

**W**e, the young people of India comprise 27.5% of the total population as per 2011 census. The National Youth Policy, 2014, acknowledges the importance of youth and envisions active youth participation in civic, social and political development of the country. As responsible citizens and future leaders, we are determined and advantageously poised to contribute to the growth of the nation. We will pursue this through active engagement and involvement in decisions that affect our lives and those of our families and communities.

Underpinning the Plan For Every Child Initiative led by Plan India, a series of regional and national level youth debatathons took place from October to November 2017, bringing forth the collective voices of 181 youth from five regions on solutions towards issues faced by young people and children, and especially girls in vulnerable and marginalised situations.

We, the young people, through our collective experience, appeal to all to ensure the protection of every child, especially girls in difficult circumstances, from any form of discrimination and deprivation, so that all children can realise their rights and entitlements and fulfil their potential.

To ensure that no girl is left behind, we urge you, the Government of India, and other stakeholders, to make every effort and undertake all measures to secure quality education for all girls; their optimal health and development; protection from all forms of violence including harmful traditional practices; and complete inclusion in decision making and other participatory processes. More specifically, we appeal to you to:

- 1 Ensure access to quality education and review educational curricula to eliminate gender bias and promote gender equality, also by strengthening gender ratios among teachers;
- 2 Combat dropout of girls at high school levels by increasing residential education and free transport facilities;
- 3 Improve facilities available in schools and colleges to address the needs of girl children, and emphasise on improving knowledge and practices related to menstrual hygiene and sexual reproductive health;
- 4 Eradicate gender stereotypes and prevent and eliminate gender-based violence and exploitation in all settings, including the home, place of education, community, workplace, etc.;
- 5 Create safe spaces at all levels (families, communities, institutions, public forums and government) for young people to express their views and opinions and constructively engage in decision making, including via digital platforms;
- 6 Invest in skill building and economic empowerment of girls and young women and provide diversified vocational choices which are gender equitable and transformative;
- 7 Improve gender-ratios in the workforce by providing opportunities to young women and also building conducive work environments to protect and uphold their rights, especially with respect to equal wages, opportunities and sexual harassment at the workplace;
- 8 Promote sports and cultural activities as a tool to engage with girls on different issues, also providing them with opportunities to represent themselves at various platforms;
- 9 Make special provisions for effective inclusion of and equal opportunities for most marginalised girls and young women, including those most vulnerable and excluded such as those living with disabilities, in extreme poverty, etc.; and
- 10 Enforce laws and sensitisation of law enforcement agencies towards the rights of children and young women, with strict provisions for non-compliance.



We, the young people of India, are resourceful and wholeheartedly committed to making meaningful contributions to resolve the problems affecting our lives and society at large. With your help, support and investment, we are determined to create an India that is fit for young people, and a society that nurtures respect for every citizen, celebrates diversity and promotes equality.