Adolescent Girls in India

India has one of the fastest growing youth populations in the world, and one fourth of the population is made up of adolescent girls. Within the family, girls receive less health care, education, and fewer opportunities for employment than boys. Adolescent girls are often forced to do household work, take care of their siblings, drop out of school, marry and have children early. They are at a higher risk of human trafficking for sexual exploitation and of getting HIV/AIDS.

What is Girl Up doing in India?

Girl Up supports the United Nations Population Fund’s (UNFPA) Action for Adolescent Girls initiative in the Rajasthan region of India. The goal of the program is to protect adolescent girls’ rights and help girls delay marriage and have children when they are ready. The program educates girls and women on important health issues and makes them more aware of public services available to them. Additionally, the program aims to educate girls – who are both in and out of school – as well as provide them with vocational skills so they are able to one day earn an income.

Some highlights of the program include:

- Offering youth-friendly health and nutrition information
- Creating a network of adolescent peer educators for girls to meet and learn from one another
- Connecting girls with mentors
- Training on basic life skills, including home-based and vocational skills, to help girls earn an income and play a greater role in their communities
- Supporting enrollment in formal and non-formal educational institutions
- Giving girls information and access to the public services available to them
- Educating married adolescent girls on sexual and maternal health issues

About India

India occupies much of the South Asian subcontinent. It is the second most populous nation in the world with a population of more than 1.2 billion. It is the world’s largest democracy, and a multi-lingual state. Four religions – Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Jainism – originated in India, and it is home to the ancient Indus civilization and historic trade routes and empires. It is one of the fastest growing industrialized economies in the world.

Because adolescent girls in India deserve to be educated, healthy, safe, counted and positioned to be the next generation of leaders.

You see a girl. We see the future.