



## State-Stakeholder Consultation: Ensuring Easy Access to Govt Services for Vulnerable and Street Children in Rajasthan

On May 26, 2023, under the guidance of the Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, NACG EVAC -Rajasthan Chapter (National Action Coordination Group to End Violence Against Children) in collaboration with CHETNA NGO (Childhood Enhancement through Training and Action) organized a successful stakeholder consultation on “Ensure easy access to education and government services for vulnerable children” at Institute of Development Studies Jaipur conference hall. The consultation brought together Mrs Sangeeta Beniwal, chairperson of RSCPCR, Sanjay Gupta chairperson of NACG EVAC India and Director CHETNA NGO, Mr Vikas Kumar Meena, Assistant Director of Education RSCPCR including education professionals, government officials, community leaders, children and civil society representatives from 10 districts of Rajasthan to discuss and address the crucial issue of accessibility and inclusivity in education and government services.

### Welcome and Introduction

At the beginning of the workshop, all the representatives who attended the workshop were welcomed and introduced by Mr Madan Nagda, Convener NACG EVAC Rajasthan Chapter. After that, the children from Chetna NGO presented handmade paper flowers and mementoes to the State Commission for Child Rights Protection Chairperson, Mrs Sangeeta Beniwal and other distinguished guests.

Recognizing the fundamental importance of education and government services in fostering the growth and development of our society, Sanjay Gupta shared that consultation aimed to identify challenges and propose innovative solutions to make these services easily accessible to the street and vulnerable children in Rajasthan

Further, he briefed Mrs Sangeeta Beniwal about the (NACG-EVAC India) and shared that it is a country-level civil society forum of the South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC), an apex body of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), with 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.

### Identifying Gaps and Challenges:

A discussion was conducted to identify the gaps and challenges in the existing systems and policies that hinder the access of street children to government services. Participants

discussed issues related to identification, documentation, awareness, coordination among stakeholders, and the need for targeted interventions.

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 Aadhaar and Janaadhar, long distances from communities to schools, children dropping out of schools, children being involved in child labour, and inability to access government schemes, POCSO cases etc.

Giving opportunities to the participants from different districts, Mr Gupta urged them to present cases related to children.

- Anchal (representing Prem Nagar community): "I am 8 years old, and my parents do not send me to school because the government school is 4 kilometres away from my community and apart from this school, there is no other school nearby due to which I am deprived of education."
- Umesh: "I am 11 years old, and I want to become a soldier when I grow up. The school authorities ask for an Aadhaar card, and the people who make Aadhaar cards demand a lot of money."
- The case of two children was shared from Sirohi district where the children were denied entry into the school for not paying the fees.
- Shared cases of children being involved in child labour from Sambhar district where girls work with their mothers in a salt factory.
- Participants from the Alwar district shared that timely attention is not given to the problems arising in POCSO cases.

### **Strategies and Recommendations**

Representatives from government departments and NGOs shared their ongoing initiatives and best practices aimed at improving access to services for children.

The main hold of the consultation was when the children shared their views and issues - directly with Chairperson, RSCPCR and other government officials. Commission listened carefully to each and every child and addressed their issues. During the consultation, participants engaged in insightful discussions and shared their valuable perspectives, experiences, and ideas.

**Mrs Sangeeta Beniwal** listened to the entire discussion carefully and expressed the commission's dedication to implementing the proposed solutions and initiatives discussed during the consultation. Further, she urged organizations to work collaboratively with the government and relevant entities to drive positive change in education and government services for vulnerable children.

She asked to submit the list of areas where children are facing problems in enrollment of Unique Identification Numbers in the commission office so that necessary facilities can be provided to the children.

**Mr. Vikas Kumar Meena** Assistant Director of Education, RSCPCR members 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. Further, he provided guidance on every issue related to admission to the school:

- He clarified that for any problems related to school admission or education, approach the block and district officials of the area and still if one does not get help, then take the help of the commission.
- There is a school established in each village panchayat. If there is a school located more than 2 kilometres away in any town, inform the district officer there.
- The school's administration enrolls children according to the education department's calendar. It ensures that information about each child is provided on the Shala Darpan portal.
- Along with this, he urged social organizations and parents to teach children at home because children drop out due to not being able to cope with the school syllabus.

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.

### **Way Forward**

The successful stakeholder consultation marked an important step towards building a more inclusive and accessible society by actively engaging stakeholders and fostering meaningful collaborations.

Commission assured to organize camps for making Aadhaar cards in slums and ensured to send a letter to UIDAI for the same.

It was ensured to submit the issues related to children in writing from the participants participating in the consultation from different districts so that orders could be issued to the officials of the concerned area.

Emphasis was placed on solving the problems faced in school admission in a phased manner and the officers of the Block level were asked to ensure that school admission is completed through the process created by the government.

It was highlighted that raising awareness among vulnerable children and their families about available government services is crucial.

Stakeholders stressed the need for targeted awareness campaigns, community mobilization, and capacity-building programs to empower families and communities to access and utilize these services effectively.

**Strengthening Data Collection and Monitoring Mechanisms:** Improving data collection systems to accurately identify and track vulnerable children. This will enable evidence-based planning, monitoring, and evaluation of interventions aimed at ensuring their access to government services.

It was decided to explore the possibility of research etc. on street and working children in collaboration with the Institute of Development Studies

### Closing Remarks

The consultation concluded with closing remarks by Mr Nagda Convener NACG EVAC Rajasthan Chapter expressing gratitude to all participants for their valuable contributions and emphasizing the importance of sustained collaboration to ensure the well-being and rights of children.

### Next Steps

A comprehensive report capturing the discussions, recommendations, and action points will be prepared and shared with all stakeholders after the consultation. The report will serve as a roadmap for future interventions and advocacy efforts to improve access to government services for children in Rajasthan.

### Annexure 1: Photos



<b>Annexure 2: Agenda of the Consultation</b>		
Time	Topic	Facilitator
10:30 am-11:00 am	Registration of participants and networking over tea	CHETNA NGO team
11:00 am -11:10 am	Welcome and Introductions of the Participants	Mr Madan Nagda, State Convenor, NACG EVAC Rajasthan
11:10 am-11:20 am	Opening remarks and a brief overview of the agenda and briefly explain the desired outcomes of the consultation.	Mr. Rajesh Kumar
11:20 am-11:30 am	Sharing about NACG EVAC India and the format of consultation-	Mr. Sanjay Gupta Chairperson, NACG EVAC India and Director CHETNA NGO
11:30 am-11:35 am 11:35 am-11.40 am 11:40 am-11:45 am 11:45am-11:50 am 11:50am-11:55am 11:55am-12:00noon 12:05 pm-12:10pm	<p><b>Background and Context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a background on the current situation and challenges faced by vulnerable children in accessing education and government services.</li> <li>• Share relevant data, statistics, and case studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue.</li> </ul> <p>Case presentation 1<sup>st</sup> Case Presentation 2<sup>nd</sup> Case Presentation 3<sup>rd</sup> Case Presentation 4<sup>th</sup> Case presentation 5<sup>th</sup> Case presentation 6<sup>th</sup> Case presentation 7<sup>TH</sup> Case Presentation</p>	

12:10 pm-12:20 pm	Respond from the Education department	Mr Naveen Jain, Secretary Education Department
12:20 pm-12:30 pm	Response from Additional Director Social Justice & Empowerment	Mr Reena Additional Director, Social Justice & Empowerment
12:30 pm-12:40 pm	Response from Additional Director, DCR	Mr. Shyam Singh Shekhawat Additional Director, DCR.
12:40 pm-1:00 pm	Response from UIDAI & others	Mr Rakesh Verma, Deputy Director UIDAI, Mr Sitaram Swaroop Joint Director, JanAadhar
1:00 pm-1:15 pm	Keynote address by RSCPCR chairperson	Mrs Sangeeta Beniwal Chairperson, Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights
1:15 pm-1:30 pm	<b>Action Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate a discussion on developing an action plan to address the identified challenges and implement the proposed solutions.</li> <li>• Discuss the establishment of a collaborative framework or platform to facilitate ongoing collaboration and coordination among stakeholders.</li> <li>• Identify mechanisms for monitoring progress, sharing best practices, and ensuring accountability in the implementation of the action plan.</li> </ul>	Mr. Sanjay Gupta Chairperson, NACG EVAC India and Director CHETNA NGO
1:30 pm-1:35 pm	Vote of thanks and Group photo	Mr Om Prakash, National Board Member, NACG EVAC India
2 pm onwards	Lunch and depart	CHETNA team



As a result of this consultation, CHETNA NGO organized a three-day (June 14 to 16) special Aadhaar card camp for street children in collaboration with Rajasthan State Commission for Child Rights Protection. The Chairperson of SCPCR, Mrs Sangita Beniwal, inaugurated the camp in the presence of more than 150 children and local stakeholders. The aim of the camp is to address the issue of street children lacking proper identification and ensure their access to essential services and education.

The camp was set up in a central location accessible to street children in Jaipur. To maximize participation, the team worked closely with local authorities, NGOs, and volunteers who are familiar with the areas where street children often gather.

The camp aimed to empower street children by providing them with a vital identification document - the Aadhar card - and facilitating their access to government services and entitlements.

**Objectives:**

- To provide Aadhar cards to street children who lacked proper identification documents.
- To raise awareness about the significance of the Aadhar card in accessing various government services and facilities.
- To collaborate with the state commission to enhance outreach and ensure effective implementation of the camp.

**Activities:**

**Registration and Documentation:** Team members assisted street children in filling out the necessary forms and gathering relevant documents for the Aadhar card application process.

**Aadhar Card Application:** Team members and representatives from the government department responsible for Aadhar card registration were present at the camp to expedite the application process.

**Information Sessions:** Informative sessions were conducted to educate the children about the importance of the Aadhar card and how it can open doors to education, healthcare, and social welfare schemes.

**Follow-Up Support:** We ensured that all applicants received their Aadhar cards promptly. Follow-up services were provided to address any concerns or issues that arose during the process.

**Impact:**



The Aadhar card camp proved to be a resounding success, with 125 street children receiving their Aadhar cards during the event. The initiative significantly enhanced their access to essential services and entitlements, enabling them to integrate better into society.

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 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.

It served as a step towards empowering street children and ensuring their access to essential services, ultimately working towards their holistic development.