

MY CHOICES
FOUNDATION

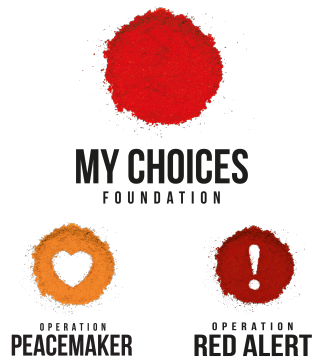


OPERATION
PEACEMAKER



OPERATION
RED ALERT





AB DE VILLIERS JOINS THE #RESPECT2PROTECT MOVEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH INDIA BECAUSE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IS BIGGER THAN SA VS. INDIA

HYDERABAD, 9th December, 2015: AB de Villiers, South Africa's cricket captain, and the world's best batsman, has joined India's campaign to end gender-based violence and discrimination! In a pledge made in solidarity with India, de Villiers has put aside rivalry and taken a stand to Respect2Protect women and girls. Why? Because "violence against women and girls is BIGGER than South Africa vs. India", said de Villiers.

de Villiers filmed his pledge with the My Choices Foundation in team in Delhi on December 1st, the day before the epic 5 day test match between South Africa and India. When asked why he believed in making his pledge, and why he would make time to film his stance in the midst of his hectic schedule, de Villiers said "because every woman and every girl deserves a fair chance". He said that his own life is a product of good upbringing and opportunities to pursue his dreams, and girls should not be denied the same opportunity just because of their gender.

Mentoring and encouraging school students is a cause close to de Villiers' heart, so he chose to make his pledge in honour of every girl or woman pursuing her education. In his pledge, de Villiers speaks to boys and men, encouraging them to "speak up and step up" if they see a girl being harassed "in the class room or on the street". It is a powerful message to society about making sure every woman and girl's right to get an education is protected.

AB de Villiers' pledge can be viewed online [here](#). The pledge transcript is below.

"Protecting a woman or a girl means respecting her. Protecting her right to walk, ride, drive or get to school without any threat to her safety. It means speaking up, and stepping up if you see her being harassed - on the street or in the class room. It means making sure she stays in school, and if she's missing from school finding out why. It means believing that if she is allowed to survive and thrive in school, that she will succeed in life. Respecting her potential means protecting her! I will RESPECT2PROTECT!"
- AB de Villiers, 1st December, 2015

WHY AB DE VILLIERS CHOSE TO MAKE HIS PLEDGE ABOUT EDUCATION:

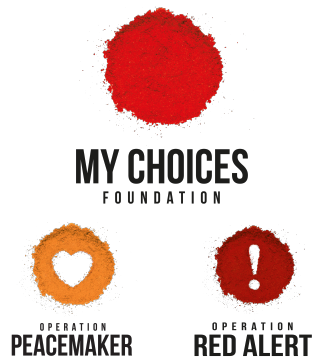
"Violence or the fear of violence is an important reason for girls not attending school. Besides being in itself an infringement of girls' rights, violence is also denying girls their right to education" (ActionAid 2004)

Violence against girls takes many forms including rape, sexual harassment, intimidation, teasing and threats. It affects all girls, regardless of age, race, class, caste or location. Poverty, war and long journeys to school put girls at additional risk.

The causes are rooted in male-dominated cultures which belittle or condone violence against girls and women. Violence is used as a tool for imposing male power. Girls themselves often regard violence as inevitable and feel powerless to complain.

"Enshrined in international and national law, education is a fundamental right of all children without distinction or discrimination of any kind. It is also widely recognised as an enabling right, one which, by promoting the fullest development of a child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities, allows her to claim a range of other rights and fulfil her potential (UNCRC)."

It should not be dangerous to walk to school. School itself should be a safe space where young girls study unburdened by anxiety of harassment and abuse. Parents should rest confident that their daughters are protected and respected.



If men and boys take a pledge to respect every girl's right to education, the mobility she needs to get to school, her dreams that will see her pursue academic accomplishment and her right to exist and thrive in public spaces, then school will not seem like such a dangerous place. In a world where girls and women are respected, their parents will not be fearful to send them to school. We need a world where school girls are allowed to survive and thrive in school. #Respect2Protect school girls.

WHAT IS #RESPECT2PROTECT AND WHERE IS IT GOING:

#RESPECT2PROTECT IS A PLEDGE TO RESPECT THE DREAMS, RIGHTS, CHOICES AND SAFETY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS.

IT IS THE BELIEF THAT MEN ARE AT LEAST 50% OF THE SOLUTION TO ENDING VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN.

IT IS THE PROMISE THAT IF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND SAFETY ARE RESPECTED, THEIR PROTECTION IS GUARANTEED.

The initial phase of #Respect2Protect Campaign received viral support with 700+ thousand video views, 64+ million hashtag impressions, over 1,000 original social media posts, YouTube tribute videos and on the ground action from volunteers.

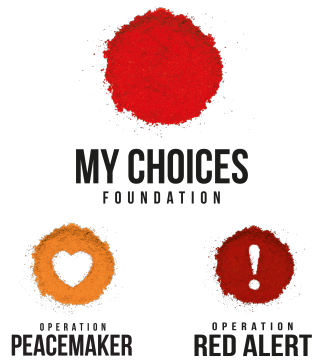
My Choices Foundation is committed to ensuring that the #Respect2Protect concept is more than just words, more than just 5 inspiring athletes giving a feel-good message in a moving video. We are committed to ensuring that #Respect2Protect procures transformation and action. This will be done through a series of calls to action to all of the campaign's online followers. The first step is to encourage each individual to make their own pledge. This will lead to additional action steps resulting in real-world steps like one young man, Chakradhar Reddy is taking. Chakradhar is setting up a presentation in his school to 1,000 students to educate them on violence against women and girls and get each one to take a pledge to #Respect2Protect! In addition to adding every-day voices and action by every day men and women, we will continue to seek to add additional voices from leadership in different sectors including sport, entertainment, government, and business.

At the core of all My Choices Foundation's efforts is the desire to see victims of gender-selective abuse, violence and exploitation provided with the help they need to end it. Along with the #Respect2Protect message is a helpline through which anyone facing or who knows someone facing abuse can access through a simple SMS keyword mechanism to be connected with trusted Counsellors who can provide them with the choices they need to end and heal from abuse or violence.

My Choices Foundation expects this new phase of the campaign to go viral, and help catalyze real changes in the mind set of society towards women and girls. Together, we can make protect women and girls by offering them the respect they need and deserve.

CAMPAIGN GOALS:

1. **AWARENESS:** To raise mass-awareness and sensitivity of the issue of violence against woman and girls.
2. **CHANGE:** To break and change harmful cultural norms and mindsets, especially those who think violence or discrimination against women is normal.



3. SET THE NORM: To cultivate a trend of treating women and girls with dignity and respect, making women and girl's safety from physical, sexual, economic, and emotional harm a normal priority.
4. ACT: To provide calls to action for individual bystanders, perpetrators and victims to:
 1. SPEAK UP
 2. CHANGE YOUR MINDSET
 3. GET HELP!

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:

Hannah Norling
Marketing Director, My Choices Foundation
+91 9948297972
hannah@mychoicesfoundation.org



MY CHOICES
FOUNDATION



OPERATION
PEACEMAKER



OPERATION
RED ALERT