



PRESS RELEASE

120,000 GIRLS SUPPORTED IN RAJASTHAN BY VODAFONE

Vodafone India Reaffirms Commitment to 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' Abhiyaan with a contribution of Rs.4.5 crore to NGO partner Educate Girls

Jaipur, 5 October, 2015:

*Manju** (11) lives in small village in the tribal belt of Rajasthan. Manju's father is a stonemason. Manju is the youngest child in her family and has three brothers and a sister. Manju's elder sister is married and has never been to school. Manju aspired to study and be the Sarpanch of her village but was convinced that her fate will be the same as her sister. She kept busy cooking at home for her family while she watched the children in her village march to school every morning.

*Suhani** (12), used to go to school until a few years ago. She struggled with making progress in reading and writing and had no way of getting additional support to improve her learning. Her parents thought that she wasn't gaining much and so they stopped Suhani's schooling. Suhani was then confined to cooking, cleaning, fetching water and taking care of her younger siblings at home.

Manju and Suhani are just 2 amongst the **120,000 girls** in rural Rajasthan who had to drop out of school but were supported by Educate Girls and Vodafone India to return back to pursue their dreams.

Vodafone, one of India's leading telecommunications service providers, as part of its commitment to the national movement '**Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**', partnered with Educate Girls, (an NGO that focuses on enrolling, retailing and improving the learning outcomes of young girls aged 6-14 years) and raised more than **INR 4.5 crore** through several initiatives to support the education of over 120,000 out-of-school girls. The young girls are largely from Pali, Jalore, Sirohi, Ajmer, Bundi and Rajsamand districts in Rajasthan.

Speaking about Vodafone's focus on education, **Mr. P. Balaji, Director – Regulatory, External Affairs & CSR, Vodafone India**, said, "Education is the catalyst to social change and one of the most critical areas of empowerment for women. Offering girls basic education is just the beginning for enabling them to make genuine choices over the kinds of lives they wish to lead. There are also important benefits for society as a whole. An educated woman has the skills, information and self-confidence that she needs to be a better parent, worker and citizen. I wish all the girls a great future."

Affirming Vodafone's commitment, **Mr. B P Singh, Director- Operations (West), Vodafone India**, said, "At Vodafone India, we are keen to leverage our capabilities and resources in partnering with the government and the developmental sector to fulfill the national priority of '**Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao**'. I am delighted that our collective efforts have enabled over 1, 20, 000 young girls to follow their dreams. I thank our NGO partner Educate Girls and my colleagues at Vodafone India for their commitment and support for this cause."

Thanking Vodafone for its support and contribution, **Safeena Husain, Founder and Executive Director, Educate Girls**, said, "It is indeed very heartening to have a corporation of Vodafone's stature support Educate Girls. Vodafone Foundation's World of Difference program has helped Educate Girls Immensely with fundraising and capacity building at the field level. Vodafone's contribution will go a long way as Educate Girls attempts to impact over 30 lac children across 27,000 schools in the underserved educationally backward districts of Rajasthan."



Notes to Editor:

About Vodafone Foundation

Mobilising the community, mobilising social change.

The Vodafone Foundation in India recognises the power of mobile technology to address some of India's most pressing challenges relating to education, health, equality and access. We are committed to enable people and technology to drive innovation, disseminate knowledge, and create shared value to improve lives.

By leveraging our mobile technology in the four areas of m-women, m-education, m-health and m-agriculture, we work in partnership with key charities, development agencies and the community to drive social change on a large scale in India. As part of our social investment programme, the Vodafone Foundation in India also focusses on disaster relief and implements the World of Difference programme, an unique employee engagement.

In countries in which Vodafone operates, a unique footprint of 27 Vodafone Foundations operate to deliver our social investment programme. These programmes are directed and chosen by the Foundation Trustees and receive funding from the Vodafone Foundation in the UK as well as their local Vodafone company. For more information, please visit www.vodafone.in/foundation

About Educate Girls:

Educate Girls (www.educategirls.ngo) is a registered non-governmental organisation that increases enrolment, retention, and learning outcomes for girls in marginalised communities in India. From a 50 schools pilot in 2007, Educate Girls has grown to cover over 8,000 schools, has brought over 100,000 out-of-school girls back to school and has impacted over 28 lac children in seven districts of Rajasthan.

Educate Girls works to improve access and quality of education in gender gap districts by collaborating with the government, teachers, parents, community members, government and the girls themselves to advance education quality and universal access. The organisation comprises of 550 full-time staff and over 4,600 dedicated community volunteers.