



CHILDVOICE

Annual report 2016-17

CHILD VOICE

Our Voice Our Rights

Annual Report 2016-17
www.childvoiceindia.org

About Us

Organization Background

Child voice is a Non-Profit organization working for children from marginalized background in 54 areas within Dindigul District, in Tamil Nadu state of India. CHILD VOICE was registered in June 2011 under Indian trust act-1882. However, Child Voice is an organization that has emerged from many years of working experience in the same communities since 1989 as a program with the partnership of International Child Care Trust, UK.

Child Voice had been working with children at risk, focusing on street and working children, school dropouts, child marriages, health and nutrition, Adolescent girls at risk, children who were sexually abused and any other children in need of special care and protection. Child voice is a right based organization that strongly believes in active community participation towards creating a safe and secure child friendly environment. It focused on long term sustainability through short and medium term interventions, enabling all children to grow in a society that promotes child participation while ensuring their rights are obtained.

Children First, everything that should be done with the best interest of the child in mind for a holistic growth and development of the Children

Children constitute to over 40 percent of India's population. As per 2011 census, Dindigul had population of 21, 59,775 of which male and female were 10, 80,938 and 10, 78,837 respectively. There are 6, 86,576 children including 3, 51,955 boys and 3, 34,621 girls under the age of 18 in Dindigul district. Another study shows that 10 percent of children under 18 are working as child laborers in the state. In Dindigul district alone 90,000 adolescent girls work in 173 odd spinning mills of which more than 40,000 children under the age of 18 are forced to work as bonded labors under camp coolie system, that systematically exploits adolescent girls from rural and marginalized backgrounds, in addition to this several children under the age of 14 are working in teashops, workshops, construction sites, brick kilns and rag picking. Over 50,000 children from the southern districts including Dindigul district are been sent to work as bonded laborers in northern states.

Child Voice believes that there are Several hundred children are at risk of being engaged in child labour because of Socio economic situation that is persistent in the drought prone regions that fall within the proposed target area. Children from rural, marginalized and tribal backgrounds are most affected and remain most vulnerable. Children working as child laborers are often subjected to sexual exploitation, physical and psychological abuse and are from neglected backgrounds.

Child Voice works with the community to create slave free societies, to ensure that children are given the best possible opportunities to study, technically equip themselves to have a shot at better employment opportunities and to have a safe and secure growing environment.



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Message from the Managing Trustee

India remains home to the largest population of modern slavery in the world. Slavery has evolved into several dynamics that are getting more and more difficult to fathom and understand. In a capitalistic driven society vulnerable young boys and girls are pushed towards slavery in service, manufacturing, development and non-formal sectors. The extent of exploitation on these voiceless victims are in par with the early American slavery. The chains and shackles are replaced with enticement, threat and strong arm tactics used by a vast network of traffickers who run a parallel government that lurks below the shadows. It's important to pay attention to the consumer goods that we use in our day to day lives, understand their origins and to see if they come from a supply chain that is benefitted from modern slavery.

Nonprofit organizations that work towards holistic human development needs to take up the issue of bonded labour, modern slavery more often. One cannot eradicate poverty without addressing these challenges which has direct link with the vicious circle of poverty.

Based on our experience, addressing the issue of modern slavery, which has its ugly hands in the deepest of the most marginalized remote economies we have found that There is a surge in young boys and girls been recruited to spinning mills, candy factories, brick kilns, domestic worker, agricultural labour etc. this also due to failed economic plans, drought, improper cred-

Vestibulum semper enim non eros. Sed vitae arcu. Aliquam erat volutpat. Praesent odio nisl, suscipit at, rhoncus sit amet, porttitor sit amet, leo. Aenean hendrerit est. Etiam ac augue. Morbi tincidunt neque ut lacus. Duis

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CHILD VOICE strives to bring attention to this by addressing the core issues of poverty, illiteracy, lack of skill set, economic dependency on agriculture, health and hygiene by engaging with the stakeholders and our primary beneficiaries, the children through various welfare and developmental programs. These moves have born some fruit as we see more number of young girls opting for higher education and skill development training's than to get themselves into work stream.



Vision Mission and Goals

Goals

Establishing sustainable communities, comprising of various stakeholders, comprehend and positively respond to the inevitable need to care and protect vulnerable children.

Empowering underprivileged children through community sensitisation

and mobilization around key issues of child rights and protection by their participation.

Assertion of comprehensive rights of children and to bring policy level changes through effective lobbying, advocacy, networking and cam-



Child Voice Vision:

A Progressive society that is actively involved in promoting and safeguarding the rights of Children



Child voice Mission:

To empower underprivileged children and to ascertain their rights, particularly protection and participation rights.

To establish sustainable communities that prioritises child rights.

To bring policy level changes for implementation of children's rights through advocacy and networking.

Key Achievements

Provided education support for 65 girls to pursue various forms of formal and non-formal education

Extended livelihood support for tribal communities benefiting 45 families

Provided intensive micro nutrient support for 35 children from tribal origins, effectively removing malnutrition for among the children

Formed village level knowledge center in 30 villages benefiting 965 children

Conducted medical camps for adolescent girls benefiting 456 young girls

Provided counseling support for 34 young girls in challenging situation and rehabilitated them appropriately

Trained and secured employment for 54 young women and survivors of modern slavery

Provided information on slavery to over 11,500 personals through awareness activities, campaigns and through public information delivery systems such as media, newsprint, bit notice, and village level campaigns

Worked closely with various network partners to make aware and support for holistic growth and development of the people from marginalized communities

Conducted a baseline survey to identify victims of modern slavery

Became the NGO partner for Wipro Chennai Marathon 2016

COMMUNITY FREEDOM GROUPS

COMMUNITY FREEDOM GROUPS

Individual challenges can be solved with social introspection. Individual challenge is also a social challenge since everything is interconnected. Poverty affects an individual who is impoverished but it's a social problem. Illiteracy of an individual will affect the community in general.

Child voice, since its inception has believed in the importance of the role of the community members in solving local problems. Though our program is primarily focused on children and young adults, our interaction with the community stakeholders plays an important role in program decisions.

In order to successfully addressing slavery through community mobilization Child voice has formed various community groups such as community support group, adolescent action groups, youth groups, Children Against Tobacco, Child Vigilance Committee, Economic Joint Liabilities Group, Survivors groups etc..

Through these group, various programs are conducted to support the children in need.



Community Support
Group

JOINT LIABILITIES
GROUP

SURVIVOR GROUP
Children Against Tobacco

SPECIAL MOMENTS



Gandhigram University Professor Dr. Raja addressing the Block level Vigilance committee members and important dignitaries



Children are the future tomorrow. Interacting with the children from Child Resource Center



Mr. Ganesan Speaking to the women and young girls on International women's day about his inspirations and the importance of equality for all women



CHILD VOICE block level AAG federation President Miss Kanmani addressing to the AAG members on adolescent power.



Opening the Bridge School In Perungadu. Child Voice efforts of 4 years resulted in building a bridge school in Perungadu tribal village. Opened by the village Elder and Kodaikanal RDO

Community First

Community intervention Measures

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Community Support Groups

Child voice has formed 32 community support groups. 30 in Nilakottai block and 2 in Kodaikanal block to support the various child welfare program that are implemented in the community. The CSG's play the role of custodians of the program with keen interest in the welfare of the community children. All program and welfare measures are taken after the consent of the CSG members. Currently there are over 487 CSG members in child voice.

groups in the village to come together to discuss their challenges and adversities. With over 50 groups and counting, with a member strength of 1023 girls, this adolescent action groups is the backbone of the program goals. These young women participate, contribute and benefit from the various trainings, and welfare programs conducted in the community.

Block level CSG Federation

In the process of strengthening the Community Support Group Activities. Child Voice Conducted Several awareness programs that materialized in the formation of Nilakottai block level Community Support federation. The aims of block level federation is to create consensus among the CSG members of the various communities and to address children related issues in a holistic and unified manner. On Nilakottai block community child protection federation aims at strengthening various child protection activities in the block and to a create slave free Nilakottai block.

AAG Federation

90 girls representing 45 AAG groups in Nilakottai block came together to select and elect Block level AAG federation on 6th august 2016. Nilakottai Thasildar Mr. Kalliappan, Govt High school Head Mistress Mrs Indira, Dr. S.P Densia- Director, Mother Teresa Women's University Department of Women Studies participated in the event . The Day witnessed Cultural Programs by the adolescent girls and election of office bearers. All the girls together selected the 5 office bearers through voting process.

The Federation Members Took an oath to protect the rights of the girl child and encourage education and positive development among girl children.

Joint Liabilities Groups

Child voice helped organize 256 women who were the victims of modern slavery into 51 Joint Liabilities group to help them avail micro credit from various credit institutions.

The women undergo various entrepreneurship trainings, are taught financial management and marketing skills. trainings, are taught financial management and marketing skills. Some of the groups have successfully gained access to micro credit and have started their own small enterprises. In addition to this, government support and subsidies for the deserving candidates is also secured through these groups.

Survivor Group

Several hundreds of women, who in their childhood, out of poverty and lack of awareness fall victim to the enticement and mislead of spinning mills and get enslaved under Sumangali scheme for 3- 5 years, during their time they are over worked, exploited and are emotionally abused. Some of these women suffer from permanent physical and emotional health conditions developed because of the hazardous environment that they were working in. asthma, depression, Menstrual related issues, Anemia etc. due to poor physical condition, and these women are not able to do their regular work. They need support counselling, guidance and assistance for economic empowerment. Child voice has over 30 such groups in our working areas. Where women who had survived the spinning mills are formed into such groups and provided with various forms of assistance.

Adolescent Action Groups

Young girls between the ages of 12 to 18 are formed into small 20 member

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Life Skill Education

Child voice regularly conduct life skill education training to capacitate young girls from challenging environments to face life's unending hurdles with a systematic approach to problem solving. This series of 2 day training are provided by trained professionals who have experience in supporting women during their adverse situations.

Girls who are victims of modern slavery, abuse, exploitation and from marginalized environments are selected and encouraged to participate in the 2 day life skill training. Usually the training are held outstations, giving the participants a break from their regular monotonous lifestyle.

Young girls working in spinning mills are the primary beneficiary of the program with important given to survivors (girls who had formerly worked in spinning mills and other exploitative systems of modern slavery). Under this program, young girls are taught to face life's challenges through simple replicable activities and exercises. Problem solving, stress management, social participation, Decision making, effective communication, self-awareness, assertiveness, empathy etc. are some of the major components in the training

234 young girls are benefited in the life skill training conducted by child voice over the period of 1 year.



Health Camps

One of the major challenge faced by children is poor access to health services. Child voice conducts periodic health camps in rural areas bringing them closer to medical access. Children and young adults benefit from these camps which aim to improve the overall health of the target communities

Young girls and women working in spinning mills are screened for respiratory illness and other health issues that tend to arrive due to their occupation. Girls diagnosed with issues are followed up and given regular treatment and support from local registered government doctor or the Govt hospitals. 245 girls have benefited from the various health camps conducted by child voice during 2016-17.

In addition to this, survivors from the spinning mills are supported for their psycho social care and health related issues. Most women suffer from stress related issues for which counseling support provided.

VOCATIONAL SKILL TRAINING

Vocational Skill Training

Child voice believes that self-sustainability is the best solution for fighting poverty. Young girls are forced to work in spinning mills for the primary reason of fulfilling their economic needs. Because of lack of marketable skills, these girls suffer poor wages and have very limited options. Unfortunately these options are full of exploitation and abuse. Since early on, Child voice has strived to address this problem by providing alternative employment based training for these girls.

For those who cannot pursue higher education are given counseling to streamline their attitude, aptitude and focus, and are supported for various employment based training such as Garment making, Cell phone repair and service, bedside assistant, soft skill development, computer related training programs etc. Some girls are even put up with radical but challenging training programs such as two wheeler mechanic training program by Yamaha Motorcycle Corporation.

Most of these training programs are in association with leading institutions which are experts in their concerned fields. Child voice works closely with institutions such as Gandigram rural University, Gandigram Development Trust, VAIGAI trust, Mother Teresa Women's University and other community based train-

Successful candidates are supported for job in leading local industries which has a fair workman's policy or Group Loans by National and regional credit institutions which help towards their self-sustainability.



CHILD VOICE Field coordinator speaking to an adolescent girl encouraging her to pursue higher education



Pic 2: Young Girls getting trained in Garment making course in Thummalapatti Community Training Centre.



Graduates and students of CHILD VOICE Vocational Skill training initiative 2016



EDP (Entrepreneurship Development Program)

Several women have been benefited in the series of Entrepreneurship Development Programs conducted by Child Voice. The primary focus of this training program is to create a positive home environment for children to grow, with less stress on the family to make their ends meet. Women are trained for small scale, individual or group trade, with the help of Canara Bank and other professional small scale industrial development trainers.

Women from improvised economic background are chosen for Selected local based EDP Training and are provided 2 to 4 day training on how to manufacture, market and manage commercially viable products using resources available locally. The program aims to engage women who can work from homes with flexible timings, using raw materials source locally, value addition them and market them within their community or nearby town and earn substantial income that would contribute towards their economic sustainability. Child Voice believes that by having several sources of income for women, particularly from the marginalized communities can be in a position to send their daughters to schools and not to work as it happened in most cases where single occupancy dependency has caused irregularity in the income which forces parents to send their children into spinning mills.

Successful implementation of this program has resulted in several women taking up small scale business modules such as backyard poultry raising, soap and phenol manufacture etc.



LABOUR LAW AND SLAVERY ACT

Awareness on Labour law and Slavery act has been given to 30 villages in our working areas. Over 12,000 people have been provided information on various forms of modern slavery, exploitation and corresponding relief mechanism that is available with the government. Training on labour laws, anti-trafficking and slavery related acts are given to the community members. The aim of these forms of training are to identify slavery and to understand the various pre and post solutions available within the framework of the constitution.

Government Officials and Stakeholders Awareness Meetings.

In addition to providing information to the community members, Awareness on Sumangali Thittam and other forms of modern slavery is also given to Government officials and other stake holders. Series of interface meetings which are focused to create consensus towards understanding the various dynamics of modern slavery is conducted periodically to keep in tab about the current development of the issues. Village and block level Vigilance committees are formed to observe possible exploitation of individual children.

STOP CHILD MARRIAGE

CHILD MARRIAGE AWARENESS

Child Voice is working towards creating a Child marriage free Tamilnadu, however, Socio economic conditions in our working areas make it a major challenge in addressing the issue of child marriage. This is become both a cultural and personal issue for many families. Despite of the resistance from certain sections of the society, Child voice has managed to prevent 8 child marriages in Nilakottai block. Child voice continues to provide awareness to the community members and children through our various forms of reaching out programs to create an understanding on the shortcomings of child marriage.

During 2016-17 child voice has worked closely with communities to prevent child marriages. All the 8 marriages successfully stopped by Child Voice and the concerned government departments were brought to our attention by the AAG members in the respected communities.

PREGNANCY CARE

Child Voice also works closely with newlywed women and young mothers with the local primary health care centers on positive pregnancy along with pre natal and post natal care of child and the mother. This includes supply of WHO approved Multivitamins with the support of Vitamin Angels.



SPECIAL DAYS

Child voice celebrates special days to provide information and awareness to the community and children for better good. Special days such as international children's day, world girl child day, Global Hand wash Day etc. are celebrated. These days are chosen carefully in order to highlight the importance of the day as well as to provide information on the relevance of celebrating such days. Awareness Campaigns, Rallies, Chat shows, Competitions, public Programs, cultural events etc. are planned and conducted to felicitate the events.

VILLAGE CHILD RESOURCE CENTER

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Child Voice has initiated 30 village child resource centers in 30 villages. These resource centers, function every day, benefit over 1230 children and several thousand community members. Unlike traditional study centers, which focuses only on education. Child voice CRC centers play a vital role of being an evening study centre for children, a place to play, learn, work, debate and share their talents.

In addition to this these village centers also provide vital information for the community, support them to gain access to various government welfare programs, conduct regular visit to the families of vulnerable girls. Keep stock of situations that might lead any individual into slavery, identify school dropouts, and to bring social level community welfare initiatives to the village.

Children have shown remarkable improvement in their attitude and aptitude. As the resource centre also focuses on the health hygiene and general well being of the children. Regular events, programs and competitions are held to keep the children in high morale. Yoga, meditation, folk songs, traditional martial arts etc are also taught in these centers. Children are encouraged to pursue their talent areas such as drawing, public speaking, writing etc.

Reduction in dropout rate, increased attendance in regular mainstream school education, awareness on child marriage, improved reading habit etc are some of the achievements of the CRC centers.



Special Days

GIRL CHILD EDUCATION

GIRL CHILD DAY is Celebrated every year with focus on girl child education in 2016. Individual interactions, community debates, and Adolescent girls' initiatives to encourage education of girl child had resulted in over 124 girl children to continue their studies. Community acceptance of the importance of girl child education is one of the major achievements of this initiative. Panchayath level awareness, community level awareness, school campaigns etc. focused on the importance of girl child education.

GLOBAL HAND WASH DAY

Child Voice celebrates Global Hand Wash Day every year. Global Hand Washing day is an annual Global day dedicated to increase the awareness and understand the importance of hand washing with soap and water to effectively prevent young children and adults from falling ill. This day started first in 2008 is an important event to improve the personal hygiene standards of young children in our working area. Child Voice this year Promoted the habit of hand washing in 31 villages covered over 869 children.

WORLD WATER DAY

On 22nd March 2017 Child Voice celebrated world water day in 15 villages covering 4 panchayath in Nilakottai block. Water and sustainable development was the core motto of this event, celebrated every year. Since most of our working area is drought hit due to failed monsoon, the importance of water was well understood by the children in the community. Having to spend over 2 hours a day to collect water, the children spoke a lot about the systems that need to be in place for effective water conservation.



UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Universal Children's day Children first is the focus of Child Voice with its vision of creating safe and secure growing environment for all children. Child Voice follows the guidelines of UN-CRC to effectively work towards the safety and security of all children, especially from those of the marginalized and vulnerable backgrounds.

While celebrating childhood, Child voice, celebrates Universal Children's day on Nov 20th. On November 20th 2016, 486 children participated in the cultural program, rally and awareness campaign held at Government High School, Nilakottai. The children from over 30 villages along with community support group members took part in the program.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION

OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

On November 25th Child Voice celebrated International Day for the Elimination of Violence against women. Over 256 young girls and women from different communities took part in various grass root level program to highlight the plight of women and measures to save women from violence. Alcoholism and its effects, broken family, domestic abuse, marital rape were some of the topics discussed.



HEALTH HYGIENE & SANITATION

MENSTRUAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Menstrual Health Management is one of the primary focus of child voice. As a part of Fresh Water Action Network, South Asia- FANSA. Child voice constantly works with young adults and women on their menstrual health management. All 45 AAG members get regular updates on their menstrual health related information through the coordinators. Menstrual health related programs, myth busting and personal hygiene related informations are provided regularly. Over 850 girls are benefited from these training.

HEALTH

Special programs are also conducted with guest speakers from reputed universities, Healthcare departments who take part and share their insights with the children.

improvised sections of the society. Funds raised through this will be utilized for the growth and welfare of tribal communities.

CHENNAI MARATHON

Child voice is one of the NGO partner for Wipro Chennai marathon 2017. Child voice worked closely with the marathon team and United Way, Chennai towards the successful marathon. Chennai Marathon is the biggest marathon held in Tamilnadu every year. More than 20,000 runners took part in this marathon which also had a special charity run which, highlighted the challenges faced by



TRIBAL WELFARE



TRIBAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

Under our Tribal welfare and development program intensive and holistic program to educate and empower tribal children have resulted in successful achievements of goals for Perungadu tribal community in Perungadu, Kodaikanal

Perungadu is a tribal community located about 24 kilometres from the Hill station of Kodaikanal. This village consists of 45 tribal families in 2 clusters. Belonging to the Paliyar community, the people and children of Perungadu have little or no access to any of the basic requirements for a human to lead a dignified life. Living in the periphery of the forest in a barren patch of land, the tribal people do not have access to agricultural land, clean water, basic sanitation, and even electricity.

In 2015 with a primary Goal to start a bridge school in the village, establish relationship and encourage the children to like education, bridge the knowledge gap and to enable the children to attend regular school, get educated, be literate and have aspirations in life.

Over the period of time, this initiative has evolved through constant input from child voice and now have several welfare programs for the community.

BRIDGE SCHOOL AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Bridge courses are a tool to help students to succeed in their graduate level studies. Child Voice operates a bridge school in Perungadu, for the dropout students from Perungadu tribal hamlet to continue their education. The main purpose of this bridge school is to reduce the knowledge gap among children from challenging backgrounds when compare to the children from other sections of the society. In this academic year, we had enrolled 34 students in the Bridge school. Of these 34 students, 28 children regularly attend their classes. 6 children are irregular due to migration and other factors beyond our control.

Apart from textbook learning, the children are engaged in several extra-curricular activities like songs, yoga, sports and games. An output based practical methodology is implemented in the Bridge school. In addition to this, the children are given an opportunity to develop their global knowledge through exposure visits

EDUCATION SUPPORT

Education remains to be the biggest challenge for children from hilly tribal areas, remoteness, and isolation from the mainstream community, accessibility and natural born timidity of the tribal children remain to be some of the biggest hurdles of these children. The programs in the bridge school are designed to address these issues and

to engage with the children in a positive atmosphere.

Children with potential are identified at early stage and were given special training, enabling them to sit for their regular exams in a nearby panchayath school. 8 children were successful in this academic year and sat for their exams. The remaining children are showing remarkable improvement and will soon be able to attend regular schooling. This is a remarkable achievement of the children, from not too long ago never stepped into a school to have shown potential and attitude to excel in their academic performance. The children remain focused and have proven many skeptics wrong through their remarkable performance. Addition Educational Officer who visited the children was impressed with the reading, reciting and writing ability of the children, and he recommended 8 children to sit for exams in a regular school. All the challenges in securing the place for the children in the school was met by Child voice. The children were screened for their blood group and after meeting up with other requirements stipulated by the department of education,

These children, being from a community, not so long ago was shunted away and lived in isolation in the forest, the children of parents who have never touched a pen, felt the texture of a notebook are now carrying their textbooks with pride and smartness of capable and looking forward to an enlightened future.



of capable and looking forward to an enlightened future.

In addition to this, to address there was a condition of severe malnutrition among the children from the community. To address this major challenge, Child Voice, intensive Re nutrition Program, along with midday meals were provided to the children. Children were supplied with micro nutrient induced candies regularly which showed tremendous results. Within months of the nutrition program, children began to feel more energetic, with a notable increase in their aptitude, concentration and involvement.

Currently 35 children are undergoing the Nutrition program, with successful results.

Medical camp and Vaccination Drive

Since most children are not inoculated, Child voice with the Department of health had conducted a Special Vaccination Camp on 6th January 2017 to prevent those children been infected by Measles virus. Measles used to be one of the major cause of concern among tribal children. All the children from the community were inoculated to prevent been infected by the virus.

Livelihood support

To encourage families to have alternative source of income, child voice trained 30 families on country chick-

en raising (a local breed of hen that is robust, and produces eggs of high nutrition value) more than 150 pairs of hens were supplied to the families, who raise them and sell the eggs, after their needs to the local market at a good price.

Social Events

Exclusion is the major challenge among the tribal communities. The children remain isolated and often times feel intimidated by the outside world. To change this, children are encouraged to conduct social events like Pongal and Republic day celebration, in which children and guests are invited to attend their events. Similarly they attend several programs conducted in various areas. Notable among this is the participation of the children in the residential Training camp in Madurai on 27-28th January 2017. Exposure visit to Vaigai dam as a part of their social exposure was conducted successfully on 11th February 2017.

Welfare Gifts

Child voice keeps a tab on the needs of the children's needs and support them with periodic gifts to the children. School bags, sports equipment, warm winter quilts, books, clothes etc. are given to the children as a part of our Joy of Giving Program





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