

ON TRACK

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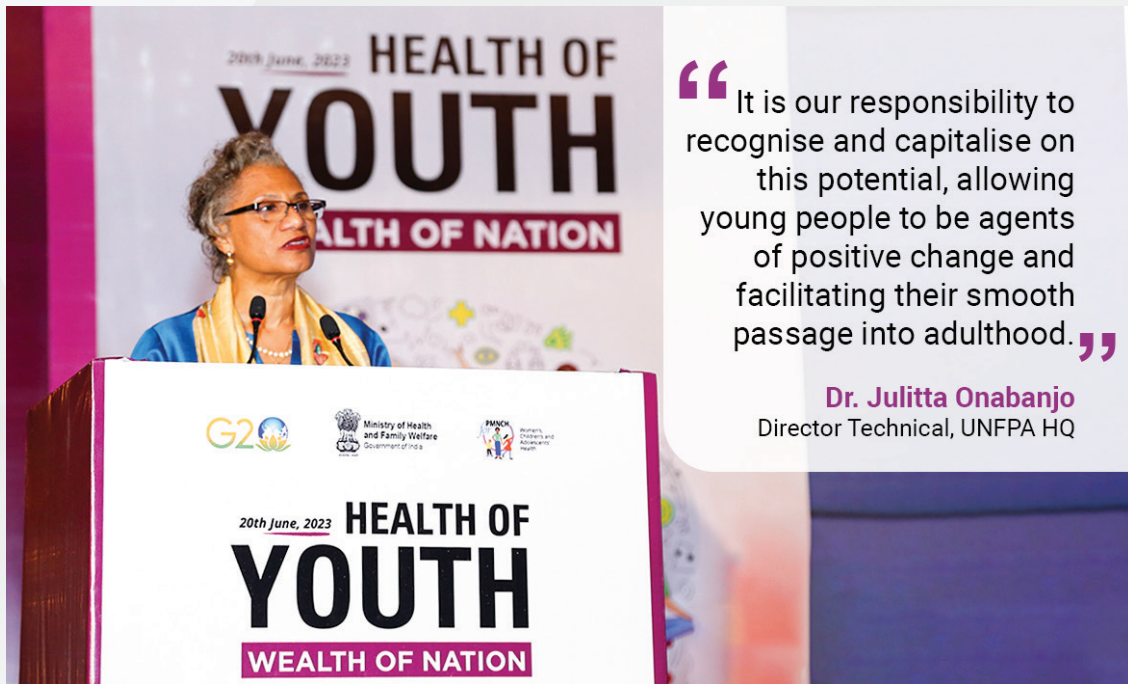
The State of the World's Population Report calls for Focus on Reproductive Rights



The landmark report [“8 Billion Lives, Infinite Possibilities: The Case for Rights and Choices”](#) calls for a rethink of how population numbers are framed.

Every member of our human family has the right to make free and informed choices about their health, bodies, and futures. This right should be the starting point for all conversations about population. Population is, after all, about people, about creating the conditions for all 8 billion of us to live freely and fully, equal in dignity and rights, on a healthy, safe, and prosperous planet. When we invest in people and their potential, in their rights and choices, all of humanity benefits.

Highlights from G20 Events



“ It is our responsibility to recognise and capitalise on this potential, allowing young people to be agents of positive change and facilitating their smooth passage into adulthood. ”

Dr. Julitta Onabanjo
Director Technical, UNFPA HQ

Promoting Youth Health: A G20 Co-Branded Initiative

UNFPA took the lead role in organizing the G20 co-branded event titled 'Health of Youth, Wealth of Nation.' This event, hosted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) of the Government of India in collaboration with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (PMNCH), received support from notable organizations like the Gates Foundation, USAID, WHO, and UNICEF. The event featured technical seminars, a session on multi-sectoral partnerships for youth and adolescent health and well-being, a youth town hall, and a marketplace showcasing various health programs and interventions for adolescents and young people across India.

One of the primary objectives of the event was to empower young people as agents of change and promote dialogue and engagement among policymakers, government officials, experts, partner agencies, and youth leaders from G20 nations. The discussions revolved around topics such as adolescent and youth health, injuries and violence prevention, sexual and reproductive health, and mental health.



Leading the Y20 Summit: UNFPA's Role in Youth Engagement

UNFPA was honoured as a delegate and observer at the Y20 Main Summit held in Varanasi from August 17th to 20th, 2023. UNFPA also played a pivotal role in the pre-inception meetings in Guwahati, Assam, and pre-summit meetings in Leh, Ladakh.

UNFPA worked closely with the Y20 Secretariat and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to provide technical assistance for the development of the final Y20 communique, which was unveiled during the Y20 Main Summit.

UNFPA played a convening role in developing five white papers that facilitated collaboration across various UN agencies. These efforts contributed to hosting Y20 discussions nationwide. Consequently, Y20 Chaupals (Village-level Meetings) and Y20 consultations were organized across the country. UNFPA further hosted an online consultation involving youth from 22 countries. These consultations captured the aspirations and policy suggestions of young people, which were instrumental in shaping the themes for Y20.

The summits brought together over 100 youth delegates from G20 countries to deliberate on five key themes: Future of Work: Industry 4.0, Innovation and 21st Century Skills; Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction: Making Sustainability a Way of Life; Shared Future: Youth in Democracy and Governance; Peacebuilding and Reconciliation: Ushering in an Era of No War; and Health, Wellbeing and Sports: Agenda for Youth.



Mainstreaming Gender Discussions at the W20 Summit

"Placing women and girls at the heart of sustainable development by ensuring their full rights and choices within bodily autonomy, health, education, and employment is the most strategic economic and social investment," emphasized UNFPA Representative Andrea M. Wojnar during the W20 Summit.

The W20 serves as the official G20 engagement group dedicated to gender equity. Its primary aim is to integrate gender considerations into G20 discussions, translating them into policies and commitments that promote gender equality and women's economic empowerment as part of the G20 Leaders' Declaration.

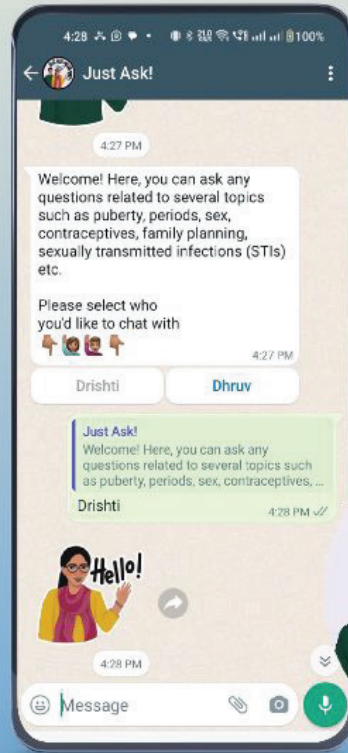
Leveraging the Power of Youth



A Forward-Looking Youth Policy Centred on Young People's Aspirations

On International Youth Day (August 12), the Rajasthan Youth Board unveiled a new draft Youth Policy, developed in collaboration with UNFPA's technical support, and presented it to the Honourable Chief Minister, Mr. Ashok Gehlot.

Mr. Sriram Haridass, UNFPA India Deputy Representative, and Mr. Sitaram Lamba, Chairman of the State Youth Board, along with other esteemed dignitaries, presented the policy. This policy adopts a rights-based approach, aligning itself with the Sustainable Development Goals and the constitutional rights that India upholds. Its primary goal is to foster the right opportunities and create an enabling environment for the nurturing of healthy, capable, socially conscious, ethically aware, economically empowered, and engaged young citizens, all working towards the state's development. Additionally, a booklet titled "Youth's Aspirations," which sheds light on the challenges and dreams of the state's youth, was also released.

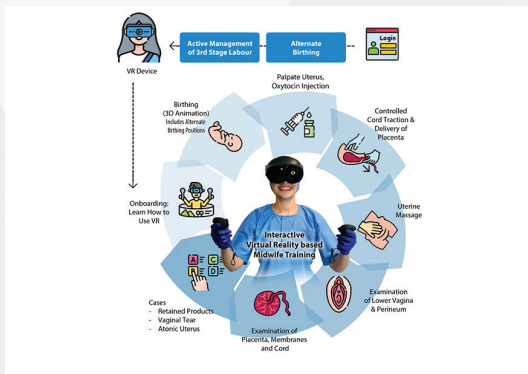


Just Ask! Khulke Poocho! chatbot

Health and Rights now at the Fingertips of Young People – The 'Just Ask' Digital Engagement Platform

In partnership with the National Health Mission (NHM), Government of Madhya Pradesh, UNFPA developed and launched the "JustAsk! Khulke Poocho!" chatbot, a cutting-edge digital engagement platform. Powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI), this chatbot has the potential to revolutionize how we educate adolescents and youth about sexual and reproductive health and rights. It paves the way for a future devoid of stigma and marked by well-informed decisions. With the 'Just Ask' chatbot, users can seek answers to questions related to adolescence, bodily changes, puberty, menstruation, reproductive health, pregnancy, family planning, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) topics. You can find more information about the chatbot [here](#).

New Frontiers with Technology and Innovations



Cutting-Edge Virtual Reality (VR) Simulation Training for Midwives

The Government of India (GoI) launched 'The Midwifery Initiative' to create a cadre of Nurse Practitioner Midwives (NPMs) in India. The aim of this initiative is to promote physiological births and ensure quality, dignified and respectful woman-centered care. UNFPA designed and launched a 'Virtual Reality-Based Simulation Training Program' at the National Midwifery Training Institute (NMTI), Patiala, Punjab to enhance their skilling. The training modality will not replace the conventional method of training in skills labs and with real clients but will act as an additional skill-building tool for active management of third stage of labour (AMTSL), identification of postpartum hemorrhage (PPH) scenarios and timely referrals.



Exploring the Potential of Geospatial Technology for Demographic Intelligence

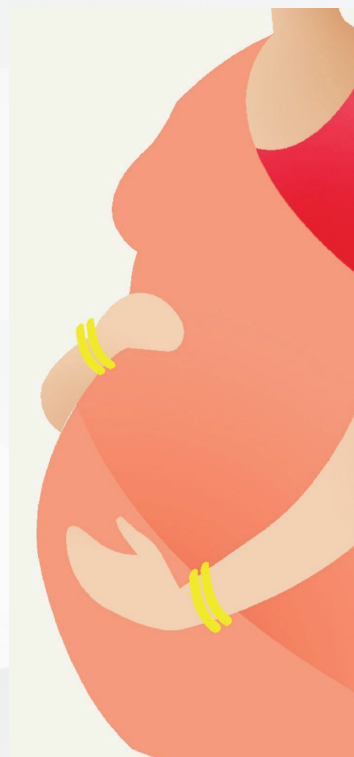
UNFPA, in collaboration with the Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD), organized a workshop that brought together a diverse array of stakeholders, including Amazon Web Services (AWS), MAXAR, the Department of Census, UNFPA experts, and CYSD team members. This workshop delved into the significance of geospatial technology, artificial intelligence, and machine learning in enhancing our understanding of demographic trends. Discussions encompassed the creation of informative visual representations across landscapes and the development of proxy indicators to anticipate previously unexplored population trends.

Elevating Gender Transformation Through Enhanced Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

Strengthening Implementation of the PCPNDT Act

To bolster the effective implementation of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, a national workshop, in conjunction with a training-of-trainers session, was conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

Mr. Naresh Kumar, Special Secretary, overseeing the Directorate of Health, Safety, and Regulations in the Government of Himachal Pradesh, emphasized the vital role of community engagement in creating a supportive environment for women and girls. Dr. Deepa Prasad, Chief of Programmes and Technical Support at UNFPA, shared valuable insights on gender-biased sex selection and the misuse of technology. She also stressed the importance of engaging a wide array of stakeholders to comprehensively address the issue. This initiative successfully trained over 100 Appropriate Authorities and Nodal Officers representing 33 states and union territories. Key elements of the training encompassed comprehensive coverage of all sections under the PCPNDT Act, analysis of case laws regarding procedural matters, and the provision of standard operating guidelines.





Collaborating to Expand Contraceptive Options

In line with the Government of India's FP 2030 commitment to diversify contraceptive choices, UNFPA has forged a close partnership with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and donor organizations. As part of this commitment, the MoHFW introduced two new contraceptives—Single Rod Subdermal Implant (Implanon NXT) and subcutaneous injection of Depot Medroxyprogesterone Acetate subcutaneous (DMPA-SC)—within the National Family Planning Programme. UNFPA played a pivotal role in facilitating the procurement of these contraceptives. Furthermore, UNFPA supported training on implant procedures and ensured the availability of training resources such as humanistic training arms and placebos to facilitate a seamless rollout of training across 10 states and 20 districts. UNFPA is also actively engaged in supporting the introduction of Antara-SC and Single Rod Implant (Implanon NXT) across 8 districts in Odisha and Rajasthan (4 in each state), with 12 providers already trained in Rajasthan and plans for training providers in Odisha underway.



Empowering Midwifery-Led Care Units for Respectful Maternity Care

With UNFPA's assistance, midwifery-led care units (MLCUs) have been established at Pannadhay Hospital in Udaipur (Rajasthan) and Mata Kaushalya Hospital in Patiala (Punjab), which are connected to the two National Medical Training Institutes (NMTIs). These initiatives have also involved capacity-building for staff to provide respectful maternity care and to support physiological births in birthing positions chosen by women without complications.



Ensuring Quality Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in Labor Rooms

The UNFPA India Representative, Andrea Wojnar, and Deputy Representative, Sriram Haridass, engaged with labor room staff at the District Hospital in Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh, where UNFPA is actively supporting efforts to guarantee the provision of high-quality sexual and reproductive health services.



A Training Manual to Challenge Harmful Gender Norms

UNFPA launched the Ujjawal Training Manual on positive masculinity with the aim of combating detrimental gender norms and engaging boys in the promotion of an equitable society. The launch event was honored by the presence of Shri Inder Singh Parmar, the Honorable Minister of School Education, Government of Madhya Pradesh.

Fostering Collaborations for Enhanced Services



Empowering Skills in Alternate Birthing Positions

Laerdal Medical India Private Ltd has joined forces with UNFPA to advance the development of a comprehensive training module focusing on alternate birthing positions (ABP). This versatile module, offered in both physical and e-learning formats, offers essential guidance for facilitating deliveries in birthing positions chosen by women. The primary beneficiaries of this training module are nurses and midwives affiliated with the National Midwifery Training Institutes (NMTIs) and Nursing Colleges. UNFPA, in partnership with Laerdal Medical India, procured 30 MamaBirthie manikin units, which have been deployed at NMTIs, the State Midwifery Training Institute, and Nursing Colleges.



Strategic Partnerships Driving Change

Strategic partnerships play a pivotal role in the 10th Country Programme Document (CPD) as identified accelerators for change. Aligned with this vision, UNFPA India has engaged in significant collaborations to advance the cause of gender equality.

- In Madhya Pradesh, an MoU was inked with the Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication to seamlessly integrate population and gender considerations into journalism curricula, fostering awareness among aspiring journalists.
- In Rajasthan, UNFPA joined forces with the Rajasthan Police Academy through an MoU aimed at enhancing the capacities of police officers and promoting evidence-based programming. This collaboration seeks to strengthen the police response to gender-based violence through multifaceted linkages.
- UNFPA established an MoU with the Haridev Joshi University of Journalism and Mass Communication, focusing on building the capacities of young journalism students. The partnership aims to empower students with knowledge about gender-related issues while enhancing their abilities in gender-sensitive reporting.



The "My Rights - My Choice" Project: Advancing Modern Contraceptive Uptake

UNFPA and Bayer AG have collaborated on the "My Right-My Choices" project, aimed at co-creating a scalable and sustainable intervention model to improve access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services among adolescents, youth, and eligible couples. This innovative intervention promotes the uptake of modern contraceptives through a blended systemic approach, combining digital interventions with health system strengthening (HSS) initiatives. The strategy focuses on raising awareness and enhancing the accessibility and availability of quality information and family planning services in India. As part of this endeavor, the AI-based chatbot 'Just Ask/Khulke Poochho' was launched to facilitate access by young people to health information and services.

Empowering Marginalized Voices through Action



Swacchangini: A Breakthrough Movement for Marginalized Communities

Mr. Hans Jacob Frydenlund, the Ambassador of Norway to India, paid a visit to the UNFPA-Patna Municipal Corporation (PMC) project situated in the Adalatganj slum in the city. During his visit, Mr. Frydenlund lauded the impactful work undertaken by UNFPA, particularly its efforts in empowering marginalized women and youth. He expressed appreciation for the Swacchangini initiative, which focuses on women-led mechanized sewer cleaning.

This initiative garnered recognition from the Urban Development and Housing Department (UDHD) and earned the prestigious 3rd prize in the state-level tableau competition held on August 15, Indian Independence Day. This accolade serves as a testament to the outstanding commitment and contribution of the Swacchangini intervention, highlighting its significant role in driving positive transformation within marginalized communities.



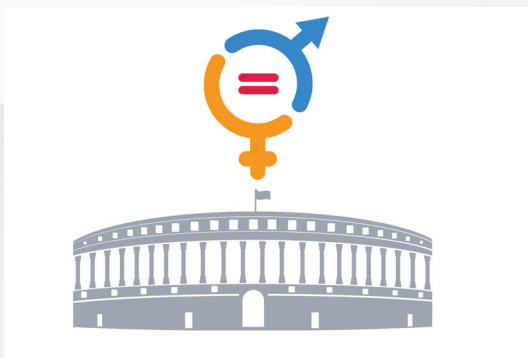
A Field Visit by the Department of Minority Welfare

In Bihar, a comprehensive field visit was conducted by Dr. Safeena A.N (IAS), Principal Secretary, and Dr. A. A. A. Faizi from the Department of Minority Welfare. They were accompanied by Prof. Faiz from Maulana Azad National Urdu University, the District Minority Welfare Officer, and the Circle Officer. The visit encompassed an observation of key activities, including the vibrant morning assembly and module transactions within the Taalim-I-Naubalighan program at Madarsa Nooria Fazlul Uloom in Ekamba, Begusarai. Valuable insights into the project's impact on education and overall development were gleaned through interactions with students, teachers, parents, and community members.



Reviving the Civil Society Platform – Sanjha Abhiyan

UNFPA, UNICEF, and the Department of Child Rights, Government of Rajasthan, organized a consultation aimed at building the capacities of 52 representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs) and government departments. This capacity-building exercise focused on promoting human rights-based approaches to address child marriage and confront discriminatory social norms. The event marked the revival of the "Sanjha Abhiyan," a civil society platform committed to collectively monitoring progress under the State Specific Action Plan and providing recommendations to end child marriage in the state.



Parliamentarians Pledge to Advocate for Gender Equality

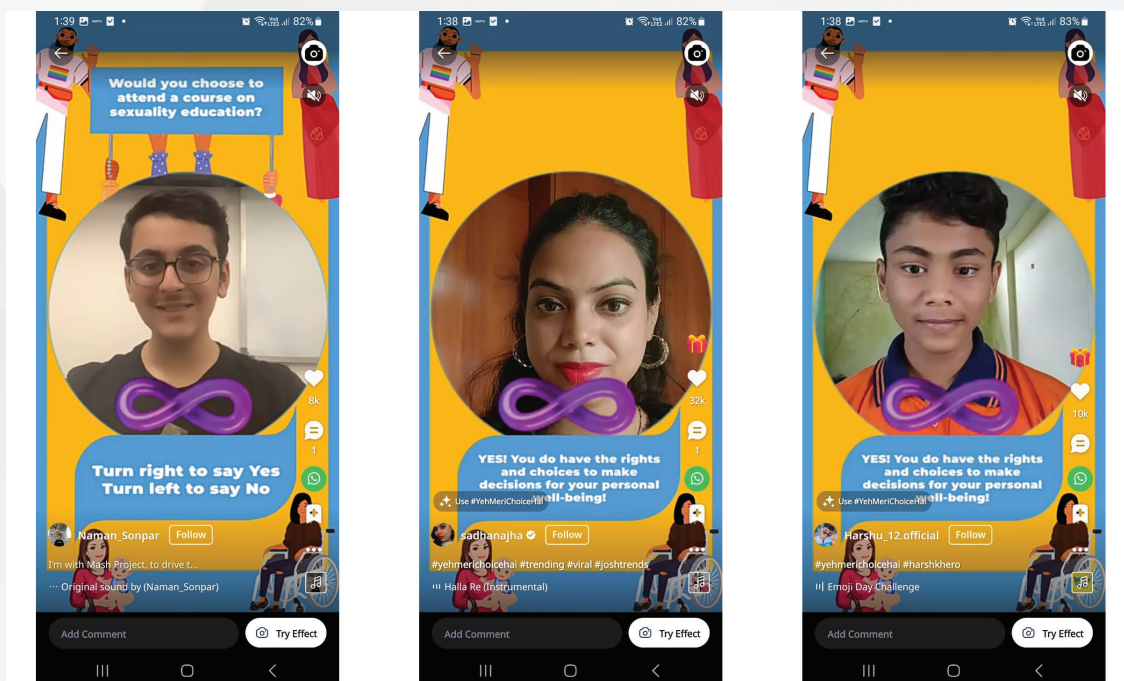
A roundtable meeting convened by the CSO-led coalition, Girls Count, in collaboration with UNFPA, brought together nine Members of Parliament (MPs). During this gathering, parliamentarians resolved to take action in their constituencies and engage in parliamentary debates to champion the rights and value of women and girls, while also challenging son preference.



Exploring Disciplinary Research-Policy

UNFPA convened a meeting involving a panel of multidisciplinary experts to review the initial round of research studies initiated under Country Programme 10 (CP10), known as '[Research for Impact Reviews \(R4I\)](#)'. The primary objective of this gathering was to shape the research agenda to be more interdisciplinary, enabling its use in informing programmatic and policy interventions.

Media and Social Media Highlights



Uniting Young People: 'Yeh Meri Choice Hai' Filter Challenge Amplifies Voices on World Population Day

On World Population Day (July 11), UNFPA initiated an interactive challenge to spotlight the voices of young people concerning various aspects of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). This engaging social media challenge aimed to gain insights into the perspectives of Indian youth regarding their overall health and well-being.



Cricketer Jemimah Rodrigues Joins UNFPA in the Fight Against Gender-Based Violence

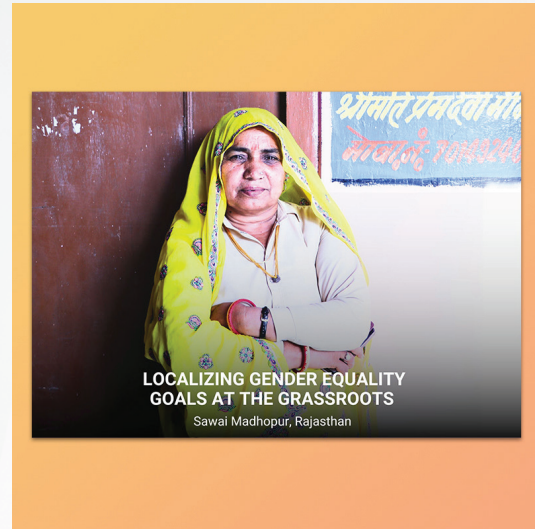
Renowned cricketer Jemimah Rodrigues partnered with UNFPA to lend her voice to the cause of combatting violence against women and girls. In a compelling message, she passionately advocated for action against gender-based violence, emphasizing the significance of unity across diverse backgrounds to work towards a world of gender equality. You can watch her heartfelt message [here](#).

Key Publications



Community Matters – A UNFPA and Outlook India Special Edition

UNFPA proudly presents "Leading Change, Changing Lives", a special edition with leading magazine Outlook India that showcases the remarkable impact of UNFPA's initiatives in Rajasthan, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar concerning Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Choices, Gender Equality, and Empowerment. Read the full edition [here](#).



Localizing Gender Equality - Goals at the Grassroots

Witness two dedicated Mahila Sarpanches, Seema Devi and Prem Devi Meena, lead transformative change in Sawai Madhopur (Rajasthan), defying societal norms and championing women's rights in their communities. Click [here](#) to read this inspiring success story.

In the news

[India's Chance to Lead: Reproductive autonomy, healthier lives and gender dividend](#)

Authored jointly by Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director, Population Foundation of India and Andrea Wojnar, India Representative, United Nations Population Fund.

[Women's Reproductive Autonomy as the New Catchword](#)

Authored by Andrea Wojnar, India Representative, United Nations Population Fund.

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