



Oral Statement at the 44th Session of the Human Right Council

Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls

Date: 6 July, 2020

Delivered by: Mr. Andrzej Owca

Madame President,

VIVAT International, Edmund Rice International and NINEISMINE note that: the principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women.¹

However, the country fares poorly on gender equality, and India is ranked **95th out of 129** countries in the SDG Gender Index on 51 indicators including poverty, health, and education.²

In the patriarchal Indian society, economic dependence on the male counterpart is itself a cause of gender disparity. A total of 30 percent people live below the poverty line and out of this 70 percent are women.³

Analysis of the Sample Registration System data (SRS) shows that 760,000 sex-selective abortions of female foetuses took place in 2015-2017.⁴

It's a sad reality that despite educational reforms in the country girls in India are still denied a chance at learning

We urge the Indian government to:

- Strengthen and increase the budget allocation of gender-responsive schemes significantly.
- Ensure State monitoring and accountability in the implementation of schemes, policies, laws, constitutional guarantees and international commitments towards the realization of SDG 5 – Gender equality
- Educate and build awareness in society around gender equality through education and media.

I thank you.

¹ http://mospi.nic.in/sites/default/files/reports_and_publication/cso_social_statices_division/Constitutional&Legal_Rights.pdf

² https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/india-ranks-95-among-129-countries-in-global-gender-equality-index-119060401222_1.html

³ <https://www.savethechildren.in/resource-centre/articles/gender-discrimination-in-the-indian>

⁴ <https://www.hindustantimes.com/more-lifestyle/women-s-day-2020-gender-equality-the-right-of-every-child/story-sPO6QUbICDY2bFhNr4XNYI.html>