



UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

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INDIA: EMBRACING GIRLS

VIDEO

FAMILY

WOMEN

AUDIO

NARRATION

It should be a happy event having a daughter in the family, but for some women in India and a few other Asian countries it is seen as a burden. (8)

Most parents view having a boy as more desirable. They believe that sons will take care of them in their later years while daughters will join their husband's family when they get married. After that, they'll seldom contribute to their parents' needs. In addition to that, parents face an economic burden with girls as they have to come up with a dowry when they marry. (21)

Due to these prejudices, many pregnant women experience intense pressure from family members to find out the sex of their fetuses and to abort the females. (9.5)

DAXA AT HOME

Daxa Patel is from a small village in Gujarat in western India. When she learned that she was pregnant with a girl, she was deeply concerned.

(8)

DAXA PATEL ON CAMERA

PATEL: (local dialect) **F**

“When we got the test results, my in-laws immediately insisted I should go for an abortion. My husband also wanted me to do it.” (8)

WOMEN’S MEETING

NARRATION

But Daxa resisted and kept the baby. Driven by her experience, she joined a local campaign against testing to determine the sex of fetuses. (10)

SEMINAR

Daxa met other women there with similar stories to hers. Nimbu was thrown out of her in-law’s house when she refused to abort her fourth daughter. Her husband also left in support of her decision against his parents’ wishes. (16)

NIMBU ON CAMERA

NIMBU: (local dialect) **F**

‘We manage. I would rather be poor than to be without my daughters.’ (4)

MEETING WITH ACTIVISTS

NARRATION

Nimbu’s and Daxa’s attitudes are signs there is hope in tackling existing prejudices against girls. (6)

These negative views are affecting Indian society in a profound way. Because parents have favoured males for such a long time, there is now a severe gender imbalance in many States. The national government has introduced legislation to

curb this harmful trend. Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, Pravir Krishn. (21)

PRAVIR KRISHN ON-CAMERA

KRISHN: (English) **M**

“The tools that we need to use are strong laws, punishment. Without the fear of the law catching up with you, nobody will really fall in line. And then incentives, social action, mobilization to ensure that it is sustained and the society takes this issue as its own problem.” (18)

OVER HER SOUNDBITE

NARRATION

Radha Sharma is a journalist from the Times of India. She has been supporting the campaign in Gujarat to change attitudes. (7.5)

RADHA SHARMA ON CAMERA

SHARMA: (English) **F**

“.....Basically the idea is to keep on telling the society that it’s not necessary to have a son to be a happy family.” (6)

COMMUNITY MEETING /
CLASSROOM

NARRATION

The UN Population Fund is working hard in India to educate people about gender equality. It supports an awareness campaign in communities and schools. It is hoped that students will bring the message home to their parents. (14)

UN LOGO

This report was prepared by William Ryan for the United Nations.