

National Action And Coordination Group For Ending Violence Against Children, India

A Country Level Civil Society Forum of SAIEVAC, an Apex Body of SAARC.



Volume - 4 Issue-16

Newsletter

January to June 2023

About us

The NACG-EVAC India is the country-level civil society forum of SAIEVAC, the South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children, an Apex Body of SAARC, with National mechanisms in all 8 South Asian countries. SAIEVAC also maintains institutional linkages with the SACG – the South Asia Coordinating Group on Action against Violence against Children which is the UN/INGO interagency group. In every country the SAIEVAC national mechanisms consists of the Government and the NACG mechanism, and the Government mechanism is spearheaded by the Ministry of children. In India the Ministry of Women & Child Development is a nodal agency of SAIEVAC.

SAIEVAC regional and national mechanisms share a vision that all children irrespective of gender, throughout South Asia enjoy their right to an environment free from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect & discrimination.

The four guiding principles of NACG EVAC India are non-discrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; the right to a dignified life, survival, and development; and respect for the views of the child. Currently, NACG EVAC India has a presence in 21 states and 4 Union Territories, accomplished through the concerted efforts of state convenors and dedicated members. They operate under the governance of the Executive Committee and its office bearers, and the entire network functions under the leadership of its chairperson.

From the Desk of the Chairperson



Greetings to all valued readers

I am delighted to address you as the newly elected Chairperson of NACG EVAC India (National Action and Coordination Group to End Violence Against Children). We are happy to present the six-monthly (January-June 23) developments and accomplishments of the network through this newsletter. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to

ex-chairpersons, past executive committees and national board members who tirelessly work towards our mission of preventing and responding to all forms of neglect, abuse, exploitation, and violence against children in all settings.

We also take this opportunity to welcome the new team who started work since Jan 2023.

Some of our major accomplishments have been the successful implementation of more than 6 State Stakeholder Consultations with the presence of more than 800 participants; 3 online consultations and meetings on child marriage, children with disability etc. with around 900 participants, 3 NACG EVAC state chapters meeting on developing an action plan on making child-friendly states with 150 participants; verification & validation of member organizations. Central to all endeavors was the active and direct engagement of the children themselves, ensuring their maximum participation and the extensive sharing of their perspectives. In addition, we have actively engaged with the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development, International Labour Organization & UNICEF team and others to apprise them about the progress of NACG EVAC India and the possibilities of joint initiatives.

Looking ahead till December 2023, NACG EVAC India will conduct around 10 consultations, SAIEVAC Governing Body meetings and engagement with the government and collaboration with stakeholders to provide comprehensive support systems to ensure children's holistic development and protection.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all our national board members, partners and donors whose support has been instrumental in our achievements.

Warm regards

Sanjay Gupta
Chairperson, NACG EVAC India

Meeting of the Rajasthan State Chapter: Developing a Child-Friendly State Action Plan



Meeting of the Rajasthan State Chapter was convened to discuss and formulate a comprehensive Child-Friendly State Action Plan aimed at enhancing the well-being and rights of children across the state.

The meeting commenced with the welcome of the new chairperson with traditional Rajasthani Pagdi (Turban) by Mr. Madan Nagda, State Convener Rajasthan Chapter and B.K Gupta, Om Prakash, Rakesh Sharma etc. The plan aimed to address key issues such

as education, healthcare, protection, and overall development of children. The participants recommended strengthening the state's school infrastructure, enhancing teacher training programs, and promoting inclusive education for children with disabilities. Participants emphasized the importance of strengthening child protection mechanisms, improving reporting and response systems for child abuse and exploitation, and creating awareness campaigns were

suggested.

The meeting of the Rajasthan State Chapter provided a platform for stakeholders to come together and shape a comprehensive Child-Friendly State Action Plan. The discussions and recommendations centered on ensuring children's holistic development, protection, and participation. The commitment displayed by participants reflects a collective determination to create a brighter future for Rajasthan's children.

State-Level Dialogue on Child Welfare, Government Schemes - Addressing Issues, Crafting Solutions, and Fostering Collaboration in Uttar Pradesh.



In January 2023, we organized State-Level Consultation on Child Welfare & Government Schemes -Problems, Solutions and Collaboration in Lucknow Uttar Pradesh. The consultation was attended by children and prominent government authorities (Women and Child Development UP, Labour Department etc.) so that we all can ensure the development, care and protection of children through cross-cutting policies and programs, spreading awareness about their rights and facilitating access to learning, nutrition, institutional and legislative support for enabling them to grow and develop to their full potential. More than 50 participants from 12 districts of UP and 10 children participated in this consultation.

Meeting with Joint Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development



During January 2023, the Chairperson of NACG EVAC India, Shri Sanjay Gupta, along with Dr. Rinchen Chopel, DG of SAIEVAC, and Shri Vikram

Srivastava, SAIEVAC's technical advisor, held a meeting with Mrs. Indira Mallo (IAS), the Joint Secretary of MWCD, and Shri Vikas Tripathi, the Director

of MWCD. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on the advancements of NACG EVAC India and explore potential collaborative endeavours.

Empowering Futures: Unveiling the Realities of Child Marriage in India - Exploring Challenges and Pathways to Change

A National level online Consultation on the Status of Child Marriage in India, its Problems, and Solutions, was organized by the National Action Coordination Group to End Violence against Children in India (NACG EVAC India), on 16th February 2023. The meeting was attended by more than 350 participants from different states of India.

During the consultation following were the main key speakers - Sri Sanjay Gupta Chairperson, NACG EVAC India, Smt. Gitika Dutta Sharma - Vice-Chairperson, NACG EVAC India, Dr. Indrani Bhattacharyya - Executive Committee Member & Thematic Lead: Child Marriage, NACG EVAC India, Dr. Anjalah Pandiri-



National Consultation Status of Child Marriage in India Problems & Solutions

16.2.2023 | 3:30PM - 5PM NACG EVAC INDIA Online at Zoom



Sanjay Gupta
Chairperson
NACG EVAC India



Divya
Associate Director
Dakra



Dr. Indrani Bhattacharyya
NACG EVAC INDIA
thematic lead
child marriage



Dr. Anjalah Pandiri
Executive Director
CHILDLINE India Foundation



Vikram Srivastava
Convener
Campaign against Child
Marriage

National Action And Coordination Group For Ending Violence Against Children, India



Executive Director, CHILDLINE India Foundation, Sri Vikram Shrivastava-Convener, Campaign against Child Marriage and Founder, IThought, Smt. Divya Mukand- Associate Director, DASRA Dr Indrani Bhattacharyya put forth a brief welcome address and opened the discussion. She gave an introduction on NACG EVAC India and shared the aim of the meeting to discuss the current status of Child Marriage, different strategies to reduce child marriage through an interactive session and that NACG EVAC brings different Civil Society Organizations, NGOs, Government Institutions, academicians, and Children forums to promote interactions, share good practices networking advocacy around the issue of Child rights. It was mentioned that there are more than 600 members of NACG in 29 states of India and that 5 major issues are being addressed by the NACG EVAC viz. Child sexual abuse, Child Marriage, Child labour, Child Trafficking, Corporal Punishment and two cross-cutting issues of Participation and Children with disability. Dr. Bhattacharyya continued that there would be a series of consultations based on different topics. However, she said that Child marriage was selected

as the 1st topic of discussion in 2023 putting forth the urgency of the issue of child marriage because despite there has been a decrease in the most recent NFHS survey to 23.3%, it's a burning issue in some states like the West Bengal, Tripura, Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana with over 40% of cases of child marriage.

In addition, she highlighted that multiple reports reflect that post-COVID, child marriage rates have surged which is visible in government documents as well as in research-based reports from global program teams such as UNICEF. One such report, named Evidence and Review on Child Marriage in India 2020 to 2022, has been published in January 2023, by Girls Not Brides. Following this, Dr. Bhattacharyya introduced the esteemed panelists and requested Mr. Sanjay Gupta to take the session forward.

Sanjay Gupta initiated the session by saying that Child Marriage was a sensitive issue and required detailed discussion. He referred to the situation of Child Marriage in Assam and how it is our shared responsibility to address this issue. He also shared about NACG EVAC India, its roles and responsibilities and its relationship with National Government and South

Asian countries. Vikram Srivastava was invited by Sanjay Gupta to elaborate on his PIL against child marriage in which he stated the impact of Assam's situation has increased the sensitivity of the issue. He also stated that the law against child marriage has been prevalent for a very long time but its implementation has always been below sub par. He put focus on how in India, according to recent census data, over 4 lakh girls have been widowed before the age of 21 years of age. The prevalence of the practice of child marriage is a reflection of patriarchy and power relations in our Indian society and this ultimately leads to trafficking.

After this, the discussion moved to the best strategies to use within the system to combat child marriage. He urged everyone to look at the other aspects as the law is only one dimension, there is a need for sensitizing policy makers and other stakeholders who implement it, strengthening the access to services to Childline, Child Welfare Committees, organizing training and awareness sessions at all the levels, work with grassroots stakeholders, community groups and media. Most importantly, access to quality education including Life Skill Education in a safe environment should be made accessible for all.

National-level orientation program on children with disability



On 14th March 2023, a national-level orientation program on children with disability was organized online. Eminent speakers Mr. Sanjay Gupta Chairperson NACG EVAC India, Ms. Gitika Dutta Sharma, Vice Chairperson NACG EVAC, Mr. Prakash Rath theme lead Children with Disability Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, Mr. Rajesh Tiwari, Former Deputy Secretary Government of Chhattisgarh, Ms. Tulka Das Director Sanchar and Sannyashai Kumar Behera, President Orissa Association for the blind and many other civil society representatives participated. The discussion revolved around the various challenges faced by children with disabilities and the strategies by which the NACG EVAC India Chapter could offer support and solutions to alleviate these concerns. During the discussion participants shared the various challenges faced by children with disabilities: -many educational institutions are not equipped or willing to adapt to the unique needs of children with disabilities, leaving these children with fewer educational opportunities, lack of access to specialized medical care and rehabilitation services, especially in low-resource settings, inadequate

infrastructure, such as a lack of ramps or accessible transportation, which limit their mobility and access, in many settings, children with disabilities are not included in decision-making processes that affect their lives. In the second half of the meeting, NACG EVAC India presented and requested support from governmental entities and civil society: Inclusive Education that

accommodates children with varying disabilities and ensures they receive quality education alongside their peers, Healthcare services need to be accessible, affordable, and tailored to cater to children with disabilities, community outreach and awareness campaigns can play a vital role in challenging and changing societal perceptions and biases, Governments should enact and enforce laws that protect the rights of children with disabilities and ensure their inclusion in all sectors of society, Empowering children with disabilities, and their families, through knowledge, skills, and support networks can boost their confidence and participation.

The national-level online orientation program successfully brought together a diverse range of stakeholders to address the multifaceted challenges faced by children with disabilities. By fostering collaboration, sharing knowledge, and highlighting best practices, the program contributed to the ongoing efforts toward creating a more inclusive and equitable society for all children, regardless of their abilities.

National level orientation on Children with dis-Abilities.

14.03.2023 | 3:30PM - 5:30PM

NACG EVAC INDIA

Online at Zoom

Sanjay Gupta
Chairperson
NACG EVAC India

Gitika Dutta Sharma
Vice Chairperson
NACG EVAC India

Prakash Rath
theme lead
Children with Disability
NACG EVAC India

Rajesh Tiwari, Former
Deputy Secretary
Govt of Chhattisgarh

Tulika Das
Director Sanchar

Sannyashai Kumar Behera
President Orissa Association for the blind

Meeting with the International Labour Organization to explore potential collaboration opportunities

In this context on April 10, 2023, Mr. Sanjay Gupta Chairperson of NACG EVAC India met International Labor Organization country officials Shri Lakshmi Narasimhan Gadiraju, Shri John Arul Roy, Ms. Itishree Sahoo along with Mrs. Gurpreet Kaur, Convenor, Haryana Chapter to discuss on a potential proposal collaborative effort for prevention and elimination of Child Labour in the selected states through strengthened national networks of civil society organizations and stakeholder consultations.

The objective of this potential partnership would be to contribute to the prevention and elimination of child labour in



India through the strengthened national network of grass-roots organizations that will carry out targeted interventions at state and local levels including

advocacy, raising awareness among stakeholders, promoting child rights and rationalizing the Regional Action Plan drafted in Nepal consultation in 2022.

NACG EVAC India chairperson attended a two-day conference on ending child labour in the South Asia Regional context

UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (APRO), UNICEF Regional Office for South (ROSA), South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC), Plan International Asia Pacific, and World Vision Asia Pacific, hosted the Regional Forum intending to take stock of efforts to date to end child marriage in South Asia on April 18-19, 2023 at Kathmandu Nepal. They highlighted the successes, good practices, and lessons learned, and identify promising and effective





initiatives and investments that need to be prioritized and resourced to end child marriage in the region. Dr Rinchen Chopel, UNCRC Committee Member/ SAIEVAC Director-General participated in the meeting. Shri

Sanjay Gupta Chairperson of NACG EVAC India attended that meeting and shared India's various provisions to end child marriage.

UNICEF and Plan Nepal presented and discuss data and trends in

the region, including changing prevalence, manifestations, and patterns of child marriage, changing drivers of the practice, and emerging new forms and manifestations and challenges and issues.

In that meeting progress toward the Regional Action Plan to End Child Marriage, highlighting policy and legislative responses, including national legislation, National Action Plans, Theories of Change, lessons learned, and good practices were also reviewed. Initiatives and promising and innovative practices to empower children and young people, especially adolescent girls, including the availability of options and choices outside marriage and youth-led activism were presented and discussed. Action to accelerate to achieve the targets of the Regional Action Plan to End Child Marriage, and confirm renewed commitment identified and prioritized.

Reaching out to member organizations

During a meeting between the Chairperson of NACG EVAC India and the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Child Development in January 2023, the suggestion was given. This suggestion stipulated the submission of a comprehensive list containing details of EC members, office bearers, and general members to the ministry when necessary. The primary emphasis was on ensuring that all members adhere to the norms established by the Government of India.

National Secretariat initiated the task of gathering information about all members associated with NACG EVAC India. In this process, a roster consisting of 578 members from all states was compiled, sourcing data from the NACG EVAC website. State convenors were then provided

guidance to engage with these members, and email communication was employed to request the submission of each member's NGO Darpan ID.

The responsibility to locate other members and ascertain their willingness to continue their membership was assigned to state convenors. Those members whose Darpan IDs were absent from the Niti Ayog Darpan ID portal were contacted individually via phone calls, and their responses were meticulously documented in an Excel spreadsheet. Subsequently, the National Secretariat successfully established communication with 407 members out of a total of 578. This outreach effort resulted in the collection and updating of Darpan IDs, contact numbers, and email addresses of the members.

Rajasthan State Stakeholder Consultation, in collaboration with RSCPCR

On May 26, 2023, under the guidance of the Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, NACG EVAC, Rajasthan Chapter in collaboration with CHETNA (Childhood Enhancement through Training and Action) organized a successful stakeholder consultation on 'Ensuring easy access to education and government services for vulnerable children' at the conference hall of Institute of Development Studies Jaipur. The consultation brought together more than 80 participants including Mrs. Sangeeta Beniwal, Chairperson of RSCPCR, Mr. Sanjay Gupta Chairperson of NACG EVAC India and Director CHETNA, Mr. Vikas Kumar Meena, Assistant Director of Education RSCPCR including education professionals, government officials, community leaders, children and civil society representatives from 11 districts of Rajasthan to discuss and address the crucial issue of accessibility and inclusivity in education and government services.

Recognizing the fundamental importance of education and government services in fostering the growth and development of our society, the consultation aimed to identify challenges and propose innovative solutions to make these services easily accessible to all individuals, irrespective of their background or circumstances.

The main hold of the consultation was when the children shared their views and issues - directly with Chairperson, RSCPCR, and other government officials. The primary focus areas of the discussion where children, parents,



and organizations have raised concerns about non-enrolment in schools due to the lack of an Aadhar Card, long distances from communities to schools, children dropping out of schools, children being involved in child labour, and inability to access government schemes, etc. Mrs. Sangeeta Beniwal listened to the entire discussion carefully and urged organizations to work collaboratively with the government and relevant entities to drive positive change in education and government services for vulnerable children. Mr. Vikas Kumar Meena assistant director of education, RSCPCR addressed all the issues related to education one by one and explained how communities and organizations can approach the education department from block level to state level and address the issues related to children.

Mr Sanjay Gupta, chairperson of EVAC India shared that in the coming year, NACG will work closely to address child protection and child labour in Rajasthan and emphasized the importance of fostering partnerships among government agencies, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations to address the issues. Mr Madan Nagda State Convener NACG EVAC India said "Today's gathering underscores our commitment to empowering children with their rightful access to vital government services, paving their way to a brighter future and we will ensure to follow up on the suggestions and action discussed during this consultation".



Uttarakhand Stakeholder Consultation : Empowering Vulnerable Children's Access to Govt Services with State Commission Collaboration

In Dehradun, one state-level stakeholder's consultation was held on June 8, 2023, under the guidance of NACGEVAC, India. In this consultation, 74 participants from different departments of state government and different organizations, which are working for children in different districts of Uttarakhand participated. Dr. Geeta Khanna, Chairperson of SPCPCR, Uttarakhand, was the chief guest of this consultation. DIG Law and Order P. Renuka Devi, Mr. Shiv Uniyal from UIDAI Uttarakhand, Ms. Anjana Gupta Additional District Probation Officer, Mr. Sanjay Gupta Chairperson NACG EVAC, India, Ms. Aditi Kaur Mountain Childrens Foundation and many other organizations like Vimarsh Nainital, Arpan Pithoragarh, Latika Foundation and Asra Trust participated.

The main objective of this consultation was to discuss with different associated departments how children in need can get benefits from various policies of the government. In this consultation, the main issues shared were : Problems in school



admission of children, difficulty in getting Aadhar Cards, difficulty in making birth certificates, non-availability of the sponsorship scheme and rehabilitation of children freed from child labour.

At the end of the consultation some advice was given and decisions have been taken for future actions:

- A circular will be generated by UKSCPCR and sent to the education and health departments, emphasizing the necessity for action to be taken on all the points raised by both children and participants.
- UKSCPCR will draft and distribute a circular to the DWCD, prompting the commencement of an evaluation of current CICs and specialized residences for children. This evaluation will focus on the utilization of facilities, accessibility, and related aspects.
- The Chief Protection Officer (CPO) will circulate instructions to all District Protection Officers (DPOs) to organize 'Samasya Samadhaan Camps,' dedicating half a day, particularly to address children's concerns, in each district.
- The Director of UIDAI has been approached to initiate an awareness campaign, facilitated by civil society, to educate rural areas about the process of updating Aadhar Cards.

Ms. Aditi P Kaur State Convener NACG EVAC India said that "Today, as we gather to discuss and deliberate upon the crucial matter of ensuring easy access to government services for children in Uttarakhand, our efforts must reach every corner of society, especially those who are most vulnerable. Through collaboration, compassion, and commitment, we can build a pathway to brighter futures for these young souls, transforming challenges into opportunities and adversity into strength".



Stakeholder Consultation on Strengthening Child Protection System : A collaborative initiative by NACG EVAC India and DCPCR



On June 27, 2023, at the Indian Law Institute in collaboration with the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights, NACG EVAC India (National Action and Coordination Group to End Violence Against Children) Delhi Chapter successfully organized a comprehensive stakeholder consultation on strengthening the child protection system. The event aimed to engage key stakeholders and experts in a constructive dialogue to address challenges and devise effective strategies for safeguarding the rights and well-being of children.

The consultation brought together more than 80 participants representatives from government agencies, civil society organizations, academia, child rights workers, children, and relevant professionals. This collaborative effort fostered an inclusive and participatory approach, enabling a holistic understanding of the issues surrounding easy access to govt schemes and generating innovative solutions.

The event commenced with a keynote address by Shri Anurag Kundu, Chairperson of DCPCR, who emphasized the significance of a robust child protection system and the collective responsibility to ensure every child's safety, dignity, and development. He highlighted the urgent need to address gaps in existing frameworks and explore collaborative approaches to provide easy access to different govt schemes

meant for children.

The key panelist was Ms. Nandini Maharaj - Additional Director of the Department of Education, Ms. Ranjana Prasad, Member DCPCR Delhi, Shri Gaurav Saini, SDM Defense Colony, South East District Delhi, Mr. Varun Pathak - Chairperson (CWC) Central District, New Delhi, Mr. Vishwajeet Ghosal, Director CHILDLINE Prayas NGO, Ms. Helly Fur Kaur, Secretary DLSA, West District Tis Hazari. Throughout the day, participants engaged in interactive sessions, panel discussions, facilitating knowledge sharing, exchange of best practices, and brainstorming of ideas. Key themes discussed included:

- Strengthening child protection laws and policies to address emerging challenges.
- Enhancing the role of communities, families, and schools in safeguarding children's rights.
- Improving coordination and cooperation among stakeholders in the child protection system.
- Enhancing access to quality child protection services and support.
- Enhancing child participation and promoting a child-friendly approach.

The stakeholder consultation also served as a platform for networking and forging new partnerships among diverse organizations and individuals committed to child protection. Participants expressed their commitment to continued collaboration and action, building upon the outcomes of the consultation to drive meaningful change at the policy, programmatic, and community levels.

Shri Sanjay Gupta Chairperson NACG EVAC India and Director CHETNA NGO shared that any violence against children is our core mandate. The consultation gave many fruitful suggestions such as having quarterly meetings of NGOs and the education department to discuss issues related to access to education, a single window approach for concerns and issues related to school admission, public distribution system (PDS) deprived family assessment, creating awareness on child marriage prevention and schemes at the grassroots level, sharing best practices of Ciss project implementation in other districts of Delhi as well as in states, etc. "Such consultations will be organized in 18 states by March 2024 on issues related to children" he added. Madhavi Kotwal Samson Delhi State Convenor said "In collaboration with NACG EVAC India Delhi Chapter and



the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights, we are taking a significant step forward in ensuring the safety, well-being, and rights of our children. This joint initiative reflects our collective commitment to creating a robust framework that leaves no child behind. The expertise, insights, and contributions of stakeholders during this consultation will play a pivotal role in shaping a safer and more nurturing environment for every child in Delhi and beyond".

As the stakeholder consultation drew to a close, participants left with a renewed sense of purpose and determination to work collectively toward a society where every child's rights are protected, nurtured, and respected.

Impact of Consultation:



RCPCR took note of the issue raised by a few children from Childhood Enhancement through Training and Action (CHETNA) in NACG EVAC INDIA, state chapter Consultation, that street-connected children in Jaipur not having Aadhaar cards and hence deprived of welfarist schemes for them. In collaboration with Rajasthan State Commission for Child Rights Protection, we organized a three-day (June 14 to 16, 2023) special Aadhaar card camp for street and vulnerable children. Chairperson of the State Commission for Child Rights Protection, Mrs Sangita Beniwal, inaugurated the camp in the presence of more than 150 children and local stakeholders. The camp aims to address the issue of street children lacking proper identification and ensure their access to essential services and education.

Following this, the Chairperson mentioned that in the past week, NACG EVAC (National Action and Coordination Group for Ending Violence Against Children) Rajasthan

Chapter organized a State Stakeholder Consultation and children shared that they don't have Aadhar card and in the absence of an Aadhar, children were not being admitted to schools and not benefiting from other social schemes. Taking cognizance of this problem, the commission, in coordination with the CHETNA organization organized this special Aadhaar card camp for the first time within a week so that children can be enrolled in schools during this session.

Alongside the enrolment process, awareness and counselling sessions were conducted to educate the children about the importance of Aadhaar cards and the benefits they can avail of with proper identification. Information about education opportunities, healthcare services, and social welfare programs was also provided. It served as a step towards empowering street children and ensuring their access to essential services, ultimately working towards their holistic development.

"Inside the Media Spotlight: Exploring Stakeholder Consultations' Extensive Coverage!"

Considering the power of media to force necessary changes, media has been invited to all programs and there was extensive media coverage of all stakeholder consultations by newspapers and digital media as well.

Media has arisen the issues of that area to bring them to the notice of the government departments and civil bodies. Along with that 36 Facebook page updates have been done to create awareness and to inform activities worldwide.



Consultation on Strengthening Child Protection System: A Collaborative Initiative by NACG EVAC

By Pp Correspondent | PUBLISHED: 03, Jul 2023, 19:58 pm IST | UPDATED: 03, Jul 2023, 19:58 pm IST



New Delhi: In collaboration with the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights, NACG EVAC India (National Action Coordination Group to End Violence Against Children) Delhi Chapter successfully organized a comprehensive stakeholder consultation on strengthening the child protection system. The event aimed to engage key stakeholders and experts in a constructive dialogue to address challenges and devise effective strategies for safeguarding the rights and well-being of children.

The consultation brought together more than 80 participants representatives from government agencies, civil society organizations, academia, child rights workers, children, and relevant professionals. This collaborative effort fostered an inclusive and participatory approach, enabling a holistic understanding of the issues surrounding easy access to govt schemes and generating innovative solutions.

Mainstreaming marginalised with special Aadhaar camps

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, JUNE 19

TWENTY-SIX-YEAR-OLD MOMU, a resident of Prem Nagar slum that is about half a kilometre off the Jaipur-Agra highway, polishes shoes for a living.

Going by the general profile of children in Prem Nagar, chances are that Momu's children, Moyni (4) and 18-month-old Karu will follow in his footsteps and take up similar jobs like a kaddi-wallah (one who trades junk and rags), pick garbage, drive a rickshaw, do seasonal jobs, or even beg.

As a regular man in the slum, there are quite a few children already doing these jobs. "My father polishes shoes and mother does jeeva-bartan. I sometimes find scaping garbage and sell for Rs 10-20 per kilo. If I beg, they either give me food or I get up to Rs 50-60 per day," says an eight-year-old who has nine siblings.

"Jeeva-bartan" is a barrier system where a person goes around collecting hair from homes and gives curries (jeeva/zeera) and sterilis in exchange for hair. In Prem Nagar, quite a few women



Parents get their children registered for an Aadhaar card in Prem Nagar, Jaipur, on Friday, June 16, 2023.

are engaged in "jeeva-bartan", including Heena Devi, who then sells the hair for money.

While Devi has absolutely no documents of her children, Hemraj, 8, and Heena, 9, Momu and his wife Sarjana have the hospital certificate of their son Karu.

Like some other parents in Prem Nagar, Heena, Momu and Sarjana hope to change that by educating their children, but a lack of Aadhaar means no access to a government school three kilometres away. For several rea-

sons or limited to lack of money and awareness, many residents of Prem Nagar, especially children, don't have Aadhaar cards.

This May, this was raised by some children associated with Childhood Enhancement through Training and Action (Chetna), an NGO, at a stakeholder's consultation organised by the National Action and Coordination Group for Ending Violence against Children (NACG EVAC) in Jaipur.

"When we go to schools, we are turned down; when we go

again, they ask for Jan Aadhaar card; when we go with the Jan Aadhaar card, they tell us to reduce the age of the child. Now how can we reduce the age?" said Mohamudul Shabir Sha, 13, at the consultation.

This prompted Sangeeta Biswal, Chairperson of Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (RSCPCR) and who was present at the consultation, to try and bridge the gap through special camps for Aadhaar enrolment through the Department of Information Technology and Communication. Three such camps — in Prem Nagar, Kaila Khata and Jaipur's Pura Kilar — were set up for three days between June 14 and 16.

The Prem Nagar camp was inaugurated by Heena on June 14, who said: "Children here as old as 13-14 years haven't been enrolled in a school due to lack of Aadhaar card, hence I gave instructions for setting up camps in the respective localities. Getting an identity card is a fundamental right of a person."

In Prem Nagar, the registration camp was held out of a cen-

tre run by Chetna; the registration was limited to children between the ages of 0-18. Deepesh Saini, project coordinator with Chetna, says mainly the aim of the exercise is to help students enrol in government schools and avail benefits of government schemes.

Although Aadhaar service is free, service providers often charge a "hefty" fee. Khema, 33, a state educator with Chetna, says: "Some people here are in debt that they can't even spare a few hundred. And it also means that they have to do the day's work."

Asaram Gargaj, 26, also an educator with Chetna, says that most people in the slum don't have any document, which also prevents them from accessing several government schemes.

But things are changing. Parit Singhwal, 9, who has an Aadhaar has been going to a school for a month now, attending class 2. Standing next to her, Deepika, 14, hopes to join Parit soon. "It is perhaps for the first time that RSCPCR went out of its way to set up these camps. If there are other places where people don't have Aadhaar card, RSCPCR will set up camps through NGOs and government organisations," Biswal added.



Editorial: This Newsletter has been compiled by Ms. Pragna Singh and Ms. Pooja Singh under the guidance of Mr. Sanjay Gupta, Chairperson, NACG EVAC, India.

National Secretariat NACG EVAC, India: Childhood Enhancement through Training and Action (CHETNA) 40/22, Manohar Kunj, Ground Floor, Gautam Nagar, Behind U.P. Dairy, New Delhi - 110049

Phone: 011-41644470, Fax - 011-41644471, sanjay.gupta@nacgevacindia.com, www.nacgevacindia.com