director Bhutan





Since 1974

India is moving towards a future powered by the unlimited potential of its young people, where digital innovation unlocks gender equality. A future where men are allies, where the elderly can age with dignity, where people have control over their own bodies, and where climate change solutions are led by women and girls. This is the vision of India at 100 years (Viksit Bharat).

As UNFPA celebrates 50 years in India, **6 Key Drivers** have been identified to accelerate progress.

THE **6 DRIVERS** FOR A SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FUTURE

Youth **Power** Unleashed

India stands at the cusp of transformation. A nation with [251 million young people](#) aged between 15 and 24 which is a third of its working-age population, holds the key to India's stride towards socio-economic excellence. A demographic dividend waiting to be tapped.

Paving the Way for a **Civic-Conscious Youth** in Bihar

The *Taalim-i-Naubalighan* (T-i-N) program initiated the establishment of **69** 'Youth Parliaments' throughout Bihar. These parliaments were conducted within their respective Madrasas, symbolising a convergence of community and educational endeavours.

In addition to enhancing the Madrasa infrastructure, the efforts were aimed at cultivating an understanding of the Constitution of India and democratic values among youth participants.



Tech Empowers Women

India is emerging as a global digital leader while marching towards its objective of becoming the third largest economy by 2030. To expedite this goal, women must become drivers of socio and economic growth. Their access to, empowerment with, and safety in technology is crucial.

Women and Girls Front and Centre: Digi Shaktis, Digi Sakhis and Tech Sakhis

*The **Digi Shaktis**, a group of inspiring women are transforming communities with the power of technology*

The Mission Shakti Department of the Odisha Government in collaboration with UNFPA India, is empowering Women Self-Help Groups (WSHGs) through digital and financial literacy as well as training on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). This initiative will equip over **6 million** women with technology, significantly boosting their economic independence and agency



Digi Sakhi 2.0: The New Digital Storytellers of Madhya Pradesh

In Indore and Bhopal, young girls are being trained in social media, video storytelling, and scriptwriting through the Digi Sakhi 2.0 program. These workshops have successfully reached participants across 9 districts in the state and trained over **200 young people**.



Tech-Sakhi: Emerging Changemakers of Rajasthan

UNFPA India, in partnership with the Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti (Women's Public Rights Committee) is implementing the "*Tech Sakhi: Badlaav ki Awaaz*" (Tech Sakhi: Voice of Change) initiative. The program has empowered over **30 girls** with digital skills which enabled them to raise awareness about the harmful effects of child marriage.



In the City of Patna, Technology is Being Leveraged to Leave No One Behind

The Patna Municipal Corporation (PMC) in collaboration with UNFPA India, is training a group of women from underserved settlements to operate machinery for sewer cleaning. These women (called *Swachhanginis*) are transitioning from manual scavenging to utilising mechanical equipment for sanitation work. Their exceptional efforts earned them recognition, with 10 *Swachhanginis* being invited by the Government of India to attend the Republic Day celebrations this year!

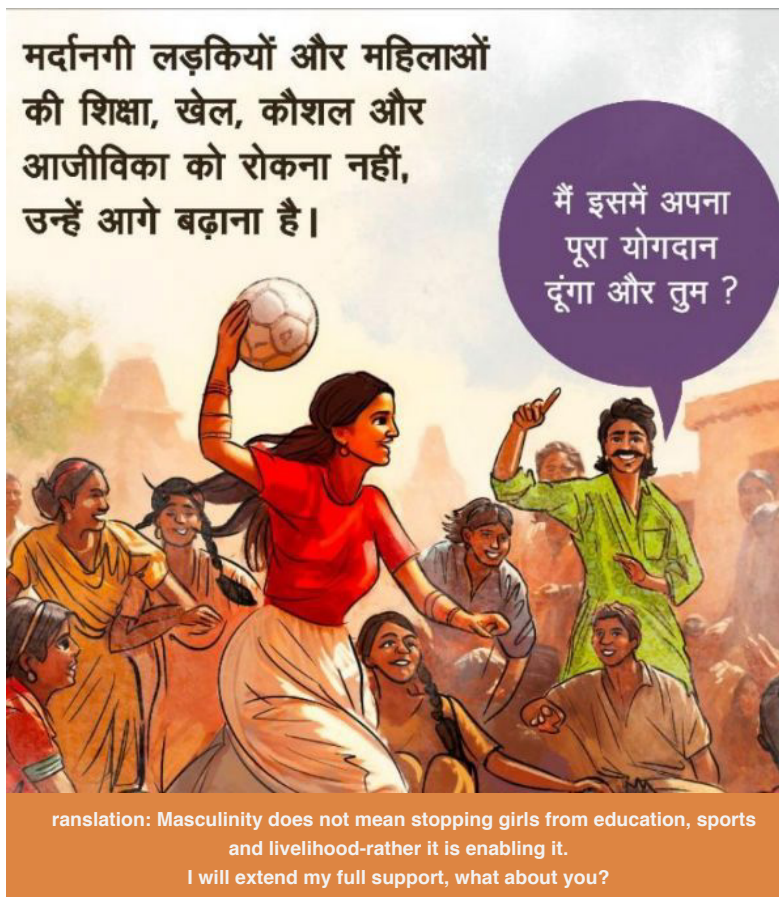


Redefining Masculinity

Positive masculinity plays a vital role in advancing gender equality and women's rights. It reduces gender-based violence, and creates a more inclusive and harmonious society. It is crucial for creating an environment where women, men and persons with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations can thrive.

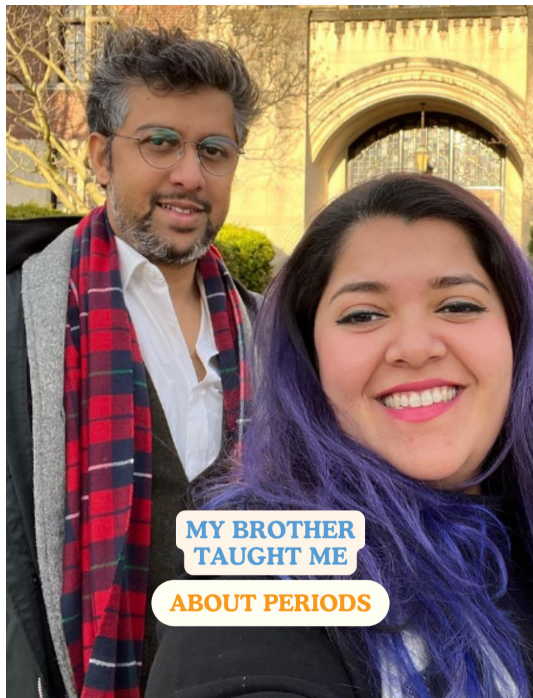
Men and Boys are **Emerging as Allies** in Sawai Madhopur (Rajasthan)

UNFPA India has launched a pilot project in Sawai Madhopur, targeting **600** young men and boys to imbibe positive masculinity. A comprehensive toolkit is being deployed for their training that features posters and board games. Trained peer educators are leading the sessions and encouraging participants to support community initiatives like promoting sports for girls, connecting girls with Government schemes, and enhancing safety measures in villages. The insights gained from this pilot will guide the future expansion of positive masculinity programs through Government initiatives.



Watch this video to

See Positive Masculinity in Action!



Read this Analytical Paper:

Men's Participation in Family Planning and Reproductive Health



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Healthy Ageing

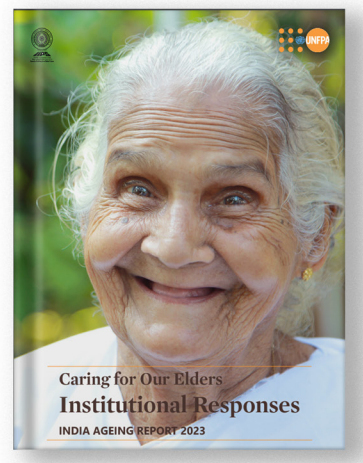
The world's population is living longer and growing older. In India, there are [153 million persons aged 60 years and above in 2022](#), and this number is expected to reach 347 million by 2050. The longevity is increasing due to improvements in the general health of the population. Ageing is a complex issue encompassing health systems, labour and financial markets, social protection and education.

Launch of the Flagship India Ageing Report

UNFPA India and the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) unveiled the ["India Ageing Report 2023."](#) highlighting both opportunities and challenges in elderly care across India. Mr. Saurabh Garg, Secretary of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Ms. Andrea M. Wojnar, UNFPA India Representative jointly launched the report.

Mr. Saurabh Garg emphasised, "The India Ageing Report 2023 offers a critical roadmap for our goals, and I call on all stakeholders to join forces in implementing its recommendations."

The release of this report has led to discussions in Parliament on creating policies that ensure ageing is a healthy and joyful journey for senior citizens.



Odisha is Spearheading **Policy Interventions** that will Transform Senior Care

Odisha is experiencing a rapid demographic shift, with current data showing 1 in 9 residents as 60 years or older. This ratio is expected to rise to 1 in 6 by 2036. To address this, the Odisha Vikash Conclave (OVC) in partnership with UNFPA India, held a special session in Bhubaneswar, focusing on ageing and its implications for healthcare, social services and economic planning.

The Odisha Government's Department of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) and UNFPA India will now collaborate to update the state's senior citizen policy.



My Body, My Mind, #My Right

Bodily autonomy, the principle that each person has ownership over their own body, is essential for upholding sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). It highlights the importance of having control over one's body, maintaining dignity, and making informed choices based on accurate information.

Putting Mental Health First for the Staff of the Department of Skill Development

UNFPA India, in collaboration with the Child In Need Institute (CINI), has facilitated training sessions for the Department of Skill Development's staff, focusing on vital subjects such as mental health awareness and promoting positive well-being. This initiative has made a significant impact, reaching **300** participants, including ITI Training Officers, Principals, and Clerical Staff, enriching their understanding and capabilities.

Informed and Empowered: Rajasthan's Girls Take Charge

The Rajasthan State Council of Secondary Education (RCScE), in collaboration with UNFPA India, has initiated the 'Pankh Project'. This initiative has trained 198 teachers, 394 peer educators, and 94 wardens in adolescent reproductive-sexual health, gender-based violence and safe internet practices. It has positively impacted over **30,000** adolescent girls from marginalised communities enrolled in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs).

Grassroots Leaders are Combatting Gender-Based Violence across India

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) and UNFPA India are upskilling **200** Panchayat leaders nationwide to tackle Gender-Based Violence (GBV). This initiative broadens the grassroots leaders' understanding of GBV and also fosters an environment of knowledge-sharing and innovative practices to combat discriminatory norms.

Shri. Giriraj Singh, Union Minister of Panchayati Raj, has reaffirmed the Ministry's dedication to eradicating GBV and discrimination, marking a significant step forward in the collective journey towards equality.

This partnership has launched the "Panchayats Free from Gender-Based Violence, Handbook for Elected Representatives," available in [English](#) and [Hindi](#), to guide leaders in their crucial work. Additionally, the launch of a short animated film advocating for Women-friendly Panchayats has further amplified the campaign's reach and impact.



Feminising Climate Solutions

Climate change affects women and girls disproportionately, making them more vulnerable to its impacts like food insecurity and displacement. To address climate change effectively, it is crucial to place women at the center of developing and implementing solutions.

Odisha is Harnessing Girl Power to Enhance Disaster Risk Resilience

Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) and UNFPA India have established a 'Gender and Inclusion Cell' to promote a holistic disaster risk resilience approach, focusing on marginalised women. The launch of the roadmap outlines five key action areas: Policy Review and Alignment, Capacity Building, Community Resilience, Knowledge and Data Management, and Multi-stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy. This initiative's objective is to increase women's participation and impact across the disaster management cycle.

[Read an inspiring story on](#) how Odisha's young girls are emerging as frontline warriors to combat climate change!



UNFPA INDIA @ 50: DIGITAL LAUNCH

The U in UNFPA Campaign

The 'U in UNFPA' campaign marked the vibrant milestone of 50 Years of UNFPA in India through a digital celebration. The launch saw participation from over **50** celebrities, content creators, and changemakers garnering an online reach of **28 million**. The campaign emphasised that "YOU", the communities and people, are at the core of UNFPA India's mandate.



GIRLFLUENCERS - The Architects of the Social Media Techscape

As a part of the 50th anniversary celebration, UNFPA India hosted an event spotlighting "[GIRLFLUENCERS - The Architects of the Social Media Techscape](#)." The event explored the role of social media platforms in storytelling, advocacy as well as creating safe spaces and enabling girls to have equal voices while exploring avenues for monetisation.

The panel featured esteemed speakers including Ms. Andrea M. Wojnar (UNFPA India Representative), Mr. Sunder Venketraman (Head of Content at JOSH), and two inspiring program participants: Tech Sakhi Ms. Yashoda from Ajmer, Rajasthan, and Digi Sakhi Ms. Asha Prajapati from Madhya Pradesh.

In Other News

A Platform for Advocacy : R4I Review Meeting

The second round of the Research for Impact (R4I) Review meeting brought UNFPA India together with key technical stakeholders to address India's most urgent priorities. With a focus on pivotal themes: economic and demographic shifts, health, education, gender equality, and the pressing impact of climate change, the conference proved to be a platform for strategic dialogue towards actionable insights and forward-thinking policies.

UNFPA India's Global Engagements

Innovating Education Through Technology: At the Life Education Pacific Regional Conference organised by the UNFPA Pacific Sub-Regional Office, UNFPA India showcased its digital initiative, the '[JustAsk! AI chatbot](#)'. This chatbot serves as a new digital tool to ensure that young people have health and well-being information at their fingertips.

Bhutanese Delegation Experiences Incredible India

UNFPA India recently welcomed a delegation from Bhutan which included members from the UNFPA Bhutan Office, Government officials, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) partners.

The delegation visited the School Health and Wellness Program (SHWP) and RKSK (National Adolescent Health Program). They also received an overview of UNFPA India's collaborations with key stakeholders, including Bayer, Amazon Web Services (AWS), the Government of India, and various CSOs, highlighting a comprehensive approach to health and wellness initiatives.

