Policy Proposal for Strengthening Girl Child Education in India: A Multi-Ministerial, Youth-Driven National Strategy

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Submitted to:

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Women and Child Development
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
- Ministry of Rural Development
- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- Local MLAs

I. Executive Summary

India has made commendable strides in improving access to education for girls. However, challenges remain in achieving equity, retention, digital inclusion, safety, life skills training, and post-secondary support. This policy seeks to identify **critical policy gaps** in the current framework and proposes an **inter-ministerial, youth-collaborative approach** to bridge them through integrated, actionable initiatives.

II. Policy Gaps Identified

1. Lack of Focus on Secondary and Higher Education Retention

- Existing schemes (e.g., Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao) focus heavily on early education
- Inadequate policies ensuring retention from Class 9 to 12 and transition to higher education

2. Digital Access and Literacy Deficit

- Girls in rural and marginal communities face limited digital access and STEM exposure
- No comprehensive policy ensures equitable access to digital education infrastructure

3. Inaccessibility to Infrastructure

- Long distances, limited and unreliable transportation hinders attendance
- Unavailability of schools, and basic resources in remote locations

4. Inadequate Menstrual Health and Sanitation Facilities

- Absence of proper WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) facilities hinders attendance
- Lack of integration between health and education sectors to address this barrier

5. Limited Youth Voice and Participation in Policy-Making

- Current schemes do not include girls' and young women's voices in shaping education policy

6. Safety Concerns and Gender-Based Violence in and around Schools

- Insufficient measures to ensure safe school commutes and secure campuses
- Poor implementation of the POCSO Act awareness in schools
- Shortage of female teachers leading to discomfort and unwillingness to attend

7. Lack of Gender-Sensitive Career Guidance and Skill Training

- Girls are not equipped with career awareness, entrepreneurship, or financial literacy

III. Objectives of the Proposed Policy

1. Ensure **100% retention** of girls in secondary and higher education

2. Eliminate **digital and STEM education disparities**

3. Make every school **WASH-compliant and period-friendly** by 2030

4. Institutionalize **youth voices** in decision-making through policy councils

5. Enhance **safety, transport, and support services** for girls in education

6. Promote **career readiness and skills training** through public-private initiatives

IV. Proposed Initiatives & Multi-Ministerial Collaboration

1. Girl Education Continuity Fund (GECF)

Lead: Ministry of Education + Ministry of Women and Child Development

-   Direct Benefit Transfers for girls transitioning from Class 8 to 9 and Class 10 to 11
-   Emergency stipends for girls at risk of dropping out due to marriage, migration, or poverty

2. Digital Daughters Program

Lead: Ministry of Electronics and IT + Ministry of Education

-   Free digital devices and internet access for female students from Class 6 onward in low-income and BPL communities
-   STEM mentorship through partnerships with tech firms and NGOs

3. National Menstrual Health in Schools Initiative (NaMHSI)

Lead: Ministry of Health + Ministry of Education

-   Sanitary pad vending machines, disposal units, menstrual health workshops
-   Provide free medical and emotional support for menstrual conditions (dysmenorrhea, menorrhagia etc.)
-   Employ local women for maintenance and awareness generation

4. Safe School Commute and Campus Program

Lead: Ministry of Rural Development + Ministry of Home Affairs

-   Implement gender-sensitive transport solutions (e.g., bicycles, shuttle buses, rickshaws)
-   Employ local women in driving and operating these solutions

- Install GPS tracking and mobile safety alert systems near schools

5. Youth Education Policy Council (YEPC)

Lead: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports + Ministry of Education

- Elected student representatives (50% girls) from each district form advisory councils
- In-person quarterly conferences for first 3 years, followed by online quarterly conferences to track progress
- Annual national convention feeding into the national education strategy

6. FutureHer Career & Skills Hub

Lead: Ministry of Skill Development + Ministry of Women and Child Development

- After-school career clubs and workshops led by female mentors and alumni
- Integration with national digital skilling platforms (e.g., Skill India)

V. Implementation and Monitoring Framework

- **National Implementation Committee (NIC)** under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) for high-level coordination
- **State Education Task Forces** to localize and execute policy interventions
- Integration with **SDG 4 (Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 8 (Decent Work)** targets
- Pilot programmes to be undertaken in 150 schools across the country in partnership with youth representatives
- Implement a "Train the trainer" model to ensure designated personnel are adequately qualified and informed
- Devolve authority and resources to district/block-level units with clear budgeting and managerial autonomy
- Ensure all Ministries/departments function collaboratively rather than in silos
- Develop **clear metrics and feedback loops** during rollout to detect gaps early and course-correct, jointly with youth leaders
- Establish regular **independent, transparent audits** and evaluation frameworks with accountability for both policymakers and implementing authorities
- Institutionalize **citizen feedback mechanisms** (e.g., report cards, social audits) to generate local accountability
- Track progress through quarterly conferences; redesign/redress and experiment as situations evolve

- Protect **academic freedom** and **data transparency** to empower evidence-based policy

Monitoring Tools:

- Real-time dashboards at district levels
- Independent youth-led audits every year
- Public data on retention, facilities, and digital access disaggregated by gender and region

VI. Funding Sources

- **Funding Sources**:

  - Consolidation of existing schemes (e.g., Samagra Shiksha, BBBP)
  - CSR partnerships for digital and STEM programs
  - State matching grants
  - International development grants (UNICEF, World Bank)

VII. Conclusion and Call to Action

This proposal offers a holistic, scalable, and equity-focused policy framework to ensure every Indian girl not only goes to school but **thrives and leads**. A girl child educated is a nation empowered. We urge the Government of India to adopt and launch this **multi-ministerial, youth-anchored policy** by **National Girl Child Day (January 24, 2026)**.

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