



Gender at
Work India



FEMINIST YOUTH CHARTER 2025



Acknowledgements

The Feminist Youth Charter 2025 represents the collective voice, vision, and determination of over 200 young feminist leaders from across India. It is the outcome of extensive regional and national consultations organised under the Feminist Youth Leadership program, anchored by Gender at Work India in partnership with UN Women India.

This Charter is rooted in the lived experiences, struggles, and aspirations of young people from diverse identities vis-à-vis gender, caste, class, sexuality, and disability. Their contributions reflect the urgency of addressing structural inequalities and the hope of building a future grounded in gender justice, inclusivity, and collective care.

Gender at Work India extends its heartfelt gratitude to each young feminist leader who engaged in this process – for their time, their insights, and their unwavering commitment to creating systemic change. These recommendations will not only enrich ongoing feminist dialogues but also serve as a guiding framework for governments, institutions, and civil society to strengthen gender-inclusive and gender-just policymaking in the country.

Gender at Work India also thanks UN Women India for their continued and steadfast support in making this collaborative effort possible.

Preface

We, young feminist leaders from diverse movements, communities, and disciplines, have come together to envision and demand a future grounded in gender justice, equality, and collective care. This charter is born out of our lived experiences, political commitments, and the urgent need to address systemic inequities through an intersectional lens – one that holds gender, caste, class, sexuality, ability, geography, and climate justice in the same frame.

Rooted in solidarity and accountability, we put forth clear, actionable demands to governments, institutions, donors, and civil society. These demands span education, climate action, health, livelihoods, technology, disability rights, and beyond – recognising that our struggles and solutions are interconnected. This is our collective call for structural change, for centring marginalised voices in decision-making, and for building a feminist future that leaves no one behind.



GENDER & EDUCATION

We demand that the Ministry of Education (MoE), State Education Departments, educational institutions, curriculum bodies, and regulatory agencies such as UGC, AICTE, and NCERT take the following actions:

Legislation and Policy

- Establish a comprehensive and periodic monitoring and evaluation framework that reviews the national and state education policies, educational institutional practices, and scholarship programs.

Access and Inclusion

- Provide free education to all students till grade 12, and ensure access to free higher education for transgender persons, along with dedicated scholarship programs for individuals from marginalised communities.
- Establish and support DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion), DBA (Dalit Bahujan Adivasi), and Queer Collectives to address various forms of systemic discrimination against girls, women, gender-diverse individuals, and minority groups within educational institutions to create safe spaces for young people to feel represented and empowered.
- Mandate teacher training across schools, and higher education institutions on gender, sexuality, and diversity to promote an inclusive and equitable education system for all.
- Establish dedicated libraries stocked with a comprehensive collection of standard books and internet facilities to support a conducive learning environment for youth in rural areas. .

Improvement and Revision of Curriculum

- Implement comprehensive life skills programmes in higher educational institutions that address gender-based violence through a gender-sensitive lens to raise awareness, confidence, and resilience, while fostering a sense of community and support mechanisms.
- Revise curricula & programs to align with an intersectional and inclusive approach, incorporating the sensitivity to the diversity in gender, caste, class, linguistic, religious, and other local context-based specificities.

The background is a textured blue surface with several irregular, organic green shapes scattered across it, resembling paint splatters or abstract landmasses. At the bottom, there are large, light green, irregular shapes that look like drips or a stylized horizon line.

GENDER & CLIMATE CHANGE

We demand gender-responsive and community-led climate action that centers the rights, needs, and leadership of women, gender-diverse people, and climate-impacted communities.

To this end, we call on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), State Environment Departments, local governance bodies, and planning commissions to take the following actions:

Recognition, Inclusion & Representation in Decision Making

- Revision of terminologies to become gender-inclusive, e.g., replace ‘fisherman’ with ‘fish vendors’ or ‘fisherfolk’.
- Recognition of women as heads of households and land owners in policy and practice.
- Ensure community-centred consultations are meaningful and prior to project approval, rooted in rights, consent, and locally identified needs, and not a symbolic exercise after projects are finalised.
- Ensure due representation of feminist youth leaders and members from within the local communities in the National and State Planning Commissions.
- Meaningful representation and leadership of women and gender-diverse individuals in climate policy-making and other decision-making spaces.
- Curation of more spaces for youth to actively participate, and raise their concerns and recommendations.
- Promotion of public education and awareness on different government bodies/offices that people could reach out to for assistance or redressal.

Legislation and Policy

- Develop a state-wise Climate Action Plan and Development Plan with a focus on the needs of women and gender-diverse individuals, informal livelihoods, inter-state migrant workers, climate refugees, and other vulnerable communities.
- Transparency in policies and budgets allocated for climate change (at the state and national level), and their implementation.
- Ensure access to and the right to clean drinking water and challenge the privatisation of drinking water.
- District-level youth platforms should be set up by the government to oversee the implementation of climate action plans, ensure compliance, and publish white-paper reports for transparency and accountability.
- Commitment to the protection of sustainable livelihoods, especially of informal workers, in the face of “sustainable”, “green” or “smart” infrastructure projects implemented by the government.
- Challenge non-participatory solutions (such as carbon credit/carbon offsets) that are being introduced as climate-sensitive measures by multinational companies and governments, threatening to displace forest-dwelling people.

We also call upon donors, funding organisations, and foundations to pay heed to our demands and channelise Corporate Social Responsibility funds towards community-led, feminist climate action in a sustainable manner.

PREVENTION OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE



“ We believe — A community of survivors is the only space that can be considered safe.

Towards the objective of ending all forms of gender-based violence, we call upon the Ministry of Women and Child Development, state machineries for criminal justice, and state departments of women and child development to pay heed to our demands.

”

Sensitisation about trauma and making services trauma-informed and survivor-centred. This should include:

- Mandatory adoption of trauma-informed and survivor-centred language in institutional policies and frameworks.
- Sensitisation of both systems and communities to recognise and respond to Gender Based Violence by including education about GBV into the formal educational curricula.

Awareness and intentional empowerment approach:

- Upscaling of youth leadership programs at community levels - bringing in the intersectional lens.
- Co-creation and widespread dissemination of resources for GBV survivors in all languages, as well as in audio-visual format - these resources should be tailored to the regional context and focused.
- Access to self-defense programs.
- Defining “Violence” comprehensively in educational curricula
- Targeted empowerment programs focusing on radical thinking, soft skills, and leadership.
- Sensitisation programs must engage the wider school and workplace ecosystems, actively involving men and boys.

- Evaluate the accessibility and effectiveness of the available resources and services.
- Check the level of access for the community, and where the information is coming from.
- SRHR awareness seen from an intersectional lens with public policy and marginalised identities.

Support for Survivors

- Auditing and monitoring of the existing services, and the quality of care being provided.
- Implement transparent and easily-accessible grievance redressal mechanisms for trans and gender-diverse individuals experiencing GBV.
- Round-the-clock emergency safety measures for trans and gender-diverse individuals, such as a helpline.
- Provide training to police personnel and other authorities on trans and gender-diverse-inclusive responses to reports of technology-facilitated GBV.

Holding Media Agencies Accountable

- Require media companies to have regulations about how GBV is portrayed.
- Require online platforms to implement accountability and moderation tools for GBV against women, trans, and gender-diverse individuals.

Redefining Violence

- What violence means for different people in different contexts needs to be redefined and comprehensively, sensitively articulated.
- Support for survivor-led initiatives and community-led and community-focused agendas to redefine violence.

Monitoring the perpetrators in positions of power

- Legislative reforms should address gaps in the legal framework and work towards protecting survivors.
- Protection and vigilance cells should be established and strengthened to monitor GBV cases and hold institutions accountable.
- Monitoring committees - no perpetrators should be allowed in a position of power - corruption has to end, and stricter laws need to be established.



GENDER & HEALTH

We demand a healthcare system that is gender-just, accessible, and responsive to the diverse realities of marginalised communities. To achieve this, we call on the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), National Medical Commission (NMC), Medical Councils and Institutions at the national and state levels to -

- Increase sensitisation and capacity building of healthcare service providers to ensure healthcare services are contextualised to be more informed of, and reflect the diverse needs of the population groups they are meant for.
- Mandatorily integrate queer and disability-focused competencies in all medical curricula.
- Scale AETCOM (attitudes, ethics, and communication) in competency-based medical education curricula that is trauma informed and survivor centred.
- Introduce classes on regional languages to allow healthcare service providers to communicate with the population.
- Strengthen education and build capacity of different medical systems (AYUSH, indigenous, and allopathic medical systems) and ensure they work cooperatively and collaboratively.
- Strengthen capacity building for community healthcare workers, including but not limited to Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs), and Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs).

Research and Development

- Strengthen Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) mechanisms of existing government schemes and programs.
- Establish mandatory quality checks for all healthcare training programs.
- Collect and regularly update disaggregated data on access and delivery of healthcare services, broken down by gender, region, caste, socioeconomic status.

- Ensure access to affordable and quality healthcare services for trans-queer folks, including gender reassignment surgeries, hormonal therapy, and mental health support through inclusive health policies.

Gender, Health and Financing:

- Focus on increased allocation of budget for public healthcare systems.
- Ensure increased gender-transformative budgeting to promote inclusive and supportive spaces for queer-trans folk to express and access their healthcare needs.
- Expand insurance schemes to be more comprehensive and inclusive of gender, sexuality, sex characteristics, caste, and socio-economic status to promote the affordability of healthcare services to the most vulnerable population groups.
- Flexible funding should be explored and made available for applying a gender-transformative approach to healthcare research.

Adequate allocation of resources to healthcare systems:

- Community centers in remote, semi-rural, and rural areas (including mountainous regions) should be capacitated to address healthcare accessibility, including but not limited to minor operations and child delivery.
- There should be creation and upscaling of survivor-centred healthcare services, including but not limited to LGBTQIA+ clinics, adolescent clinics.
- There should be funding and focus on increasing rapid, efficient, and quality health transportation facilities.
- Create more mobile hospitals for emergency health issues, to provide emergency healthcare services, especially in hard-to-reach and underserved areas.

Mental health-based community building & outreach:

We demand,

- Development of community-based mental health support programs tailored to specific mental health concerns and local contexts.
- Development of awareness campaigns on the repercussions of mental health challenges (like rising suicide rates) with a special focus on suicide prevention programs.
- Increased sensitisation, awareness, and capacity building on postpartum mental health disorders (including postpartum blues, postpartum depression, and postpartum psychosis).
- Increase mental health and psychosocial support for victim-survivors of early child marriage and female genital mutilation.
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) and Anti Sexual Harassment (ASH) committees should be strengthened to provide trauma-informed and survivor-centred support.

Accessibility of Healthcare Services for Vulnerable Population Groups:

We demand,

- Co-creation and implementation of community-centred interventions for conflict zones and displaced populations to effectively address their unique and context specific challenges and needs.
- Simplification of bureaucratic processes to ensure easier access to healthcare services by forcibly displaced populations, including refugees, and asylum seekers.

Widespread Dissemination of available resources:

We demand,

- Dissemination of information about available government schemes, services, benefits, programs, and helplines in regional languages ensuring that these are accessible to all.
- Promotion of public education to break down the barriers of shame and stigma surrounding abortion and contraception use, to enable informed reproductive choices.

Infrastructure that is gender transformative:

We demand,

- The normalisation and building of more gender-neutral washrooms in public and private spaces.
- Promotion of gender neutral uniforms in workplaces.

We recommend that the Government:

- Includes transgender persons, trans-queer and gender diverse individuals in the National Health Mission.
- Covers gender-affirming care that includes surgeries, hormonal therapy, and mental health support under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme.



GENDER, SKILLS & LIVELIHOOD

We demand the full recognition, inclusion, and support for women and gender-diverse people across all forms of work, and the creation of systems that enable their meaningful participation and leadership in the labour market, and protection from exploitation. To achieve this we call on:

The policymakers at the national and state level, especially the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and the Ministry of Education, to:

- Recognise all forms of labour – including domestic work, agricultural work, and informal sector work – as legitimate forms of paid work, and ensure all women engaged in such work are counted and protected as “working women”.
- Strengthen social and policy infrastructure to enable women and gender-diverse people’s participation in the workforce.
- Roll out a national-level scheme for the development of working women’s hostels across the country.
- Implement gender-responsive budgeting towards equitable resource allocation for women entrepreneurs.

The Skilling and Employment Ecosystem (including Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, NGOs, and training institutions):

- Design intentional and inclusive skill development schemes, that are by and for women and gender-diverse persons.
- Co-design skilling programmes with women and gender-diverse persons to cater to their livelihood aspirations.
- Recognise and promote traditional and local knowledge systems as valuable forms of skill and expertise, particularly those rooted in indigenous, rural, and community-led practices.
- Ensure that skill development programmes are responsive to local contexts and youth aspirations, and do not impose outdated, irrelevant models.

- Support research on gendered labour trends, particularly those that hinder education in remote and rural areas, like human trafficking.
- Implement gender-responsive budgeting to ensure equitable resource allocation for women entrepreneurs.
- Design holistic programmes to develop entrepreneurial skills among youth that include follow-up support after the training, e.g. support with product marketing, digital and soft skills.
- Enforce ongoing monitoring, learning and evaluation frameworks for such training programmes.

To the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment:

- Enforce minimum wage laws and guarantee equal pay for all genders.
- Strengthen livelihood guarantees through schemes like MNREGA, and the creation of an urban employment guarantee scheme, learning from the success of the rural employment guarantee scheme.

An artistic illustration featuring several hands of different skin tones (brown, tan, light skin, and dark skin) reaching towards the center and overlapping. The hands are set against a background of large, vibrant, abstract shapes in blue, red, yellow, and purple. The overall style is graphic and textured, with visible brushstrokes or a paper-like texture.

COMMUNITY BUILDING & MOVEMENTS

We, young feminist leaders, community organisers and movement builders, in solidarity with all the marginalised and oppressed identities, demand:

From the Government:

- The state and central government must increase the budget for investment in youth's education and livelihood.
- Create inclusive youth and women-centric safe spaces at all levels including village, block, district and state levels in the form of Physical Community halls/ Centres that are functional and have access to all the members of the community especially the oppressed identities.
- Include young activists (from diverse age groups) in the process of policy-making, not as a tokenistic gesture, but ensuring they have decision-making powers.
- To ensure safety and accessibility to quality education for youth, establish Junior High School every 5 km for girls and provide extra support for English and STEM in after-school programs by the Govt. of India.
- Increase funding and provide fair wages and job security to the caseworkers working in the different govt. agencies (Such as - One Stop Centre (OSC), Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Village Level Child Protection Committee (VLCPC), District Level Child Protection Committee (DLCPC), Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) etc.) and departments ensuring consistency in the flow of funding.
- Ensure active participation of local communities, specifically the youth, in Gram Sabha, Panchayat meetings in rural areas, and Municipality and Corporation meetings in urban areas. Make these local forums genuinely functional, democratic, inclusive and accessible.

Youth-led movements should be encouraged to push for including their 'Demand Charter' or 'Youth Manifesto' in the election manifestos of the political parties.- However, along with that, the political parties should be held accountable to fulfill the promises included in their manifestos, without which mere inclusion of the demands will be futile.

CBOs / NGOs / Inter-governmental organisations

- Allocate dedicated budgets and generate sustained funding for youth movements, and to form and support associations to be led by young activists from intersectional backgrounds.
- Making UN spaces and forums multilingual and/or provide for real-time interpretation so people from diverse backgrounds can access these spaces and can represent their issues themselves.
- The UN must actively facilitate dialogue between the government and people-led movements, support decriminalisation of dissent , and allow spaces for resistance to exist in the country.
- The UN should acts as a communication/media platform to amplify and spread community-led narratives through storytelling and other media of artistic expressions.
- The UN should facilitate intercultural dialogues considering the diversity and marginalisations that exist in our country.
- Use folklore, and other local folk cultural mediums as socio-cultural tools for community participation and movement building and centre the voices of marginalised communities in public and political discourse.
- National-level consultations must ensure that there is a dynamic mix of representation from across communities in India, every time they are organised.

GENDER & TECHNOLOGY



Tech in Education

- Mandated tech-related skill development programs and training for teachers, especially female teachers, so that they effectively incorporate and adapt new technologies into their teaching practices.
- Addressing digital education by establishing online libraries with a comprehensive collection of resources and materials in regional languages and dialects.
- Advocating for schools and universities to encourage/ promote young girls to pursue diverse fields that go beyond gender norms.
- Implementing inclusive approaches to tech education and access across all demographics (older and younger generations,) especially in marginalised and structurally excluded communities.
- Ensuring Adivasi students have access to educational materials in their local languages, supported by language-specific teachers as well as video learning materials and online programs.
- Introducing mentorship programs to support young students, led by mentors who can reflect the lived experience of local communities, languages, and representations.

Digitalisation in Services and Infrastructure

- Establish basic digital and vocational skill centres in every community, offering training in areas like driving, health services, and other practical skills to support economic empowerment.
- Surveillance practices by the State agencies and/or the big tech companies should be challenged by ensuring data security and by monitoring and placing checks on the monopolisation of multinational companies.
- It should be mandated that government subsidies from multi-national companies be allocated to more sustainable investments in essential needs – like food, clean water, and practical public infrastructure – instead of profit-oriented digital expansion.

Preventing Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV)

We demand,

1. Addressing technology-facilitated by gender-based violence, including but not limited to cyber harassment, doxxing, non-consensual sharing and other misuse/mal-use of private images, by increasing training, resources, and accountability within police and legal justice systems.
- Ensuring that the Nirbhaya Fund is effectively utilised to tackle issues of TFGBV.
- Orienting big tech companies' governance policies to prioritise the rights and safety of survivors of tech-facilitated gender-based violence, not the protection of perpetrators and/or corporate interests.



GENDER & DISABILITY

We demand that policy makers and stakeholders in power, especially the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Ministry of Education (MoE), and their state-level counterparts, to:

- Sensitise healthcare providers to offer timely care and prevent avoidable disabilities, and ensure that healthcare policy treats mental and physical disabilities at par.
- Expand government definitions of disability to include chronic pain, psycho-social disabilities, musculoskeletal conditions, and degenerative illnesses.
- Integrate principles of universal design into the planning of infrastructure and the built environment, and require disability audits in programme design, venue selection, and MEAL frameworks.
- Conduct collaborative audits of public infrastructure, budgets, and planning, and regularly review audit frameworks themselves to identify and address gaps in transparency and corruption.
- Include indigenous individuals with disabilities in movement-building forums and civil society consultations, and ensure that policy-making processes are transparent, participatory, and informed by the feedback of individuals and groups with disabilities.
- Ensure that youth and feminist movements proactively reach out to disability advocates and organisations, rather than only inviting limited participation, and build cross-movement allyship with organisations working in similar communities and neighbouring geographies.
- Mobilise resources and increase funding for organisations that are disability-centred or are led by individuals with disability.
- Review and adapt curricula across educational levels to make them inclusive of students with disabilities, and sensitise teachers by moving from an assumption that every student is able-bodied to a principle that everyone benefits from accommodations.

- Ensure that civil society organisations embed disability-inclusive frameworks in resource planning, budgeting, and programme design, and collaborate with State Disability Commissions to audit public infrastructure and monitor policy implementation.
- Work with state-level Departments of Education and Social Justice through sensitisation, collaboration, and auditing, to advocate for disability-friendly policy changes.
- The National Medical Commission (NMC) must integrate comprehensive disability competencies into all levels of medical education and training. This includes mandatory modules on physical, intellectual, sensory, and psychosocial disabilities; patient communication and consent; rights-based and trauma-informed care.
- Co-create a shared dictionary of terms across stakeholders to support clear and inclusive communication in disability and gender advocacy.



Gender at
Work India