

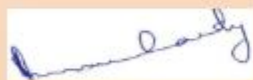


### From Chairperson's Desk

Climate change – everyone is talking about it. This year, March seemed to be the hottest breaking year on records in many big cities of India. While many countries on the other side of the globe are experiencing snow during this time. So, it's happening and at quite a faster rate.

Have you ever imagined what impact can it have on children and youths? Climate change can or has put every child on the brink of risk. Children are now forced to grow in a world that is unsafe and dangerous for them. Extreme weather events like wildfires or cyclones can threaten their lives and put them at risk of mental health issues, which can be irreversible. Poor air quality around the globe has increased respiratory illnesses among children. With worsening climatic conditions, there will be even less food and safe drinking water – making children and women more vulnerable.

What we can do, starts from today. We all need to work together – the governments, CSOs, families, communities, and all other stakeholders to bring in policy-level changes and build a world that is better and healthier for every child.



Ranjan Kumar Mohanty  
Chairperson, NACG EVAC India

Editorial Board – Aditi P Kaur, D.Roshan Kumar & Dr.  
Indrani Bhattacharya

### National Children Consultation on Ending Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in India



A National Children's Consultation on the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation was organised on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2022. The programme was supported by BMZ Germany, World Vision Germany, World Vision India, and organised by NACG EVAC India Secretariat i.e. PECUC. It was participated by 271 children from 10 states in 25 locations of 22 organisations.



This aimed at strengthening the child protection system by leveraging change in the knowledge, policy, and practice at different layers of institutional governance. It also focused on providing a platform for children across India to ventilate ideas, voices, concerns, suggestions & solutions for ending child sexual abuse and violence against children. The consultation mapped the vulnerability of children using the Children's Score Card and prepared a plan of action for children. The participants came up with constructive feedback to the government to address the gaps in the current child protection systems and services. It was decided to present the children's charter to the government and key stakeholders in a virtual interface meeting.

### State Level Stakeholders Consultation to Combat Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation



On 7th March 2022, the State Level Stakeholder's Consultation to Combat Child Sexual abuse and Exploitation was organized by NACG EVAC, India, PECUC, and Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights in collaboration with WVI & BMZ.

Ms. Anuradha Mohanty, Executive Director, PECUC welcomed the participants followed by the keynote address by Mr. Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Chairperson, NACG-EVAC, India. Mr. Mohanty briefed about the concern on the safety of children and how to ensure the right to live. He also emphasized on the release of victim compensation at the earliest possible to support the victim.

On the onset of the programme, Ms. Sandhyabati Pradhan, Chairperson OSCPCR, Chief Guest, lightened the lamp and greeted the participants for attending the training. In her address, she briefed on the role of civil societies and stakeholders to prevent child abuse, eradication of child marriage and proper convergence and coordination to make the initiative successful.

Mr. Pritikant Panda, Programme Manager, Odisha State Child Protection Society presented the session on "Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse & Exploitation in alignment with POCSO Act" and its implementation at the state level.

Almost 100 stakeholders from different districts of Odisha as well civil society organizations took part in the discussion and gave various suggestions on how to end child sexual abuse.

### Delhi State Consultation amongst Stakeholders for Ending Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation



Delhi State Consultation amongst stakeholders for ending Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation was held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre. This programme was organized by PECUC, Odisha, in collaboration with NACG EVAC India, Delhi Chapter with support of World Vision Germany, World Vision India, and BMZ Germany in cooperation with ABHAS, ASHA Deep Foundation, Society for Participatory Integrated Development and Dr. A.V. Baliga Memorial Trust. 81 participants including Children, various on-field stakeholders like- lawyers, judges, police officials, principals, teachers, CSO's, NGO representatives, and DWCD staff were present in this consultation. Mr. Sanjay Gupta, Vice-Chairperson, NACG EVAC India welcomed the gathering and shared the purpose of this workshop.



This programme was attended by Mr. Kanwal Jeet Arora, Member Secretary DLSA, Mr. Mikhael Pradhan, Advocacy head, World Vision India, Ms. Madhavi Samson, State Convenor NACG, New Delhi, and Dr. Neeraj, Dy. Director of Education

(EVGB), Education Department, GNCT Delhi. Different panelists of the programme were Mr. Yogesh, Director, Pratidhi, Mr. Harsha Chetty, Asha Deep Foundation, Mr. Awadhesh Yadav, CEO of SPID Society, Mr. Awadhesh Yadav, SPID, Mr. Sumeet Anand, Secretary Judge, DLSA & Anant Kumar Asthana, Lawyer.

In an open house discussion, participants shared their views, opinions, and recommendations for preventing child sexual abuse and exploitation, and presented their views on how to create safe environment for children. The programme ended by the vote of thanks from NACG EVAC India Vice-Chair, Mr. Sanjay Gupta, and state Convener Ms. Madhavi Samson.

### Teacher's Training Programme, Delhi



On 16th March 2022, representative Ms. Madhavi Kotwal Samson organised teacher's training with 56 teachers of Delhi Public School, Delhi. The training was held on the brief of Acts for children i.e. POCSO Act, JJ Act, Child Marriage Prohibition Act, etc. Other important aspect was also discussed like reporting mechanism for teachers, teacher's role in online safety, and basic counselling skills.

The training provides another scope of training for children of Delhi Public School. Awareness materials were also printed by NACG EVAC India Secretariat namely Teachers Handbook, Online Safety, Child Rights & Indian Constitution, Child-Friendly Police Station, Child Right tool Kit, and NACG EVAC India Brief pamphlet for their library which aims at increasing

awareness amongst children especially those who need information.

### Block level Programmes of CSAE Project, Odisha

Different field level activities were conducted in Odisha on the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation. Almost 800 participants actively took part in the 16 programmes including 3 Children, 3 ICDS, 7 CPC and 1 Teacher's training programmes.



Teachers and SMC members Training on prevention of CSA and child protection system at Bolgarh, Khordha



Village level CPC training on prevention of Child Sexual Abuse at Naktideol block of Sambalpur



"A day for Children" Programme was observed by Partner Organization MIHY at Baleswar district



VLCPC training on prevention of child sexual abuse organised in Khallikote block of Ganjam



Adolescent Children training programme held at Ganjam Block

## News from States

### Changes happened through Intervention of TDH NL

#### Husbands against Child Marriages



When a 25-years-old Suraj\* got married to a 12-years-old Ramya\*, Suraj's parents were happy knowing that now finally he will start his own family. Suraj has grown up believing that marrying a younger girl would make his married life easier as grown-up women tend to be more rebellious.

But this mentality of Suraj took a U-turn when Ramya\* was registered under the IMAGE (Initiatives for Married Adolescent Girls Empowerment) project. The project staff encouraged Suraj\* to join the spouse's meeting group. The spouse group involves all the spouses of the Early Married Girls (EMGs) and encourages them to become part of the movement. The meetings are meant to spread awareness about the issue of child marriage while enabling the spouses to become their spouse's partner in the journey toward empowerment. The husbands are taught about the importance of education for their wives, given awareness on having children only once the wives are 20 years of age and motivating them to become active participants in the movement activities.

One of these meetings was conducted on 1st January 2022 in the Belgaum district of Karnataka. 12 spouses of registered EMGs participated in the meeting where the staff discussed the importance of gender equality and the role of men in creating a supportive environment for the EMGs. The spouses found the session to be an encouragement for them to extend their moral support towards the EMGs as they engage in the movement activities.

Men like Suraj now don't feel the need for women around them to "settle down" before 18 years of age. In fact, they want to see their wives achieving good grades and becoming financially independent rather than being in the four walls of their homes doing unending household chores and having early child-bearing.

As the husbands continue to attend these meetings, equality and empowerment have become a practice rather than a concept.

#### Including Devadasis in the Agenda



The fight for devadasi rights is an ongoing battle and one that should be fought. Devadasi dedication is a

big problem that we still face in India. Women and children from lower caste Devadasi communities are unfortunately forced into that line of horrific, degrading work and are forced to be sex workers. A practice deeply rooted in socio-cultural exploitation, children of Devadasis are abused and discriminated without being given a choice.

TdH NL has been working to address this issue since 2019 through its project Children GOOD (Children Getting Out of the Devadasi System).

On the 10th and 11th of January, through the project Children GOOD, the team held a state-level consultation meeting on the need to urgently work to revise an existing Devadasi bill. The gathering was attended by a group of women and children from Karnataka's northern districts who were afflicted by the Devadasi system. They urged that the Karnataka Devadasi (Prohibition of Dedication) Act of 1982 needs to be revised to include more prevention, protection, rehabilitation, and compensation measures.



In front of invited visitors, a list of bill amendments was delivered. The meeting was attended by Mr. H. Shashidhar Shetty, Member Secretary of the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Prof. S. Japhet, Retd Vice-Chancellor of Bengaluru Central University, and Ms Indira, General Manager of the Karnataka Women Development Corporation.

Housing, pensions, and identity documents for people affected by the Devadasi system were among the demands of the new law. A group of Kishori's (young women) who attended the ceremony urged that the government needs to create a special Devadasi Rehabilitation Board with a set budget to gradually eradicate the practice.

Ms Indira, the Women Development Corporation's General Manager, accepted the memorandum and offered to assist the government on how to begin the procedure. She mentioned that a Devadasis resurvey was about to begin. Ms. Indira stated that she will

convene a round table discussion with all parties involved to address the concerns voiced by the impacted families.

### Teaching Well, Leading Right!

One of the lyrics of a famous song by Whitney Houston says, "Teach them well and let them lead the way!" This song revolves around the idea that children are the future. These lyrics have become a reality in the villages of Jharkhand where the Terre des Hommes Foundation is working. One of TdH NL's interventions, The Mica Project, works to address child labour in the mica mines and empowers children to become change agents. This intervention witnessed children making a huge impact in their communities.



Balmanch is the name of the children's club of every village where the children meet in a group with the TdH NL staff members. In these Balmanch sessions, they are given awareness on child rights, taught about the importance of education, and much more. Since the Covid-19 pandemic hit the country, the TdH NL staff members have been spreading awareness on Covid protocols and encouraging the children to disseminate it further to their friends and family.



When TdH NL started its Vaccination Drive in September 2021, intending to vaccinate the rural areas of the country, the children attending Balmanch sessions were given awareness on the importance of their family members (those above 18) getting vaccinated to fight the pandemic. The children

brought in their doubts about vaccination and the myths they had heard from outside to these sessions and went back home confident, understanding the urgency to vaccinate.

When the vaccination camps were organised at the villages of Jharkhand, these children's parents and family members came confidently to take the jabs. Children club member Karuna's (name changed) mother shared with the TdH NL staff, "I was unsure about taking the vaccine but Karuna explained to me the importance of vaccination and encouraged me to get my first dose on the very first day of the camp."

Through the children's efforts, as of early March 2022, 22 out of 25 villages have achieved 100% vaccination coverage (1st dose) and over 75% coverage with 2nd dose of vaccination. As the Balmanch sessions continue to transform these children as change agents, they truly will make the "future brighter" through their efforts.

### ABHAS, Delhi in Action

A state level consultation of CSOs was held on 7th Dec.'21 towards strengthening the interaction with various Government and other key stakeholders to address and expedite the redressal and justice mechanism for each affected child. The meeting also addressed the issues of CSAE faced by children in extremely difficult circumstances, the role of media in reporting such cases, deliberating on the recommendations given by children, and discussing the way forward.

The meeting through its media interviews and presence/ clips, provided outreach on various social media platforms which were evident by the no. of phone calls received by the Delhi State Convener by victims of child sexual abuse from different states of North India.

The DCPCR, DWCD and DSLSA appreciated the inclusion of sessions on special children, child marriage, invisibility and exclusion of deaf and mute children, blind children, who are victims of CSAE, for bringing out their pain and extreme vulnerability and need for support and promised to take positive steps in supporting such children. This is an example of convergence and its collective strength to tackle sensitive issues like CSAE with a special focus.

Another achievement of this is the prompt and timely support they have received on cases of child marriage

and child sexual abuse from DSLSA, DWCD, and NACG EVAC members in Delhi.

### Achievement at the Community Level Interventions

- ✦ An important achievement of this project is that people are now able to talk about the issue comfortably, especially at the community level.
- ✦ With the help of a series of training conducted with different stakeholders, CSOs are able to establish linkages with these stakeholders and they too are coming forward if they got to know about such cases.
- ✦ Now people are able to recognise NACG EVAC at the ward and district level.
- ✦ CPCs have started reporting cases and taking further steps.
- ✦ Local government representatives have agreed to be a part of CPC and have promised that they will help out in whatever manner they can.
- ✦ **ABHAS Best Practice-** ABHAS has incorporated a **Rishta period**, a circle time for children coming to the centres once every week to speak about CSAE. This has helped children to share their concerns and fears.
- ✦ ABHAS now works closely with the local Primary Urban Health Centre, Asha and Anganwadi workers, doctors, school teachers, and principals of the project area who have provided good support in the prevention of CSAE.

### Transformation of Neelam

From a quiet 16-year-old to a strong vociferous child protection activist, daughter of a security guard, and residing in Tughlakabad village with her mother, father, and 5 siblings, Neelam's family migrated from Sheikhpura village, Bihar, 2 decades ago. Now in class XI in Sarvodaya School in the village, Neelam enrolled in ABHAS when she was 6. She keeps to herself, has made progress in her studies and rarely speaks her thoughts. She showed interest in participating in series of trainings that have been held under the project. The State Level CSO Follow-Up Consultation which has held on 10th Mar.'22 has paved the way for her transformation. Responding to a panelist, who said that complete prevention of CSAE is a utopian concept.3 things are possible; responding, protection, and healing to which Neelam responded by saying that "Sir! Rape ka ghav kabhi heal nahin ho sakta, Sir! Aap kaise kehree ho ki

healing possible hai". The audience was silent and all eyes were on this small little girl who had spoken her true feelings. Thanks to the concerns and awareness raised by the trainings by NACG EVAC.

### Awareness Generation through Day Observation by PECUC

#### Enthusiastic Youth Activists observed World Water Day

Every year on 22<sup>nd</sup> March World Water Day is observed all over the world since 1993. The major goal of observing this day is to create awareness about the importance of freshwater.



The core focus of observation of world water day is to support SDG Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030. The theme chosen for this year is "Groundwater: Making Invisible visible". The focus is on groundwater without which life would not be possible. It supplies a large proportion of the water we use for drinking, food preparation, sanitation, agriculture, industrial processes etc. It is also critically important for the healthy functioning of ecosystems. Exploring, protecting and sustainably using groundwater will be central to surviving and adapting to climate change and meeting the needs of a growing population. Around 2.2 billion people living without access to safe drinking water, therefore taking appropriate measures for conservation and preservation of groundwater today will save the earth from a major water crisis of tomorrow



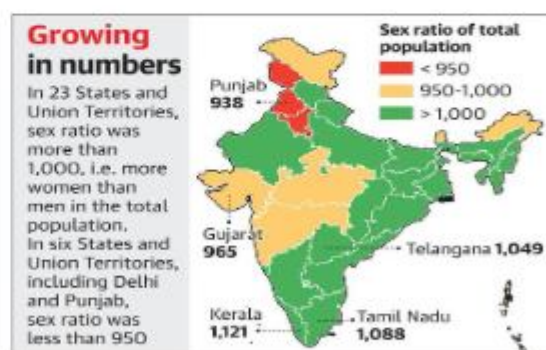
The Ecosavers youth network group members were very enthusiastic and observed World Water Day through a series of activities to generate awareness in the community about the importance of groundwater & freshwater. They carried out activities like messaging, painting, essay writing, cleaning water sources, providing water to animals and birds, rallying to save water and plant trees, hand wash practice, creating blue handprint, preparing gabion structure, handwash water channelizing to kitchen garden etc in their respective areas. More than 500 children and young people actively participated in these activities.



#### NFHS – 5 (2019-21) confirmed signs of a demographic shift in the country

(Source – *The Hindus*, Nov 26 -2021)

The fifth edition of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) confirmed signs of a demographic shift in India. For the first time since the NFHS began in 1992, the proportion of women exceeded men: there were 1,020 women for 1,000 men. In the last edition of the survey in 2015-16, there were 991 women for every 1,000 men. The NFHS surveys are smaller but are conducted at the district level and are a pointer to the future.



However, the sex ratio at birth for children born in the last five years only improved from 919 per 1,000 males in 2015-16 to 929 per 1,000, underscoring that boys, on average, continued to have better odds of

survival than girls. Most States and Union Territories (UTs) have more women than men, as the NFHS-5 data shows. States that had fewer women than men included Gujarat, Maharashtra, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, and Union territories such as Jammu & Kashmir, Chandigarh, Delhi, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Ladakh. All of these States and UTs, however, showed improvements in the population increase of women.

A State-wise breakup of the NFHS data also shows that India is on its way to stabilising its population, with most States and UTs having a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of less than two. A TFR of less than 2.1, or a woman on average bearing two children over a lifetime, suggests that an existing generation of people will be exactly replaced. Anything less than two suggests an eventual decline in population over time. Only six States: Bihar, Meghalaya, Manipur, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh have a TFR above two. Bihar has a TFR of three which, however, is an improvement from the 3.4 of the NFHS-4. Again, much like the broader trend toward feminisation, the TFR in all States has improved in the last five years.

India is still poised to be the most populous country in the world with the current projection by the United Nations population division forecasting that India's population will peak at around 1.6 to 1.8 billion from 2040-2050. A Government report last year projected that India would overtake China as the world's most populous country around 2031 — almost a decade later than the United Nations projection of 2022.

A notable exception is Kerala, a State with among the highest ratios of women to men at 1,121 and improvement over 1,049 recorded in the NFHS-4. However, the TFR in Kerala has increased to 1.8 from 1.6. The State has also reported a decline in the sex ratio of children born in the last five years. There are 1,047 females per 1,000 males in 2015-16 that has now declined to 951 per 1,000 males. The NFHS-5 survey work has been conducted in around 6.1 lakh sample households from 707 districts (as of March, 2017) of the country; covering 724,115 women and 101,839 men to provide disaggregated estimates up to the district level.

## Annual Review and Planning Meeting of ECSAE Project at PURI

The 2 days annual project review meeting was held in Puri on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2022. The meeting was organized by World Vision India in collaboration with NACG EVAC India. 10 partners representing Odisha and 4 Partners representing Delhi along with BMZ Project team participated in this meeting with the project team. At the onset of the meeting, Mr. Sunand Singh, Technical Specialist – WVI welcomed all participants followed by welcome notes given by Ms. Neeta Maria, Project Manager, BMZ Project, World Vision India.



The meeting was attended by Mr. Anil Joseph, the Senior Director, WVI. Mr. Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Chairperson NACG EVAC, India, Mr. Mikhael Pradhan, Head Advocacy, WVI & EC Member NACG EVAC, India, Ms. Anuradha Mohanty, Executive Director, PECUC, Mr. Sanjay Mishra, Treasurer, NACG EVAC, India & Aditi Kaur, EC Member, NACG EVAC, India. It was decided on the meeting that major focus needs to be put on outcome of the project as this is the last year for the project.

Published by: NACG EVAC India,  
NACG Secretariat, PECUC Coordination Office,  
House No.-63, Phase-2, Indraprastha,  
Pokhariput, Bhubaneswar,  
Odisha, India, Pin-751020.  
Telephone No.+91-674 2382175/2352278,  
Tel. Fax: +91-6742352232.  
E- mail: [nacgevac.india@gmail.com](mailto:nacgevac.india@gmail.com)  
Visit Us: [www.nacgevacindia.com](http://www.nacgevacindia.com)  
*For private circulation only*