

# Up Grade

KEEPING GIRLS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
IS CRITICAL – FOR THEM AND FOR US



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**Piramal Foundation**  
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## Kiawah Trust

The Kiawah Trust is a UK family foundation that is committed to improving the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged adolescent girls in India. The Kiawah Trust believes that educating adolescent girls from poor communities allows them to thrive, to have greater choice in their life and a louder voice in their community. This leads to healthier, more prosperous and more stable families, communities and nations.

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## Table of Contents

Foreword .....	1
Executive Summary .....	2
 1. The size and shape of the problem .....	5
 2. Key movers in the sector .....	19
 3. Key levers to improve girls' secondary education .....	27
Recommendations & Conclusion .....	35
Appendices	
Acknowledgements .....	38
Acronyms .....	40
Glossary .....	40
Endnotes .....	41



## FOREWORD

Education is the biggest challenge that our country faces today. We have a massive school system with 250 million children in 1.5 million schools, but are children are not learning. We placed second last in the global PISA test, better only to Kyrgystan in the quality of education that we deliver to our children! In this web of low student learning, girls in our nation are particularly disadvantaged.

It is estimated that 165 million women, in India, aged over 15 are illiterate and only one in 100 girls is reaching Class 12 currently. While number of girls attending primary school is largely same as the numbers of boys, the gap widens as they hit puberty and are forced to dropout to help with work at home or get married. School dropout rate amongst adolescent girls in India is as high as 63.5%. Nearly 45% girls In India get married before the age of eighteen years and roughly 50% of all working children are girls.

India is at serious risk of missing the UN's Millennium Development Goal of not just quality education for all by 2015, but also those related to women empowerment.

Ensuring quality education for girls is critical for India to achieve its socio-economic ambitions. All of our growth models depend on excellent human capital, and without investing in quality education, we will get trapped into being a middle income economy. We must recognize that women are critical contributors to our workforce, some of our leading business leaders today are women, and therefore empowering women to become responsible and productive citizens is critical for our nation's economic growth. Similarly, by investing in girls' education and empowering them to be opinion leaders and decision makers, we can address many challenges that are plaguing our society: maternal and child health, population explosion and gender based violence.

Our government too has recognized the importance of educating our girls and has taken some steps in this direction. Policies such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan and the recently announced Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme put special focus on access to education for girls. Additionally, as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, the Government has committed to ensuring separate girls' and boys' toilets in each government school, with a view that toilets are particularly important to girls' retention and attendance.

But while increasing access to schooling for girls is critical, we need to ensure they receive high quality education to prepare them for success as our nation's leaders. Our policies should also focus on shifting mindsets of our communities to recognize the importance of investing in our girls' education. Moreover, special emphasis needs to be laid on reducing dropout for girls at the secondary level.

We need to ensure that every girl receives pre-primary education that lays a strong foundation for her knowledge, primary education that strengthens her literacy and numeracy skills, secondary education that enhances her vocational skills and employability and higher education that enriches her technical and intellectual capacity.

If we are able to combine access, quality, basic infrastructure like toilets and safety in our education policies for girls, we will be able to ensure that all our girls receive the education that enables them to be empowered citizens. Our nation will not truly progress, if we do not ensure that half our population is receiving quality education.

Every girl in India deserves a better chance at life, and I urge you to join Dasra in addressing this mammoth challenge of education for all girls which will ultimately help us achieve equity and growth in our society.



**ASHISH DHAWAN**

Founder and CEO, Central Square Foundation

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For most of India's largely rural population, for economic and social reasons, completing school is an unlikely event. And for girls even more so. With the rate of drop-outs easily outrunning that of enrollments – in varying degrees across the country – India's potential talent pool of girls has always emptied out much faster than it has filled up.

Against that dust-blown background, 42-year old Meena Bhati stands out as a glimmering poster girl for both, Educate Girls (EG) as well as the larger cause of educating girls in India. EG is a Mumbai-based non-profit that works across more than 4,500 villages in Rajasthan, to give girls a better shot at entering and finishing secondary schooling.

### *Surviving the desert*

*Meena is a Field Communications Manager at EG - which is wonderfully ironic because she almost didn't complete her own schooling due to family pressure to marry. Hers is a story of circumstances coming full circle, and now spinning outwards into thousands of similar potential success stories. She was born in a patriarchal Rajasthani community that discourages girls from seeking an education, but she convinced her parents to let her study up to class 10.*

*When that milestone passed, she was pulled out of school and told to focus on household chores and care for her younger siblings. The next 10 years, she did just that. And then she was married. The setback proved to be a blessing. Her husband is a teacher, who helped her back into the school system, which she completed, then went on to acquire a Bachelor's degree in Education, and is currently studying Hindi and Rural Development at the post-graduate level.*

*Meena is now a role model for girls across the desert state; in her they see proof that they can aspire to a full education and then make it happen.*

*But she is also part of a miniscule minority among India's adolescent girls, who generally have far worse luck and family support when it comes to staying in school.*

1 / 100

girls

*in rural India  
reaches grade 12*

There is a  
shortage of  
2,00,000

*secondary schools  
in India*

53%

of teachers

*at the secondary  
level have only  
completed  
graduation  
or less*

## **Class barriers**

At home, they face parents, specially in rural settings, who do not see value in girls being educated. Many girls in their early-to-mid teens are seen as overdue for marriage and pulled out of school. In homes where money is scarce – and it often is – it is considered better spent on boys than girls.

At school, girls say their teachers' perceptions and behaviors are biased towards boys. School books frequently reinforce gender stereotypes of women as passive participants without much to contribute socially, economically or intellectually.

All these factors shape a girl's desire to go to school and stay there until completion – and her parents' desire to send her there.

While there may be differences of opinion on the choice of response to the issue, there is no ambiguity at all on what secondary education can do for girls. Experts and experience have shown beyond any doubt that – like a girl-child vaccine of sorts – it fights early marriage and pregnancy, improves maternal and child health, and gives her a measure of economic independence.

Dasra has identified the following four cornerstones that hold the potential to build a secondary school system that can achieve this:

1. Decentralize management authority down to school level
2. Create a girl-friendly environment in secondary schools
3. Increase focus on skills development
4. Integrate technology to improve quality of education

## **Roll call**

While a nascent generation of non-profits is exploring new ways to make this happen, their patchwork of programs can become a completed jigsaw only when businesses and the government place the full weight of their intents and resources behind these fledgling efforts. A good place for them to start would be funding non-profits such as Children's Lovecastles Trust, Going to School and Learning Links Foundation, which are doing pioneering work to take secondary education to girls across the country.

We can take no credit for the first Meena – she was entirely the product of sheer good fortune and the surge of her own aspirations. But if we make it our business to nurture and inspire the next generation of Meena Bhatias across the countryside, we will have pointed India's girl child towards the horizon and set her free.



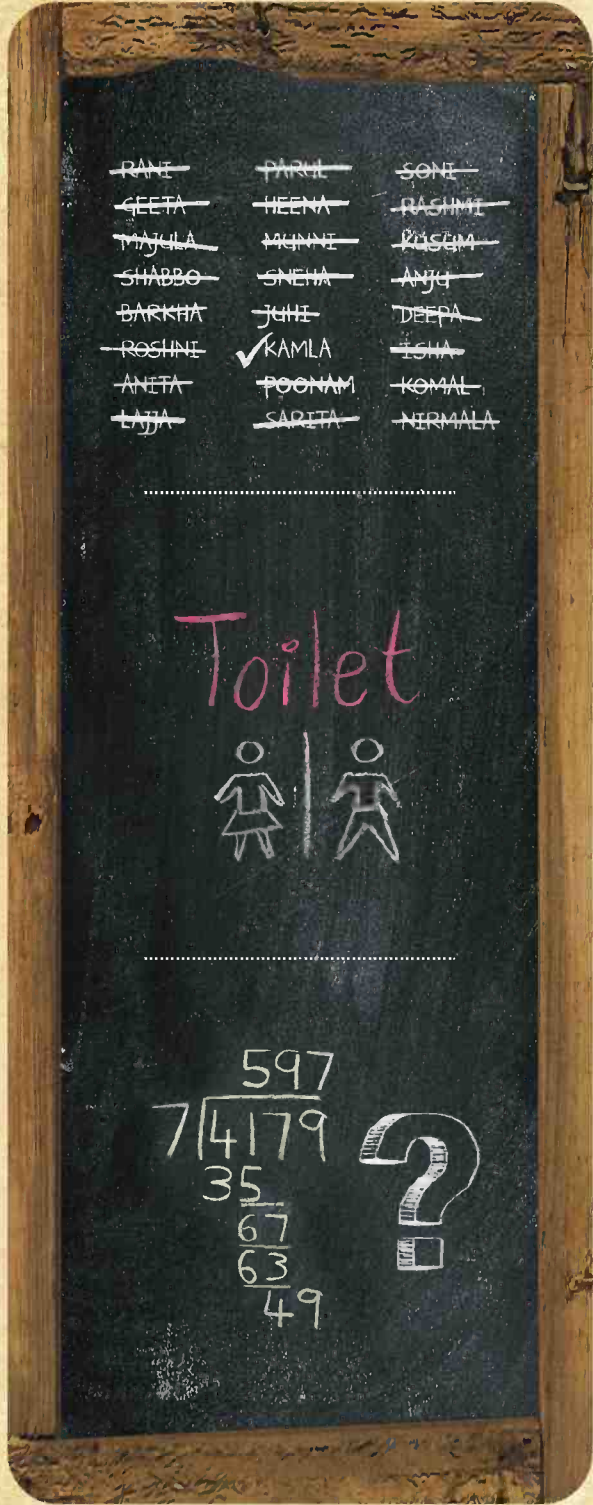




## The Size and Shape of the Problem

3.7 million

girls are out-of-school in India.



**Enrollment, attendance and completion:**

- 43% girls and 58% boys are enrolled in secondary education
- 49% of girls enrolled in secondary school do not attend classes

**Access and Infrastructure:**

- 39% of poor households have access to a secondary school within a 2 km radius as compared to 59% of rich households
- 40% of schools do not have a separate toilet for girls

**Quality:**

- There are about 11 female teachers per 100 male teachers in rural India, compared to 138 female teachers per 100 male teachers in urban India
- 25% of all children enrolled in Std VIII have difficulty reading a simple text at the Std II level of difficulty. Nearly 50% still cannot solve a division problem

This section defines the problem on two counts:

1. India's shifting focus from elementary to secondary schooling, and
2. How secondary education is failing girls in India

## 1. INDIA'S SHIFTING FOCUS FROM ELEMENTARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOLING

India has made strong progress in education in the last two decades, achieving nearly complete enrollment in primary education.<sup>1</sup> Development stakeholders ranging from the Indian government to international organizations, civil society and philanthropists have been directing extensive focus and funding towards the growth of the education sector.

Most of this focus has been on primary education, as the first step, aimed at establishing the importance of education in the minds of marginalized communities, improving enrollment, access to schools and literacy levels. India has made significant progress in these areas and India is track to achieve its Millennium Development Goal of universalizing primary education.<sup>2</sup> Enrollment level in primary schools has made significant strides with over 97% of children in schools in 2014.<sup>3</sup>

Strong rates of enrollment and retention at the primary school level, along with India's sustained economic growth, have significantly increased demand for secondary education, which is where the focus of the development sector and the government is now shifting to.<sup>4</sup>



## Fundamental differences between elementary and secondary education sectors:

It is important to recognize the key factors which differentiate the secondary education sector from elementary education. These factors make it difficult to replicate a strategy which worked at the elementary level for secondary education.



### Elementary Education Sector

### Secondary Education Sector

#### Management Structure

A majority of the schools are government schools.

Large proportion of students study in privately managed schools, which are autonomous in nature.

There are around 30 state secondary examination boards, which add to the heterogeneity, making it difficult for a single solution to address the challenges across the country.

#### Policy

Elementary education is a constitutional right in India and so various government schemes and programs aim to make education affordable and bring schools within convenient reach of the marginalized sections.

Secondary education is not a right and there exist several barriers which limit access to it.

#### Resource Requirement

Investment required in elementary schools is relatively lower than secondary schools.

Secondary schools require higher investment.

Skilled subject teachers, high quality learning materials and learning aids such as science laboratories, libraries and computer laboratories, are essential requirements for secondary education.

## 2. HOW SECONDARY EDUCATION IS FAILING GIRLS IN INDIA

*It is estimated that for every 100 girls that enroll in school in rural India, 40 will reach grade 4, 18 will reach grade eight, nine will reach grade 9, and only one will make it to grade 12.*

Quality secondary education equips girls with the skills, attitudes and experiences that they need to be able to exercise choices and make themselves economically self-sustaining – it is one of the most effective ways to level the gender gap.

Compared to primary schooling, gender parity at the secondary education level is skewed substantially in favor of boys.

The early years of puberty are when adolescent girls from rural and less developed India are most likely to drop out of school. Secondary education is a privilege held back from them by two forces – gender and community restrictions, and institutional bottlenecks.

Gender-based constraints typically include strong social stereotyping that views education spending as wasted on girls, who are expected to either marry early (often under-age) and focus on child rearing, cooking and cleaning; or join the labor market and support their families. Additionally, India's poor standards of latrine design, construction and maintenance, particularly in schools, discourage girls from using toilets during menstruation. On menstruating days, in the absence of a safe and private place to manage their period, girls often leave school half-way through the day – many simply prefer to stay home. These factors limit mobility for menstruating girls, resulting in missed school attendance and consequently poor academic performance.

Institutional factors primarily involve an acute shortage of good secondary schools across the country, as well as unsafe and inconvenient access for girls, typically involving long distances covered on foot, and the potential danger of kidnapping and sexual assault.

Institutional bottlenecks also include the fact that most non-urban schools lack good toilets, specially for girls; there is also a lack of quality secondary school teachers, as well as teaching materials such as science and computer labs, and libraries. Across the country, there are also substantial regional differences in availability and quality of secondary education – the issue is particularly severe in the central Indian belt of states that includes Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand, where gender stereotyping is loaded heavily against women.

For a girl, the consequences of getting little or no education are wide ranging – including poor health and nutrition, above-average mortality rates, weak economic performance, poor control over decisions affecting her life and a continuing cycle of poverty for her family.

The range of obstacles that come in the way of girls entering and staying in the secondary school system can broadly belong to two categories – lack of access, comprising factors that originate from individuals or households and the community they live in; and poor quality, which stems from institutional weaknesses – both of which work at the individual, community and institutional levels.<sup>5</sup>

	Individual	Community	Institutional
<b>Lack of Access</b>	<p><b>Economic access</b></p> <p>Non-urban households tend to view spending on school fees, uniforms, books and transportation as wasted on girls – making them much more likely to be pulled out of school than boys.</p>	<p><b>Social access</b></p> <p>Social norms in rural societies promote girls being married early and largely confined to their homes post-puberty.</p> <p>More than completing their education and finding jobs, girls are expected to focus on household chores and raising children.</p>	<p><b>Physical access</b></p> <p>Demand for secondary schools far exceeds supply. As a result, a non-urban secondary school will typically be a long walk from a girl's home – often involving the risk of kidnap and sexual assault.</p>
<b>Poor Quality</b>	<p><b>School readiness</b></p> <p>Insufficient support at home makes girls unable to cope with secondary school standards, leading to failure in exams.</p> <p>Pressure to focus on domestic chores is a demotivating factor for girls aiming to stay in school.</p>	<p><b>Unequal treatment</b></p> <p>India's gender stereotypes are reinforced in schools and teachers' attitudes, making girls uneasy and stressed.</p> <p>Discrimination against certain castes and communities results in girls from these groups being more repressed than the general population of girls.</p>	<p><b>Learning environment</b></p> <p>School infrastructure – toilets, drinking water, safe surroundings – often tends to be unsuitable for girls.</p> <p>Secondary education does not guarantee employability skills, so girls' parents perceive poor relevance.</p>

Adapted from:

- UNICEF (2007). *A Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All*
- Carlson, Samuel. 2009. *Secondary Education in India: Universalizing Opportunity*. World Bank

So far, most efforts to improve secondary education have focused on addressing supply-side or institutional issues – but a range of pilot programs have shown that opening new schools with the requisite infrastructure does not guarantee enrollment and retention. Consequently, the focus is now expanding to also ensure community buy-in, thereby addressing demand-side issues as well.

## LACK OF ACCESS

### Individual-level barriers – Economic Access:

The most commonly cited reason for girls dropping out of school is the inability of their households to bear the cost of schooling. At elementary education level, this is not much of an issue anymore, with the Right to Education Act providing for universal access; also since most schools are government-aided, they do not charge school fees. But the secondary level consists of more private than government schools, and in most cases, they are fee-based, which puts them out of reach of the poor. Further, at the secondary level, parents have to bear higher costs on uniforms, school books and other study material, and transportation.

As the table below shows, the burden of education on the poorest families is far greater than that on the richest families. Considering that marginalized households tend to have more children this burden only increases, often compelling parents to continue education for their sons instead of their daughters.

A study in Madhya Pradesh found financial constraints to be the leading barrier to girls' secondary education, with 70% of surveyed households considering it a critical factor influencing their decision to keep their girls in school.

**Table: Burden of education on the poorest families**

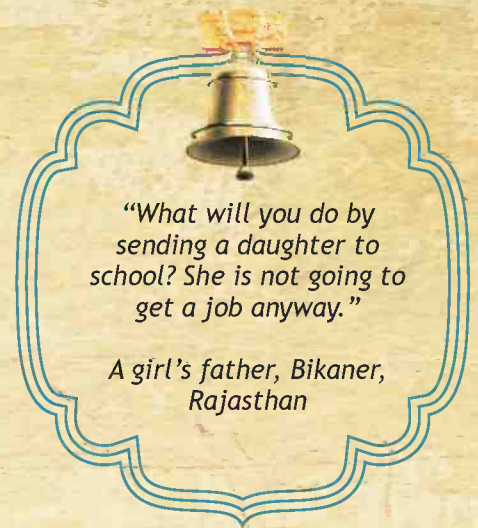
	Quintile 1 Poorest households	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5 Richest households
Household average monthly consumption (INR)	1536	2252	2982	4098	11,163
Minimum monthly schooling fee (INR 260) as % of average monthly consumption	17	12	9	6	2
Average number of children	3.2				0.8

### Community-level barriers – Social Access:

In the more marginalized parts of the country, secondary education is seen as irrelevant for girls, and parents and local communities do not support or encourage girls to complete schooling.

**Lack of parental support:** The mindset of parents in marginalized rural areas can be a strong barrier to education for girls. Their aspirations for daughters are limited to seeing them as wives and mothers – best suited for domestic chores such as fetching wood and water or caring for younger siblings – and few such parents expect their daughters to earn a living outside their community. Following this, they see little value in educating girls beyond elementary level, when schooling becomes relatively more expensive.

**Rigid social norms:** Studies have shown that a significant proportion of girls who drop out of schooling did so because they were about to get married. Customs prevailing in many rural societies in India encourage girls to get married in their teens. Traditional social norms also endorse keeping adolescent girls at home, and conservative rural communities also often discourage the idea of sending girls to co-educational schools, preferring to let them drop out instead. Fortunately, in recent years, increasing development sector focus on addressing child marriage has had a positive impact on girls' education.



Source: ICRW (2011). *Delaying Marriage for Girls in India, Formative Research to Design Interventions for Changing Norms*



Source: Dasra (2014). *Marry Me Later: Delaying Marriage and Pregnancy in India*


### **Institutional-level barriers – Physical Access:**

The existing number of secondary schools is insufficient to fulfill growing demand for secondary education. A recent Ernst & Young report estimated the need for 2,00,000 more secondary schools across India. The inability to conveniently reach a secondary school, especially in remote rural and tribal areas, is another key reason for girls dropping out of school. Studies show that having secondary schools nearby increases the chance of rural girls transitioning to secondary education.

While 99% of the rural population has a primary school within a 1-km radius from their homes, the scenario at the secondary level is different, with schools being spaced much further apart. This forces girls from economically weak sections either to pay for transportation or risk being sexually assaulted on the walk to or from school.

So far, the most common policy measure to address this lack of access has been to construct new schools and thereby also reduce the distance to be covered from home to school. But at secondary education level, scaling up access through school construction programs has been found to be ineffective, because secondary schools need to be supplemented with qualified subject teachers and infrastructure such as laboratories and libraries, which remain in short supply. Less than 30% of schools have separate rooms for science and computer labs, and less than 10% have math and language labs.

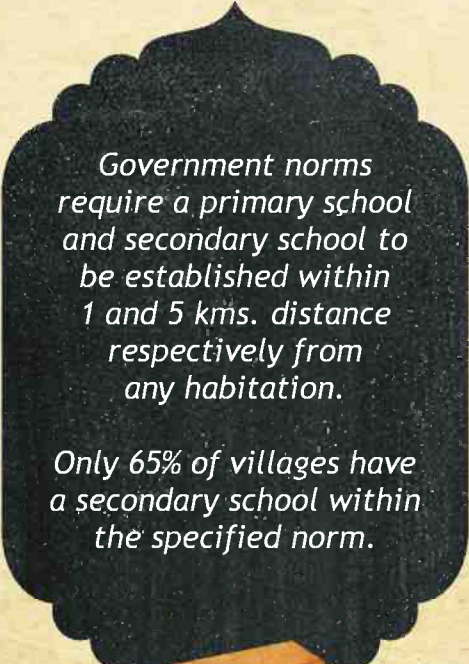
In two in-depth case studies of secondary schools in Rajasthan and Odisha, large disparities were found between rural and urban schools. The provision of equal facilities and learning resources to level the playing field between different types of schools and between rural and urban areas is an essential part of the agenda for the secondary school system. A government report recommends building larger secondary schools with more facilities, even if that would mean double-shifting, so as to provide better learning resources and make more efficient use of available land infrastructure.



*“Now she is 14 years old. It is very troublesome if she goes so far all alone. We take them to school and bring them back. One person has to be assigned with this responsibility all the time. All our girls stop going to school because of the distance.”*

*A girl's father, Datia, Madhya Pradesh*

Source: ICRW (2011). *Delaying Marriage for Girls in India, Formative Research to Design Interventions for Changing Norms.*



*Government norms require a primary school and secondary school to be established within 1 and 5 kms. distance respectively from any habitation.*

*Only 65% of villages have a secondary school within the specified norm.*



## POOR QUALITY

### Individual-level barriers

**Lack of school readiness:** Increasingly, studies show that lack of interest from girls is a key reason for them not transitioning from elementary to secondary school. This can partly be attributed to – apart from discouraging environments at home – poor quality of education at the elementary level, which leaves them unable to cope with the rising difficulty of the curriculum at secondary level and failing Class 9 – which is the first level where promotion to the next class is not mandated by law.

### Community-level barriers

**Unequal treatment:** Societal norms and biases against girls and the disadvantaged classes are often manifested inside the class, making them less inclined to attend school.

**Gender-biased environment:** Teachers often have different expectations from their male and female students. This biased perception of students' abilities is reflected in their attitudes, through the type of praise and feedback they give, and their teaching methodology, which affects classroom participation and eventual educational success of girls. Also, the learning environment through books and curricula frequently reinforces gender stereotypes by depicting girls and women in traditional roles, doing unpaid domestic work, or in a narrow set of professions such as teaching and nursing, with rare mentions of the broader range of options that girls can aspire to.

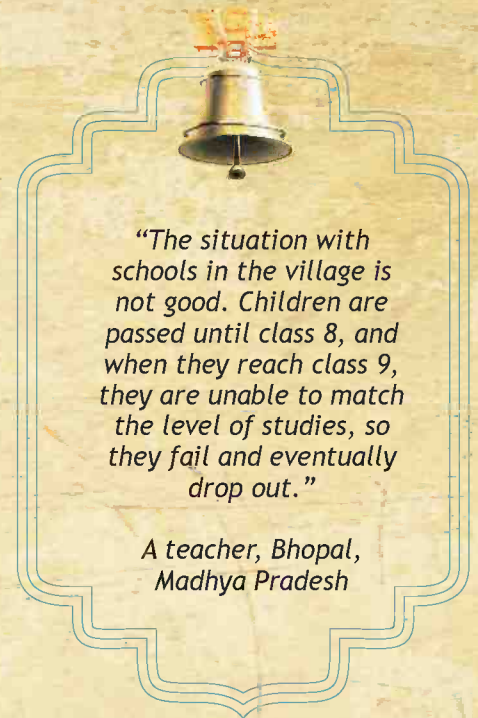
**Discrimination:** In certain regions, children from marginalized communities, such as Dalits and tribal groups, are discriminated against at school; sometimes they are asked to perform tasks such as cleaning floors or washing dishes. In some cases, these children are made to sit separately from others. The situation is much worse for girls from these communities.

### Institutional-level barriers

A major challenge that is now increasingly coming to the foreground for elementary and secondary education is poor quality of available education.

**Poor learning levels:** Although enrollment in secondary schools is increasing, many girls leave school with poor learning levels. This is primarily due to poor teaching and curricula. There are limited teachers available in rural areas qualified to teach at the secondary level – 53% of teachers at the secondary level have only completed graduation or less.<sup>6</sup> A majority of existing teachers require in-service training to be able to effectively teach the more technical subjects, such as science and math.

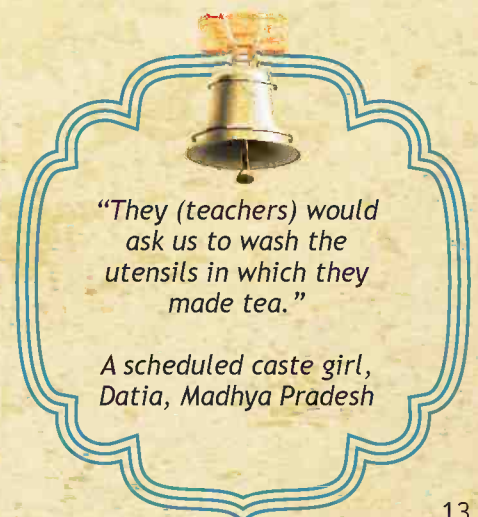
Further, the standardized curriculum used in secondary schools does not take into account the experiences of rural students, those speaking minority languages and regional disparities in its design, compounds the problem. This leaves students feeling disconnected from what they are being taught and consequently unable to imbibe it well.



*Textbooks show girls sweeping floors, serving food to boys and helping their mothers fetch water*



*Source: ICRW (2011). Delaying Marriage for Girls in India, Formative Research to Design Interventions for Changing Norms.*



Inadequate and unsafe school environment: Most budget and government secondary schools lack basic school infrastructure such as separate functional toilets for girls, drinking water and boundary walls, and essential facilities like libraries, laboratories, computer centers and playgrounds – these help improve a child’s desire to go to school, and are also a factor hampering girls’ retention.

Further, concern for the safety of a girl child, especially post-puberty, makes parents reluctant to let their daughters spend the day in an environment that is male-dominated and potentially unsafe. The severe lack of trained female teachers for secondary education, especially in rural areas, remains a continuing challenge.

Lack of perceived relevance: Dasra’s interviews with sector experts revealed that the lack of relevance of secondary education, as perceived by girls and their parents, is a critical underlying factor in the issue of drop-outs. Since completing secondary schooling does not build the skills needed to find a job or earn a living, girls find it irrelevant to put in an additional four years of education after they acquire basic literacy skills at the elementary level.



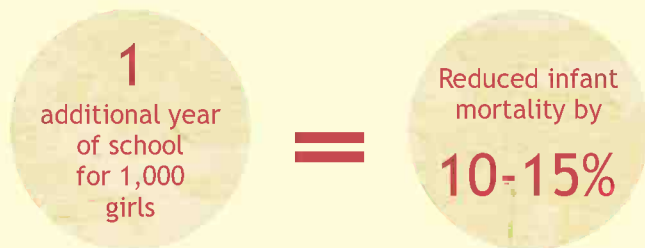
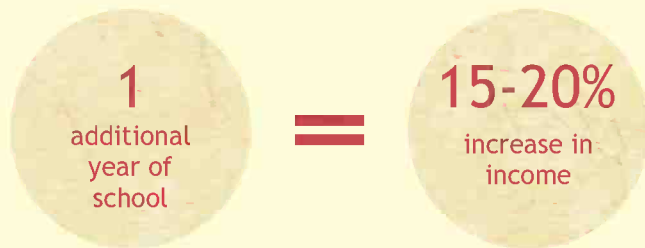
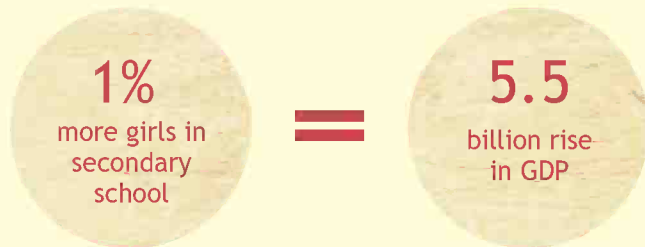
Source: UNICEF 2012



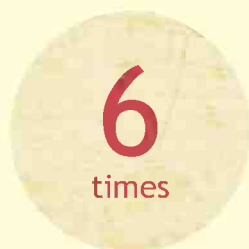
*“Study after study has taught us that there is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls and the empowerment of women. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, or improve nutrition and promote health.”*

*Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General,  
United Nations*

# WHY INVEST IN SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR GIRLS?



A girl with secondary schooling is



less likely to be a child bride



Sources:  
UNESCO (2011). *Education Counts: Towards the Millennium Development Goals*.  
World Bank (2002). *Returns to Investment in Education: A Further Update*. Psacharopoulos, George, and Harry Anthony Patrinos  
Center for Global Development (2009). *Girls Count: A Global Investment & Action Agenda*. Levine, Ruth; Lloyd Cynthia; Greene Margaret; and Grown Caren.

The benefits of educating girls are so significant and pervasive, that experts believe educating girls may be the highest-return investment available for the developing world. Educating girls improves the health and well-being of women and their families, reduces their vulnerabilities while giving them more agency in their communities and also stimulates economic growth across the country.

These benefits are visible as early as the primary education stage, but are significantly greater, and clearly result in girls having more decision-making authority and control over their lives when they have completed their secondary education.<sup>7</sup>

### Education reduces early marriage and births

Attaining secondary education has been found to have a direct impact on delaying the age of marriage in girls; women with secondary education also tend to have smaller families and invest more time and resources on their children's health and education.

Further, secondary education for girls from marginalized communities helps meet the growing need for female teachers and health workers in these communities. This is especially pertinent in societies like India, where there is a strong preference for women being served by women teachers or doctors. Attaining higher education levels also encourages women's political participation, which is currently significantly skewed in favor of men.

### Education decreases child death

Higher levels of education greatly increase a young woman's awareness of basic healthcare and empower her to make better decisions about her well-being and that of her family. This is widely acknowledged as having a clear impact on improving maternal and child health, affecting the general health and nutritional status of women and children across several indicators. According to UNESCO, in rural India, educated women have improved mobility and decision-making power to seek healthcare when a child is sick. Also, these children were shown to have better health indicators, such as height and weight.<sup>8</sup>

**Table: Girls who complete secondary education, marry later and have healthier children**

Education Level of Females	Mothers age at First Birth	Children <5 mortality (per 1000 birth)	% of children with basic vaccinations	% of children who are malnourished	% of women with knowledge of HIV/AIDS
None	19	95	26	52	30
< 5 years	19	79	46	46	57
5-7 years	20	61	52	39	69
8-9 years	21	47	60	35	85
10-11 years	22	40	66	27	95
<b>12 years</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>99</b>

Source: Carlson, Samuel (2009). *Secondary Education in India: Universalizing Opportunity*. World Bank

### Education increases income

According to a World Bank study, the returns on secondary education are significantly higher than that on elementary education, and this is even more so for females. Achieving quality secondary education allows a girl to find a better-paying job in the organized sector and be economically independent, giving her a chance to break the cycle of poverty for her family and contribute to the country's overall productivity.

Further, India's economic growth is fuelling a rise in demand for a skilled workforce equipped with at least secondary education, which makes it critical to improve the quality of our secondary education and maximize the number of girls able to access it.

## CONCLUSION – GOING FROM 1% TO 100%

In October 2012, an 11 year-old was shot at for wanting to go to school. She survived and went on to win the Nobel Peace prize for her advocacy efforts for education for girls. She was brave and could fight for her fundamental right to education in the face of extreme adversity. There are millions like her who silently go through life without ever making it through school – they wish they could, every girl wishes she could, but a combination of social, economic and cultural hindrances deny them a fair chance at life. It is shameful that a girl had to be almost fatally shot for the world to take notice of the suffering girls in some parts of the world go through to go to school.

There are clear social and economic benefits of keeping girls in school. Yet only 1% of all girls in India are completing grade 12. It will take our collective will and resources to make it a 100%. Over the past decade, we have achieved significant progress in elementary education. It's time we take the next step towards ensuring that every girl not only starts but completes her education as well. We need to join this movement, to create more 11-year old leaders of change, to fight to keep them in school and give them the power to realize their dreams and of those around them.

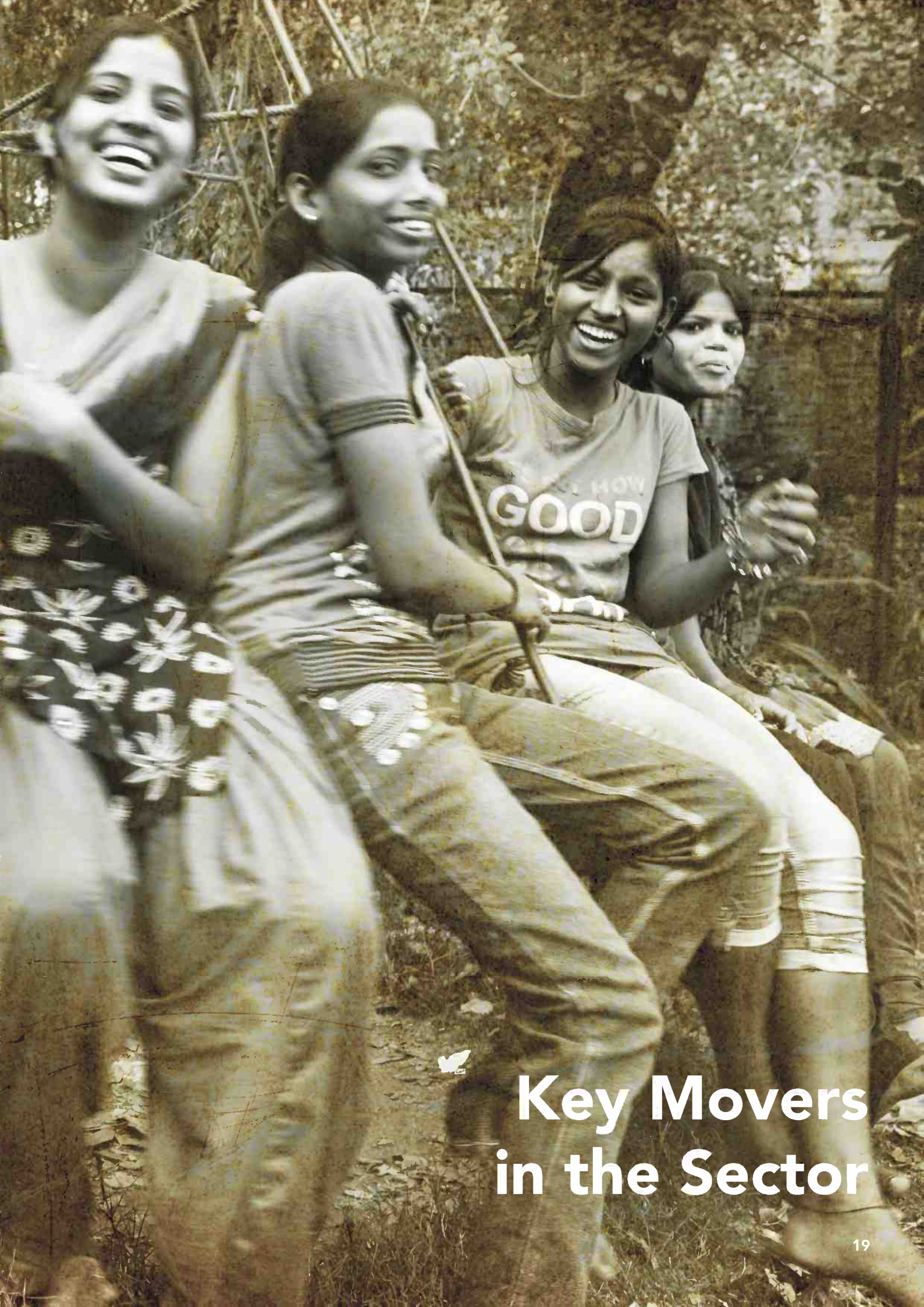
### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Strong rates of enrollment and retention at the primary school level, along with India's sustained economic growth, have significantly increased demand for secondary education, which is where the focus of the development sector and the government is now shifting to.
- Gender parity in education is almost equal at the primary level, but in secondary education, significant gaps persist. Only 43% girls are enrolled in secondary education as compared to 58% of boys.
- Unavailability and unaffordability of schools, along with poor learning environments and teaching quality are the institutional barriers to a girl completing secondary education. Her community-based barriers include deep-rooted biases against education for women, as well as social-cultural expectations that discourage them from stepping out of their homes.
- Benefits of education are visible as early as the primary education stage, but are significantly greater when women have completed their secondary education. Completing secondary education for girls reduces incidence of child marriage, improves health of mothers and children, increases income and boosts a nation's economic growth.





PHOTO © DIT / CREA



# Key Movers in the Sector

## GOVERNMENT

The State is increasing its focus on secondary education with comprehensive and innovative education policies, consisting of a wide range of interventions aimed at creating awareness, improving quality, and minimizing physical and social barriers. It is partnering with stakeholders – development agencies, non-profits, external consultants – to design, pilot and implement new programs.

### Central Government Schemes

The central government designs schemes aimed at improving education outcomes and provides state governments with the technical support and funding to implement these schemes on the ground.

Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA):

This is a centrally-sponsored scheme of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, aimed specifically at improving secondary education. The 2014-15 budget allocated INR 83,771 crore (nearly 4% of India's GDP) to education, with a significant 6% of this budget being allocated for RMSA. The key objectives of RMSA are:<sup>9</sup>

1. To achieve 75% enrollment by 2014 from 52% in 2005
2. To provide universal access to secondary education by 2017
3. To improve the quality of education and remove gender, socio-economic and disability barriers

So far, RMSA covers 50,000 government secondary schools fully, and supports 30,000 aided secondary schools. It provides them with physical facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, toilet blocks and residential hostels for teachers; works on quality-improvement interventions such as appointing additional teachers, training teachers using technology-enabled education modules, curriculum reforms; and also aims to create gender and class equity by giving preference to minority concentration areas while opening schools, hiring more female teachers and providing scholarships for girls.

The government's educational TV channel, Gyan Darshan, and radio channel, Gyan Vani, offer programs for primary and secondary school children in English, Hindi and regional languages. The content is created with contributions from various ministries, educational institutions, non-profits and research organizations, including Indira Gandhi National Open University, National Council of Educational Research and Training, and the Indian Institutes of Technology.

### State Government Schemes

States implement the Center's policies by adapting them to local requirements. Besides institutional issues, they also address individual barriers through conditional transfers – in cash or kind.

For instance, the Bihar government's Free Bicycle Program<sup>10</sup> gives girls studying in classes nine and above in government and government-aided schools INR 2,500 to buy a bicycle. Between 2007 and 2010, this helped nearly 900,000 girls go to school.

Madhya Pradesh has implemented various conditional cash transfer schemes to reduce demand-side barriers for girls. Two examples are Ladli Lakshmi Yojna, which provides INR 2,000, INR 4,000 and INR 7,500 to girls on gaining admission to classes 6, 9 and 11 respectively; and Kanya Shakhsharta Protsahan Yojna, which provides INR 500, INR 1,000 and INR 3,000 to girls on passing classes 5, 8 and 10 respectively.<sup>11</sup>





**1986**

National Policy on Education (NPE) was the first to include "special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalize educational opportunity" for women and minorities

**1994**

District Primary Education Program launched as a major initiative to revitalize the primary education system covering 272 districts in 18 states

**2001**

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) aimed at universalization of elementary education with special focus on girls' education and children with special needs

**2008**

National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education includes financial aid to ensure retention of girls till class 12

Girls' hostels established for students of 'educationally backward blocks' to make attending schools more convenient

**2009**

Government launches Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), its flagship program to make secondary education available, accessible and affordable to all

**2010**

Right to Education Act makes free education mandatory for children between ages of 6 and 14 yrs

## CORPORATES

Businesses are investing their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) resources to strengthen institutions in the secondary education sector by leveraging their core expertise, management skills and technological capabilities.

### **Partnering with non-profit organizations:**

Corporates are collaborating with non-profits to implement community-based interventions and work directly with students. Such partnerships help corporates reach out to the most marginalized communities in greater numbers.

### **Owning and operating schools:**

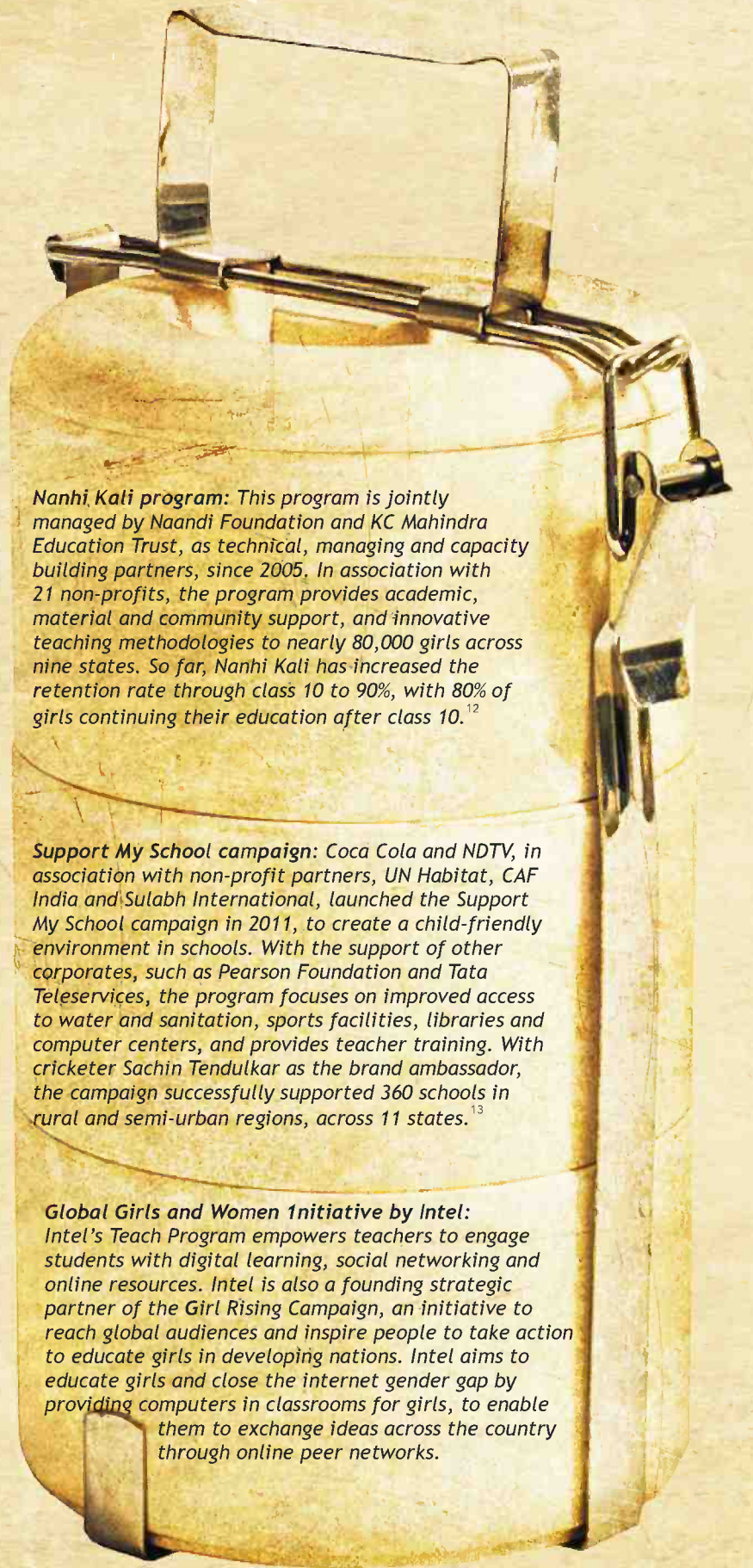
Corporates are also improving and building school infrastructure to create a conducive learning environment and ensure better engagement of students.

This approach involves higher investment in terms of resources and human capital.

### **Leveraging core business expertise**

As part of their CSR, technology companies are training teachers to use Information and Communication

Technology tools generally for education, and specifically to improve students' computer literacy, and make secondary education more relevant for them.



*Nanhi Kali program: This program is jointly managed by Naandi Foundation and KC Mahindra Education Trust, as technical, managing and capacity building partners, since 2005. In association with 21 non-profits, the program provides academic, material and community support, and innovative teaching methodologies to nearly 80,000 girls across nine states. So far, Nanhi Kali has increased the retention rate through class 10 to 90%, with 80% of girls continuing their education after class 10.<sup>12</sup>*

*Support My School campaign: Coca Cola and NDTV, in association with non-profit partners, UN Habitat, CAF India and Sulabh International, launched the Support My School campaign in 2011, to create a child-friendly environment in schools. With the support of other corporates, such as Pearson Foundation and Tata Teleservices, the program focuses on improved access to water and sanitation, sports facilities, libraries and computer centers, and provides teacher training. With cricketer Sachin Tendulkar as the brand ambassador, the campaign successfully supported 360 schools in rural and semi-urban regions, across 11 states.<sup>13</sup>*

### **Global Girls and Women Initiative by Intel:**

*Intel's Teach Program empowers teachers to engage students with digital learning, social networking and online resources. Intel is also a founding strategic partner of the Girl Rising Campaign, an initiative to reach global audiences and inspire people to take action to educate girls in developing nations. Intel aims to educate girls and close the internet gender gap by providing computers in classrooms for girls, to enable them to exchange ideas across the country through online peer networks.*

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Having successfully supported elementary education initiatives, international organizations are now shifting their focus to secondary education. The extensive research and advocacy, and implementation of programs by international development agencies and non-profits have helped increase focus on the sector and make government policies more effective.

### **Research and Advocacy**

*UNICEF creates platforms through conferences for government representatives and education experts to discuss challenges in secondary education, and the extension of the RTE Act to secondary school. UNICEF also publishes evidence-based research on secondary education for girls.*

### **Program Implementation**

*International non-profit organizations such as **Room to Read** and **CARE India** have implemented pioneering education programs and leveraged public-private partnership models to improve education outcomes for girls.*

### **Funding and Technical Support**

*PSIPSE (Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education) is a multi-donor collaborative, started in 2012, to accelerate innovation in secondary education in India, East Africa and Nigeria. It is led by a group of private donors including Central Square Foundation, MacArthur Foundation and Marshall Family Foundation.*

*The donor collaborative currently funds more than 20 innovative projects in India, for a period of 2-3 years.<sup>14</sup> These non-profits also receive technical assistance, networking and M&E (monitoring and evaluation) support from Catalyst Management Services - India, the local research and development branch of PSIPSE.*

*.....*  
*The government's RMSA program receives support from multi-lateral agencies such as the **World Bank** and **DFID**, which have committed USD 449 million and USD 89 million in financial aid respectively to the various activities under it. The project also receives technical and management support worth USD 29 million from DFID to accelerate program delivery and strengthen management information systems.<sup>15</sup>*

## EDUCATION-FOCUSED ENTERPRISES

The potential for growth and high returns in the education sector is spurring social ventures to build innovative models aimed at secondary education. These models have a growing support base from impact investors because they have the potential to scale rapidly. However, very few such models currently target secondary education for girls or work in remote areas.

### Low-Cost Innovative Education Models

Social businesses are creating low-cost education models for schools, in the form of ICT kits and digitalized content to enhance the quality of secondary education. In many cases, the revenue generated is used to cross-finance their social ventures. These businesses mainly serve urban middle- and lower-class populations.

Some examples of such organizations include **Rumi Education**, which partners with 100 budget-private schools to provide them with affordable ICT-based learning and teaching aids, priced at INR 6,000-12,000 per year.<sup>16</sup> **Butterfly Fields** sells 25% of its after-school training programs in science and maths to private schools, using this revenue to supply the remaining 75% of its modules at a much lower price to government schools.<sup>17</sup>

### Educational Entrepreneurship Models


'Edupreneurs' bring innovative and efficient solutions to the education sector. In most cases, their approach is limited to serving the private sector, although increasingly they are partnering with government schools and reaching out to marginalized communities through their social venture arms.

Business models like **Educomp**, **Next Education**, **Everonn** and **XSEED** partner with private schools to provide e-learning labs, teacher training and digital curriculum across all levels of schooling. Their approach emphasizes research and content development activities and invests substantial amounts towards human capital development at their organizations. One example is Edureach, a division of Educomp, which has partnered with 16 state governments, reaching over 11,000 government schools, to set up computer labs, provide multimedia content in regional languages, and conduct teacher training and monitoring.<sup>18</sup>

### Investment in Education

Investors fund scalable, high-impact social models in education to help close access, quality and affordability gaps. Those focusing on funding innovative, low-cost education models include **Aavishkar**, **Acumen**, **Unitus** and **LGTVP**. The Indian School Finance Company, a non-banking finance company, provides easy-access loans at competitive interest rates to schools and education entrepreneurs.



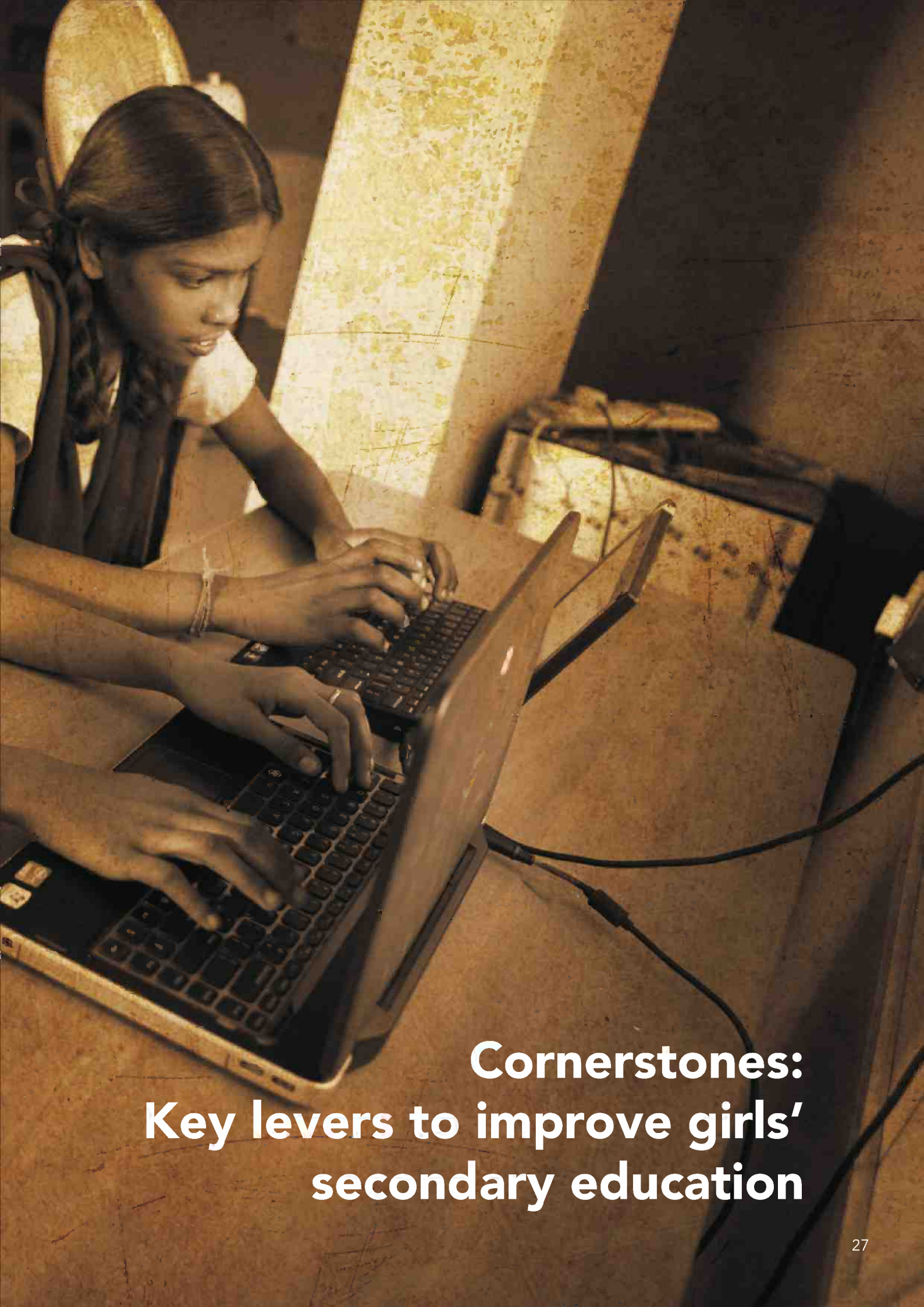


## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The State is increasing its focus on secondary education with comprehensive and innovative education policies, consisting of a wide range of interventions aimed at creating awareness, improving quality, and minimizing physical and social barriers.
- Corporates such as Coca Cola, NDTV and Intel have invested CSR resources in the overall issue of education or in education for girls specifically, rather than 'secondary education for girls', which is a relatively less recognized area.
- ▣ International organizations such as UNICEF, MacArthur Foundation and Room to Read have also started to focus on secondary education. They are investing in the experimental stages of identifying the most effective ways to create impact.
- ▣ Increasing demand and the resultant opportunities for fast growth and high returns in the secondary education sector are seeding various kinds of low-cost social business as well as for-profit models in education. The need and viability of these models has been acknowledged by investors who are keen to fund such businesses.



PHOTO CREDIT / DREAM A DREAM



**Cornerstones:  
Key levers to improve girls'  
secondary education**

Using research, expert interviews and visits to organizations working on the ground, Dasra has identified four key focus areas to improve access to and quality of secondary education for girls in India. Following a brief note on each of the four focus areas, is a set of interventions that Dasra sees as having the potential to build an enabling environment and lead to stronger implementation of initiatives aimed at that.

The four key areas identified by Dasra to address secondary education for girls in India are:



**1. Decentralize management authority down to school level**



**2. Create a girl-friendly environment in secondary schools**



**3. Increase focus on skills development**



**4. Integrate technology to improve quality of education**



A link between the issues, and the cornerstones needed to address them, is depicted in the diagram below.



## Decentralize management authority down to school level

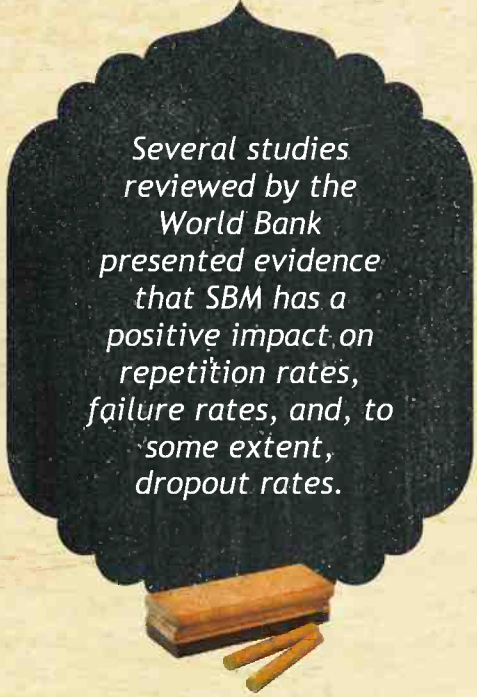
Decentralizing education decision-making by increasing parental and community involvement in schools is popularly known as school-based management (SBM). It typically involves the transfer of authority from a central or state government to schools for a range of activities, including budget allocation, recruitment of staff, procurement of learning materials, infrastructure improvement, and monitoring of teacher and student performance.

The school becomes the agent of change, with much greater engagement with the community.

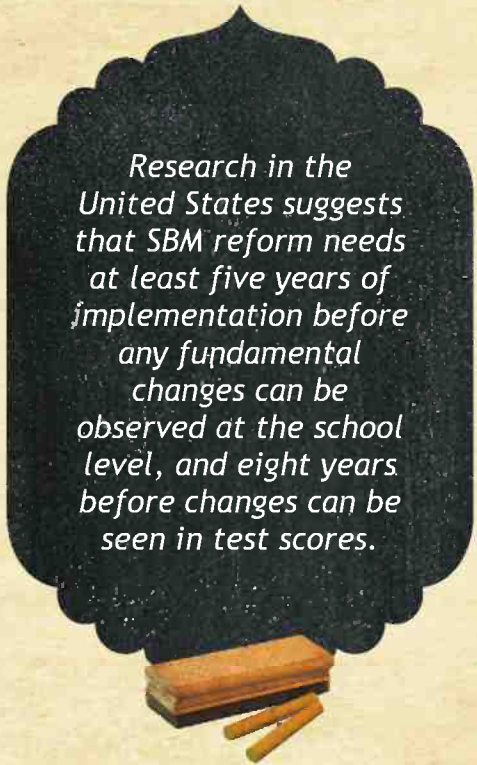
SBM can improve student achievement and other outcomes since community members – usually parents of children enrolled in the school – will demand better student evaluations and monitoring of school personnel, a closer match between the school's needs and its policies, and more efficient use of resources.

Further, close involvement of community members ensures ownership, transparency and accountability. Finally, while SBM may involve administrative expenses for capacity-building of staff and parents, it is essentially merely a change in the locus of decision-making and needs no increase in recurrent funding. In financial terms, it is considered a low-cost intervention.

Typically public schools at the secondary education level in India are controlled at the state and district levels, unlike the primary education level, where Village Education Committees and School Management Committees in public schools are standard. Experts recommend that the formation of School Management Development Committees (SMDC) for secondary schools be made mandatory to improve efficiency, enrollment and perhaps learning outcomes at the school level.



*Several studies reviewed by the World Bank presented evidence that SBM has a positive impact on repetition rates, failure rates, and, to some extent, dropout rates.*



*Research in the United States suggests that SBM reform needs at least five years of implementation before any fundamental changes can be observed at the school level, and eight years before changes can be seen in test scores.*

## Create a girl-friendly environment in secondary schools

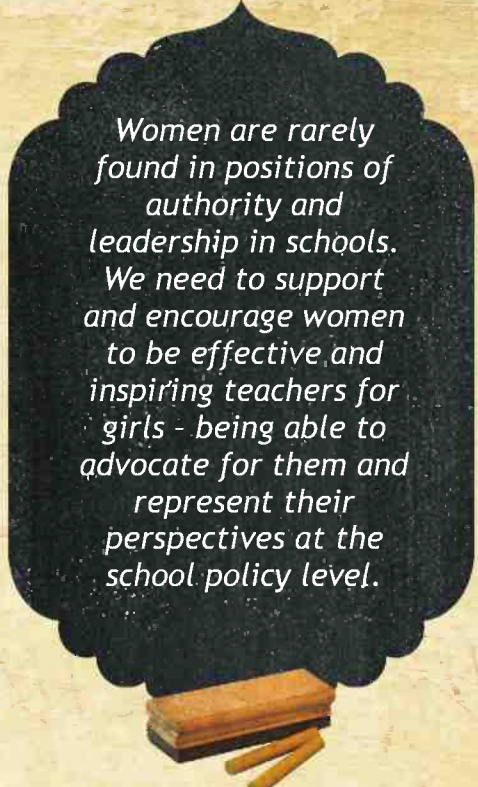
The assumption that a positive environment for girls' education has been created and nothing further needs to be done needs questioning.

In remote rural areas and conservative societies, there is a general strong demand for girls-only schools. Even in urban areas, demand for such schools exist and there are several instances of schools holding two shifts of classes, one for boys and another for girls. However, such schools are limited, especially in rural areas where they are most needed. This is why creating an appropriate environment in existing co-educational schools, where girls feel secure – emotionally and physically – is crucial.

Recruiting female teachers: A UNESCO study in India found that girls' enrollment rate was proportional to the ratio of female teachers, especially in rural areas.<sup>19</sup> Along with hiring more women teachers, it is also critical to empower them to be able to influence and change the school environment to one that is more girl-friendly. Well-trained and motivated female teachers are in turn a motivating factor and role models for their adolescent girl students.

Providing appropriate infrastructure: A literature review by Room to Read, a leading international organization found that improved connectivity to schools, separate toilets for girls, a roof over classrooms and a boundary wall around the school have a clear impact on improving enrollment and attendance of girls.<sup>20</sup> Lack of these also impact female teachers – fewer are willing to teach without these amenities and those who do show higher rates of absenteeism.<sup>21</sup>

Sensitizing teachers: Conducting gender-sensitization and updating teaching material to be more gender-balanced is vital to correct the latent gender-biases that are in-built in our school environments. The Kerala government has recognized this, and all teachers in the state now receive gender education. This in turn has created help desks – a safe place for children to report grievances and receive support.<sup>22</sup>



*Women are rarely found in positions of authority and leadership in schools. We need to support and encourage women to be effective and inspiring teachers for girls - being able to advocate for them and represent their perspectives at the school policy level.*

Source: UNESCO (2006); *The Impact of Women Teachers on Girls' Education.*

### Balika Shivirs – Providing a girl-friendly environment

*Balika Shikshan Shivar (BSS) in Rajasthan is an effective model, in which women teachers and a safe learning environment are critical determinants in the education of older girls and first generation learners from marginalized communities. According to Dr. Ramchandran of ERU Consultants (a research and consulting group), the teachers of BSS act as a sounding board and confidant for the girls. Also, the teachers in BSS are sensitized to the social and economic situation of the students and so, they did not exhibit caste/community prejudices or push girls into stereotypes. This relationship resulted in the girls seeing their teachers as role models, feeling safe in the schools and looking forward to their classes.*

## Increase focus on skills development

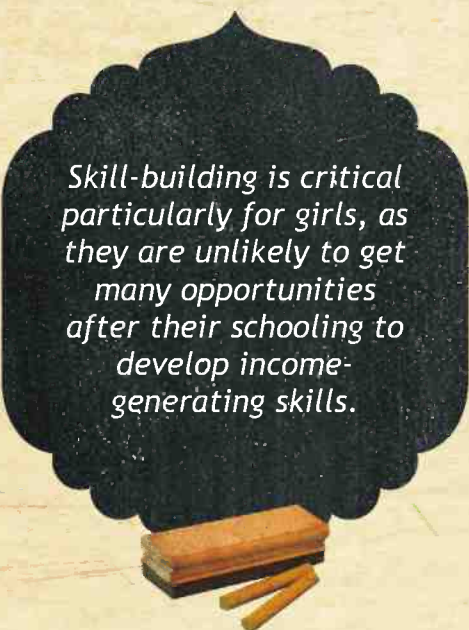
Secondary education curricula must address two objectives: helping youth develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes they need to succeed in the labor market upon graduation, while preparing some of them for higher education.<sup>23</sup> Currently, secondary education in India is largely seen as a tool for higher income groups to achieve the second objective. It does not, in its current form, prepare students for employment, resulting in many students, particularly girls and their parents not placing much value on completing secondary schooling.<sup>24</sup>

An evaluation by the non-profit Going to School found that offering skills training to girls in secondary school increases their interest to remain in school – they tell their parents that they do not want to drop out of school. They negotiate with grandparents to share housework. They tell their fathers they do not want to marry early; they convince them to instead take a loan for their education. They aspire to be bank managers, police officers, train drivers, even entrepreneurs. Girls need to be supported to:

Skill-building during this time is critical particularly for girls, as they are unlikely to get many opportunities after their schooling to develop income-generating skills.

Develop employability skills: These include job skills such as computer literacy and learning English; life skills, which focus on building a girl's personality and confidence, awareness on areas such as health and financial literacy; and vocational skills that can lead to employment, such as tailoring, weaving and electrical work. Besides empowering them and building their aspirations for careers, these skills also improve girls' learning levels on related subjects.

Build careers: Girls from rural areas and marginalized communities are often unaware of employment opportunities available to them and lack the means to pursue a career of their choice. It is essential to provide these girls with the exposure needed to enable them to choose a suitable career. Besides skills and awareness, they also need support in terms of filling online application forms, preparing for entrance exams, writing resumes and traveling for interviews.



*Skill-building is critical particularly for girls, as they are unlikely to get many opportunities after their schooling to develop income-generating skills.*

### Bijapur - Imparting vocational skills through experience based teaching

*In 2011, the district administration of Bijapur, supported by UNICEF initiated the 'Introduction to Basic Technology' (IBT) program in five schools in the district, to promote work-centered education. The IBT program introduced an experience-based learning component in the curriculum, by identifying experiences that were relevant for the local children's living context. Students are now learning new skills that were not part of formal school education earlier. These include skills like dry cleaning, repair-work, fixing electrical appliances, growing vegetables and screen-printing. They are now more interested in going to school and have developed a better understanding of the complex theories of physics and chemistry due to the curriculum related practical training. The RMSA, found the Bijapur initiative to be relevant and has planned to scale up the initiative to 100 secondary schools in 10 districts of Chhattisgarh.*



*"While creating our own pocket torches in IBT class, we realized how current flows and the importance of positive and negative terminals in a battery. Science is actually not very complicated."*

*Puja Gog, student of the Bijapur Government Girls High School*

## Integrate technology to improve quality of education

It is not unusual to find teaching aids such as flash cards, craft material, early reading books, blocks and puzzles in primary schools. These have proved to be useful learning materials for younger children. However, as they move to secondary school and enter an abstract reasoning stage of cognitive development, these materials cease to challenge and nurture higher order thinking skills.

Technology used appropriately can deliver the learning lift required for this age group. Firstly, it provides a context that is otherwise not accessible in the real world. For example, for a group of class eight students, exploring the NASA website as an extension to their geography chapter on the solar system is a virtual learning experience, which otherwise cannot be matched through traditional ways.

Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT) conducted a study in select government schools in west and south India to evaluate the impact of technology-enabled pedagogy. The following outcomes were observed:

*Learning interest, attendance and retention: The mere act of placing technology in the classroom improved students' average attendance and punctuality. Adolescents who remained absent voluntarily due to a lack of interest were motivated to attend school regularly. Students were encouraged to use various mechanisms – computers, cameras, phones – to understand and apply scientific concepts, which made subject matter far more relevant and relatable.*

*Learning processes and pedagogy: Technology as an information-processing tool takes away the traditional information-giving role of the teacher. This basic functionality of technology requires teachers to play a role that is more facilitative than informative. SDTT's field visits used maps, games, and online content to source information, and found teachers motivated to use methods other than lecturing. Some teachers indicated this was due to lesson planning, which they learnt as part of their technology training. There was a general acknowledgement of their role as facilitators, and of students as constructors of their own learning.*

*ICT (Information and Communications Technology) has been made mandatory in schools by the Indian government. However, as a World Bank study suggested, merely putting computers in schools and training teachers to use them will not improve the learning levels in students. Technology integration with education is a systematic process that requires assimilation of content, pedagogy and technology and an investment in motivating and training teachers to adopt technology for better educational outcomes.*

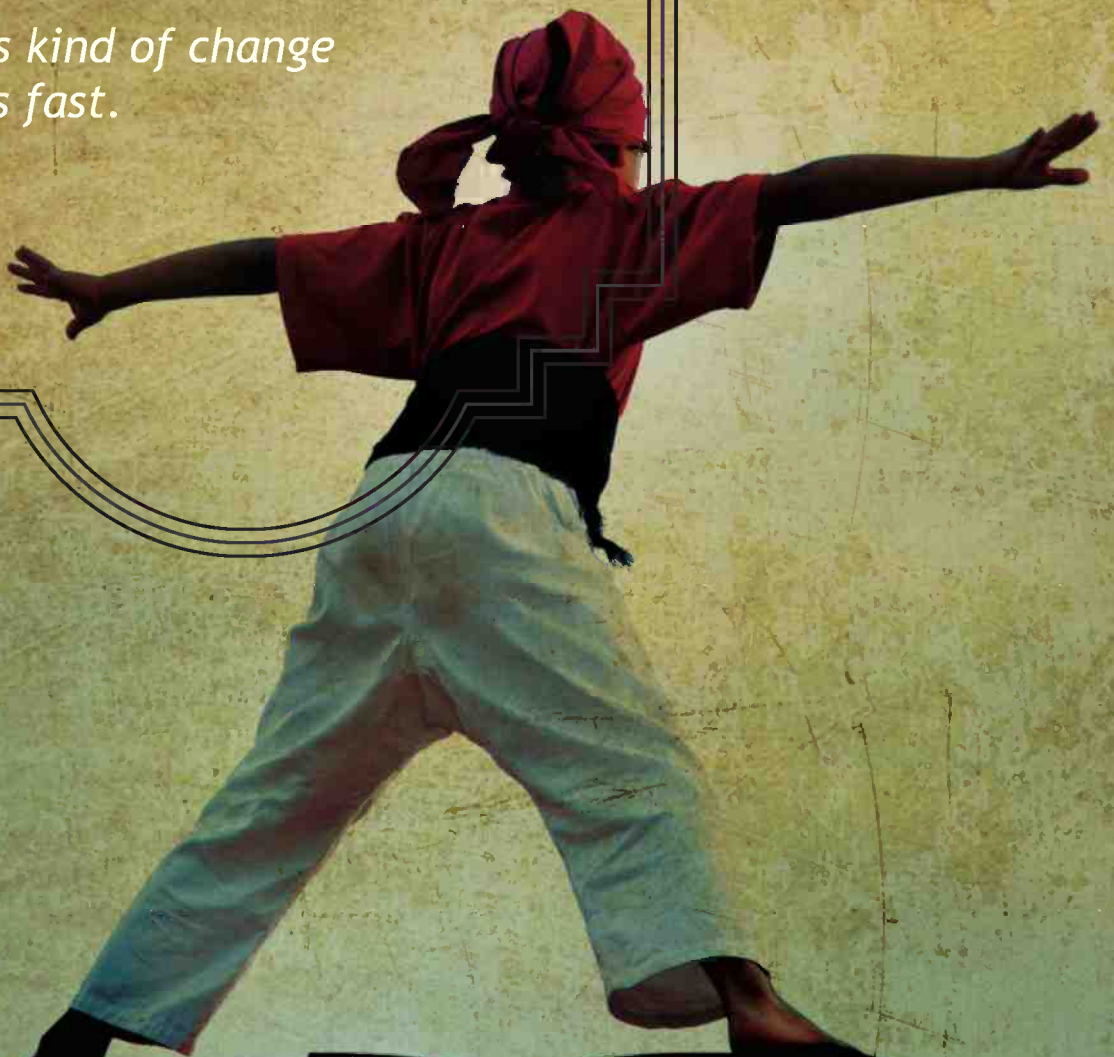
*A girl getting an education  
learns more than reading  
and arithmetic.*

*She learns that she is important.*

*She stands up for her rights*

*She goes after her dreams.*

*And this kind of change  
happens fast.*



## CONCLUSION

### **Secondary ≠ Elementary.**

It is useful to understand and learn from the progress made by the elementary education sector. However, direct replication of successful strategies from elementary education to secondary education is not likely to succeed. The two sectors have certain fundamental differences – policies, management structure, resources required, ability of communities to contribute, social barriers – which necessitate different strategies to be adopted for secondary education interventions, particularly for girls.

### **India does not have the luxury of addressing access first and quality later**

Research indicates that quality – measured by cognitive skills – is more important than access – measured by years of schooling – in determining future income and contribution to economic growth. To be meaningful, therefore, funders must ensure that interventions that expand access to secondary schools are accompanied by improved quality.

### **Focus on supply side barriers to address demand side barriers**

Research reveals that supply side barriers are closely linked to and should be focused on to address demand side barriers. For instance, demand side issues such as exam failure and lack of interest in school are indicative of supply side issues such as poor quality teaching, uncondusive environments for learning and lack of remedial coaching. Designing curriculum and learning materials, hiring and training teachers, improving management and accountability systems, developing technology for improving quality of teaching, and improving infrastructure will to a large extent tackle the demand side issues.

### **Support innovation**

Initiatives such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) at the elementary level were preceded by almost a decade of experiments after which interventions were gradually scaled up. Experts suggest that the same may be required for secondary education. Most non-profits in India are at a pilot stage and experimenting with different models to address the specific secondary education challenges. This period of trial and improvements is needed in this sector to understand and design the most effective interventions. The next few years will therefore require funders to provide longer lead time investments to non-profits with investment cycles of at least 5 to 7 years to be able to realize tangible outcomes.

### **Go local**

The needs of the secondary education sector are more diverse than those of elementary education, and the varying situation in the states – with different mix in terms of school management and board requirements – requires state-specific and at times, block level strategies. Further, the challenges specific to girls' secondary education varies across regions, making it even more necessary to design local interventions. For instance, the free cycle program for rural adolescent girls was remarkably successful in increasing enrollment and attendance of secondary school girls in Bihar. But the same program did not have much impact in Rajasthan, as the usage of cycles, especially amongst females, is very low and not as readily accepted.

### **Build a common platform for knowledge sharing**

Due to the evolving nature of the secondary education sector in India, organizations working on the issue are pioneering their own interventions and in many cases creating original tools and resources. Non-profits that attended Dasra's workshop on secondary education unanimously expressed the need for a common platform for sharing resources, best practices and innovative solutions, learnings from pilot studies, success stories and challenges. Further, a common platform would be greatly beneficial to foster collaboration and partnerships, enabling organizations to scale up effective strategies without reinventing the wheel.

### **Invest in knowing what works**

Education research in India has been sporadic, particularly at the secondary level. The well-known PROBE report which assessed the status and issues of primary education is an outstanding example of how research can provide evidence to induce policy interventions. There is much room for more systematic and comprehensive education research to understand needs in secondary education and identify successful models of change.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix I

#### Criteria used to define 'impact' and 'scalability'

##### Defining 'impact'

- Proximity to end beneficiary: Measures that involve direct contact with a beneficiary, such as teaching in class, more deeply impact individuals than indirect activities, such as revising the curriculum and developing evaluation systems.
- Duration of engagement: Interventions that involve engagement with beneficiaries over a longer period may potentially have a greater impact on their lives and situations than a one-off awareness building session or other such short-term engagements.
- Evidence for effectiveness: Interventions may be effective on paper, but the ground reality may be quite different. For example, using IT for distance learning modules can ideally have a major impact on improving teaching and learning. However, at present most rural schools do not have electricity and internet to implement these solutions. Such an intervention is therefore rated lower on impact.

##### Defining 'scalability'

- Resource intensity: This would include human and financial resources. For example, the need for skilled teachers may be a factor limiting an increase in scaling alternative schooling models. On the other hand, relatively few resources are required to train community members to deliver a service, such as transportation, inherently making it a more scalable intervention.
- Gestation period: This refers to the time required to realize impact once a program has started. For example, it takes longer for evidence-based advocacy to provide benefits to the girl child (owing to the need for gathering data, analyzing information, advocating for change by the government, securing acceptance of change and implementing legislation) than, for example, well-distributed financial incentives. Consequently, interventions with longer gestation period are deemed less scalable.
- Partnerships leveraged: This refers to the use of partnerships and other organizations to reach out to more people. For example, interventions that train or build the capacity of other organizations have the potential to affect more beneficiaries in a shorter time than those that implement the program in communities directly. They are also less expensive to deliver and will therefore qualify as more scalable.



## Non-profit mapping methodology

Dasra's non-profit mapping included site visits to view programs on the ground and interact with beneficiaries; detailed interviews with managers of non-profit organizations; phone interviews; and desk research. Operationally, the following due diligence procedures were followed:

### Initial Mapping:

Firstly, Dasra mapped the secondary education sector by collating a comprehensive list of non-profit organizations working within it, based on internet research, interviews with participants in Dasra Social Impact (Dasra's Executive Education Program) and referrals from sector experts. Initial mapping yielded a list of 142 non-profit organizations and social enterprises throughout India.

### On-Call Interviews:

Secondly, Dasra identified non-profit organizations that allocate significant resources to programs addressing secondary education for girls in India. A total of 40 were selected for on-call interviews, based on telephone conversations with the heads or program heads of these organizations. The interviews discussed:

- Activities, direct and indirect, related to secondary education for girls
- Proportion of total non-profit budget allocated to improving secondary education for girls
- Outreach of secondary education for girls programs since their inception and over the previous year (2013–14)
- Extent of diversification by program area
- Organizational and girls education program's team size

Additional information gathered included program evolution, theories of change, geographical coverage, operational models, and interventions implemented. Based on the information provided, Dasra selected non-profits for site visits.

### Site Visits:

Thirdly, Dasra met with managers and field staff of the non-profit organizations short-listed, viewing their operational models at first hand, and securing a clear understanding of how effectively their theories of change translated into effective action on the ground. Dasra staff spent 2-3 days with each non-profit organization acquiring detailed information concerning the organization in general and its secondary education for girls program in particular, including the evolution of the program, its model, management structure, program financials, outreach and outcomes achieved. This stage was used to better understand the non-profit organizations to be highlighted in this report and recommended for funding on the following criteria:

- Program structure and documentation
- Management team
- Growth over the previous three years (2012-14)
- Future scaling plans
- Proven outcomes/impact
- Current partnerships (government, academia, international non-profit organizations, and other non-profit organizations)
- External endorsements (historical and current funders, and prestigious awards)

After evaluating these criteria, Dasra profiled seven established non-profit organizations that implement high impact secondary education for girls programs in India.

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## Non-profits and social businesses

As part of its research, Dasra invited all organizations visited to participate in a capacity building workshop, held from 8th to 10th December, 2014. This was attended by 20 non-profits. Using a curriculum and a facilitation methodology from Dasra's globally recognized Dasra Social Impact Executive Education program, the workshop helped to strengthen these organizations' strategic thinking, supporting improvements in their assessment methodology and operational planning and communications with donors and stakeholders. The workshop also provided an opportunity for Dasra to present its research findings and framework to the leading non-profit experts in the secondary education for girls sector. Their input has been included in this report.

Centre for Unfolding Learning Potentials (CULP) .....	<a href="http://www.culpraj.org">www.culpraj.org</a>
Children's Lovecastles Trust .....	<a href="http://www.cltindia.org">www.cltindia.org</a>
Doosra Dashak .....	<a href="http://www.doosradashak.in">www.doosradashak.in</a>
Educate Girls (EG) .....	<a href="http://www.educategirls.in">www.educategirls.in</a>
Educate Girls Globally .....	<a href="http://www.educategirls.org">www.educategirls.org</a>
Foundation for Initiatives in Development and Education for All (IDEA) .....	<a href="http://www.ideafoundation.org.in">www.ideafoundation.org.in</a>
Going to School .....	<a href="http://www.goingtoschool.com">www.goingtoschool.com</a>
Ibtada .....	<a href="http://www.ibtada.in">www.ibtada.in</a>
India Literacy Project .....	<a href="http://www.ilpnet.org">www.ilpnet.org</a>
LAHI .....	<a href="http://www.lend-a-hand-india.org">www.lend-a-hand-india.org</a>
Learning Links .....	<a href="http://www.learninglinksindia.org">www.learninglinksindia.org</a>
Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF) .....	<a href="http://www.mvfindia.in">www.mvfindia.in</a>
Pardada Pardadi Education Society .....	<a href="http://www.education4change.org">www.education4change.org</a>
Pratham .....	<a href="http://www.pratham.org">www.pratham.org</a>
Seva Mandir .....	<a href="http://www.sevamandir.org">www.sevamandir.org</a>
Shaishav .....	<a href="http://www.shaishavchildrights.org">www.shaishavchildrights.org</a>
STIR Education .....	<a href="http://www.stireducation.org">www.stireducation.org</a>
Tropical Research and Development center .....	<a href="http://www.trdcindia.org">www.trdcindia.org</a>
Udayan Care .....	<a href="http://www.udayancare.org">www.udayancare.org</a>
VOICE 4 Girls .....	<a href="http://www.voice4girls.org">www.voice4girls.org</a>

## ACRONYMS

CSR	=	Corporate Social Responsibility
DFID	=	Department for International Development - UK
DPEP	=	District Primary Education Program
EBB	=	Educationally Backward Blocks
GDP	=	Gross Domestic Product
GER	=	Gross Enrollment Ratio
ICT	=	Information Communication Technology
IGNOU	=	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IIT	=	Indian Institute of technology
LGTVP	=	LGT Venture Philanthropy
M&E	=	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	=	Millennium Development Goal
MHRD	=	Ministry of Human Resource Development
NCERT	=	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCF	=	National Curriculum Framework
NPE	=	National Policy on Education
NUEPA	=	National University of Educational Planning and Administration
PPP	=	Public-Private Partnership
PSIPSE	=	Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education
RMSA	=	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
RTE	=	Right to Education
SHG	=	Self-help Group
SMC	=	School Management Committees
SMDC	=	School Management Development Committees
SSA	=	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
UNESCO	=	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	=	United Nations Children's Fund

## GLOSSARY

1. Educationally Backward Blocks (EBB) are those where Female Literacy Rate is below the national average of 46.13% and Gender Gap in Literacy is above the national average of 21.59%. There are currently 3,479 such blocks.
2. Gender Parity Index (GPI) is designed to measure the relative access to education of males and females. It is calculated as the quotient of the number of females by the number of males enrolled in a given stage of education.
3. Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) is the total enrollment within a country in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education.
4. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight international development goals to be achieved by 2015, by each of the 193 countries that committed to these goals.
5. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA, National Mission for Secondary Education) is a centrally sponsored scheme which came into force in 2009. It aims at developing secondary education, improving access to it and enhancing its quality.
6. Right to Education Act (RTE) came into force in 2010. It makes education a fundamental right of every child between the ages of 6 and 14.
7. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA, Education for All Movement) became operational in 2001. It aims at universalizing elementary education by making it mandatory and free for every child between the ages of 6 and 14.


## END NOTES

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