

Executive Summary

A Generation Standing on the Edge of History

As 10 young Indians part of the Next Generation India Fellowship, we represent the voices, ambitions, and ideas of a generation that makes up the largest share of our country's population. Despite our different backgrounds and expertise, we are united by a simple but powerful purpose: to imagine a future we want to inherit.

Emboldened by this ambition, and with the support of the United Nations Foundation and CEEW, we began a journey of envisioning the future of India at its centenary of independence in 2047.¹ It is a national call to action: to become a fully developed economy, a sustainability leader, and a reformer of global governance in time for our centenary of independence.² For those outside India, *Viksit Bharat* is best understood as our North Star—a vision of what a strong, inclusive, future-ready nation should be.

But achieving *Viksit Bharat* is not inevitable. The question is not whether India has a vision—it does. The question is whether this generation can navigate disruption to make that vision real. With 734 million citizens under 30, nearly one in ten young people alive today is Indian.³ That makes our stake in the outcome impossible to ignore.

This report is our attempt to turn disruption into possibility. It is not written about young people, but by us. It is not a plea for inclusion, but a playbook for transformation intended to fulfill the promise of *Viksit Bharat* by sparking an intergenerational movement where every voice could contribute towards shaping a developed India.



Five Disruptors Defining Our Future

Across months of listening, debating, and imagining with nearly 600 young Indians, five forces emerged as the great disruptors of our time. Each is a threat—but each, if grasped with courage, could be a lever for renewal and the realization of *Viksit Bharat*:



Demographic Trends

The Double-Edged Dividend

India's youth bulge is historic. Yet, for many, it feels less like a dividend and more like pressure. Every year, millions enter the workforce with degrees in hand but uncertainty in their hearts.

Take Binati, who we met from a tribal community in Odisha. At just 19, she contested panchayat elections. Though she did not win, her campaign lit a spark, showing other young women that political participation was not a privilege, but a right. Her courage speaks to the possibilities of this demographic moment: if youth are trusted with responsibility, we can reshape governance from the ground up.

The government's call for *Viksit Bharat* depends on precisely this kind of participation. Without jobs, voice, and dignity for youth, the demographic dividend becomes a demographic burden. And time is short: by 2050, India's population will begin to age.⁴ What we do now will decide if *Viksit Bharat* is a shared reality or an unfulfilled promise.



Rapid Urbanization

Building Next-Generation Cities

By 2036, India will add more than 600 million new urban dwellers.⁵ Cities are already where 60% of GDP,⁶ is produced and where young people chase opportunity, identity, and independence.

Yet, the lived experience is more complicated. Mubeena, a young professional who migrated from her village to Kochi, told us that staying away from family was the hardest thing she had to overcome, but she made the move to the city for work. Her story mirrors millions who migrate out of necessity, not choice, only to face soaring rents, fragile infrastructure, and unsafe streets.

Urbanization is the test of whether *Viksit Bharat* will be inclusive. Will it create megacities of inequality, or participatory 15-minute cities that work for everyone? Will migration constrain opportunities, or will Smart Village Hubs make India's rural life more inviting?





Artificial Intelligence

Innovation and Skilling

We are the first generation to come of age alongside technology that can make up their own stories, draw their own pictures, and even write their own songs. For some, AI can uplift and educate; for others, it is a looming threat to jobs and truth itself.

Ashim, a student we met in Silchar, dreams of solving his city's traffic chaos using open-source datasets. He is proof that given access to equitable AI, young people in rural towns can innovate solutions that matter.

For *Viksit Bharat* to mean more than growth on paper, India must ensure that AI is in itself democratizing. That will require skilling, governance, and ethics to govern our path.



Climate Change

Moving From Anxiety to Action

For our generation, climate change is not tomorrow's story—it is today's reality. Every consultation we held surfaced as a defining anxiety.

Consider Ravi, a student we met in Silchar, who nearly missed his exams when annual floods repeatedly delayed trains. Or Shraddha, who sees green jobs as a chance to earn while saving the planet. Their testimonies depict the dual nature of climate disruption: it is devastating, but it can also birth entirely new livelihoods.

India has placed climate action at the core of its *Viksit Bharat* vision. From leading the International Solar Alliance (ISA),⁷ to scaling Mission LiFE.⁸ But unless young people are empowered as co-creators of this transition—as innovators, farmers, entrepreneurs, and ambassadors—*Viksit Bharat* will fall short of its own promise.



Geopolitical Shifts

Reimagining the future of global cooperation

The world our generation inherits is fractured. Multilateral institutions still reflect 1945, not 2045. Supply chains wobble under political strain. Conflicts erupt, pulling futures into uncertainty.

Yet, young Indians are refusing to be bystanders. Harsh, a 24-year-old we met from Jammu and Kashmir, founded a youth-led think tank on foreign policy, making space for our voices in debates usually dominated by grey suits. And Nomzamo, a Zimbabwean student studying aerospace engineering in India, reminded us: "Countries like India are trying to cooperate a lot with young countries like mine, and our demographic strength is reflected in this knowledge-sharing process."

For *Viksit Bharat* to make a difference globally, India must also lead a new grammar of cooperation that centers young countries, and ensures youth have a seat on the global table.



From Vision to Action: Quick Wins and Moonshots

If *Viksit Bharat* is to be realized, vision must translate into action now, especially where young Indians live, learn, and lead. The pathways we propose are concrete steps—some **quick wins** that can be embedded into existing architecture building on current policies, others bold **moonshots** that demand new institutions and imagination that will require time but are essential for *Viksit Bharat* to endure. Together, they form an intergenerational playbook for India's journey to its centenary.

At the heart of these proposals is a series of cross-cutting foresight innovations for a Future India centered with a **Ministry of Future Affairs (MoFA)**. This new institution would anchor futures thinking across government, ensuring every budget, law, and program is tested for its impact on coming generations. MoFA would act as a bridge between quick wins and moonshots, making *Viksit Bharat* aspirational as well as achievable.



The Our Future India Blueprint

Demographic Trends

To safeguard people in the midst of demographic transitions



Quick Win: Establish a National Gig Work Commission to formalize protections for 400 million informal and platform workers, building on Rajasthan's pioneering law.



Moonshot: A Care Fund that pays caregivers, recognizing care as real work and embedding gender equity into the foundations of our economy.

Rapid Urbanization

To power sustainable, and resilient people-centered cities



Quick Win: Launch Smart Village Hubs in high-migration regions to provide digital infrastructure, skills, and incubation so that migration becomes a choice, not a necessity.



Moonshot: Scale a Jan Bhagidari (People's Participation) Framework, embedding participatory budgeting and Urban Futures Labs in every major city so citizens co-create budgets and plans.

Artificial Intelligence

Establishing guidelines for inclusive and ethical use of AI for social good and growth



Quick Win: Create a Panel on AI & Emerging Tech with youth representation, acting as a rapid-response ethics body.



Moonshot: Adopt a Skills-First Education Model that shifts hiring from degrees to demonstrated skills, preparing India's youth for jobs that do not even exist yet.

Climate Change

To turbocharge on climate change, moving from climate anxiety to climate action



Quick Win: Establish a Bharat Climate Knowledge Compendium, digitizing indigenous practices like water harvesting and cyclone-resistant architecture.



Moonshot: Build an India Supergrid, connecting renewable hotspots with communities nationwide—a decentralized, resilient, and green energy democracy.

Geopolitical Shifts

To centre young people at the heart of global decision making



Quick Win: Launch a Global South Young Leaders Fellowship, deepening South-South ties through exchanges in innovation, diplomacy, and entrepreneurship.



Moonshot: Institutionalize a Young India Secretariat, embedding youth delegates in every major international forum—from the UN to the G20—so Indian diplomacy permanently reflects the voices of future generations.



A Day in 2047

Imagining *Viksit Bharat*

To understand what these changes mean, imagine a day in 2047.

It begins in a village in Jharkhand, where a teenage girl logs on at her local Smart Hub. Her project on solar-powered cold storage is mentored by an engineer in Bengaluru and funded by microcredit she accessed online. She does not need to leave her community to chase opportunity; opportunity has come to her.

In Bengaluru, her cousin joins his neighborhood's annual City Sabha. Citizens vote on budget allocations—from flood-resilient infrastructure to youth sports facilities—and see the results implemented within months. For him, democracy is not something distant, but lived every day.

In Delhi, a group of gig workers meet with their representatives on the National Gig Work Commission. Their contracts guarantee sick leave, maternity benefits, and stable wages. They no longer fear the precarity of work, but see dignity in it.

On India's coasts, renewable energy flows seamlessly through the India Supergrid. A sarpanch in Ladakh sends surplus solar power south; a young entrepreneur in Coimbatore trades neighborhood wind credits on an app. Electricity is not just a utility but a shared asset.

And at the United Nations, Maya, a youth delegate from Tawang, addresses the General Assembly. She speaks not only as a representative of India but as a guardian of future generations. Behind her sit peers from Africa and Latin America—alumni of the Global South Fellowship—shaping negotiations through trust built years ago.

This is *Viksit Bharat*: not only a developed economy, but a society where every generation builds on the last, leaving more possibilities than it inherited. Global history teaches us that demographic windows close quickly.⁹ If India misses this moment, the cost will be borne for generations. If we seize it, however, India can show the world how the largest democracy and the youngest population can reimagine governance, sustainability, and solidarity for the 21st century.



Young people spending a relaxing afternoon at Cubbon Park in Bengaluru



Youth Consultation at Assam University convening over 90 young students, policymakers, social workers and changemakers

A Call to Action

This is our promise as Fellows: to be a generation that not only inherits the future but redefines it. But we cannot do it alone.

We call on policymakers to institutionalize foresight through a Ministry of Future Affairs. We call on businesses to invest in skills and care as seriously as they do in profits. We call on civil society to amplify young voices, not tokenize them. And we call on our peers—India's 734 million young people—to see themselves as protagonists of *Viksit Bharat*.

This is the premise of *Our Future India*.

It is a manifesto of possibility; it is a blueprint for action; and primarily, it is an invitation to every generation to co-create the future with us.

The choice is ours. The time is now.