

Working for Women and Girls in India

March 2012

DFID in India

India is a key strategic partner to the UK and the largest democracy in the Commonwealth. India is growing fast and is making good progress on tackling poverty. However, India has one third of the world's people living below \$1.25 (80 pence) a day and the average income is one third of China's.

We have overhauled the programme to reflect India's rising resources, and to ensure that it represents good value for money for the British taxpayer. We will help unlock the potential of the private sector to deliver jobs, products, infrastructure and basic services. Our support is aimed at the poorest women and girls, to help them get the quality schooling, healthcare, nutrition, and jobs which are key to breaking the cycle of poverty for the next generation.

Women and Girls: What we are doing

India has reinforced its commitment to improve the lives of women and girls by initiating large, innovative programmes and new funding since 2005. Cash payments to new mothers who give birth in health facilities and bicycles for girls who stay in school have been introduced on a wide scale. However, inequality and discrimination are still pervasive particularly in India's poorest states. The World Economic Forum's 2011 Global Gender Gap Report ranks India 113th out of 135 countries.

Improving the lives of women and girls is at the heart of DFID's programme in India. We target the most critical stage of a woman's life – adolescence – where vulnerability is high and opportunities to break the cycle of discrimination and poverty are greatest. We are helping girls stay in secondary school; thus pushing back the age of marriage and enhancing girls' respect in society. We are investing in interventions that reinforce each other and deliver in the long term - family planning, health and nutrition, microfinance and skills for jobs.

Over time, the UK is moving from an aid relationship with India to a mutual, two-way partnership on critical global development issues, including trade, global growth, climate change, and food security.



Ride to school: As many girls as boys in India attend primary school. But when poverty forces families to choose who goes to secondary school, it's usually the boys. ***In the next four years, DFID will help disadvantaged young women - especially dalit and tribal girls - get their chance of a secondary education. We will help build more local secondary schools, train teachers and get help directly to girls to cover the costs of schooling.***

What we will achieve

- **600,000 more girls get a chance to secondary education.** 300,000 more girls enrolled in secondary schools; help 240,000 dalit and tribal girls to go, stay, and graduate from secondary school by funding 'state of the art' cash incentives that reward school attendance; 50,000 girls will be provided with safe transport.
- **400,000 mothers deliver babies more safely** with the help of nurses, midwives or doctors.
- **Help 3 million more women have access to wider choices for family planning** through State Health programmes that work with private providers to deliver a wide range of modern contraceptives.
- **5.5 million more women access credit, savings and insurance.** Use access to finance, skills for jobs and links to markets to help women in the poorest states to benefit from India's growth.
- **500,000 poor women will benefit from lower health risks from indoor air pollution** and reduced drudgery will benefit from new or sustained access to modern, clean energy either for cooking or lighting needs.



Safe arrival for newborns: Rekha Rawat, a health worker in a small village in the state of Madhya Pradesh helps pregnant women to get to hospitals and deliver safely.

We will help 400,000 mothers deliver babies more safely with the help of nurses, midwives or doctors.



- **Protect women and girls from violence in Bihar** with an evidence-based strategy to prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) working with the government of Bihar. Expand VAWG evidence base for India through impact evaluations of promising interventions.

Business for development: Poor people often do not have the skills or finances to take advantage of jobs or economic opportunities that are available. Our new Private Sector programmes will help poor people, especially women, benefit from jobs, skills and access to finance in the low income states.

We will help women to increase their incomes, improve their social status, and manage their household finances and business ventures better.

Facts and Stats

- Child mortality rates are 61% higher for girls in India.
- Women labour force participation is 25% - one of the lowest in the world.
- Less than half of the married women use modern contraception.
- A third of women have experienced physical violence committed by their husbands (61% in Bihar and 49% in Madhya Pradesh).