

Men as responsible fathers in promoting and securing Rights of children

State level planning meeting, Madhya Pradesh

Date: 7th September, 2012

Place: Gandhi Bhawan, Bhopal

A state level meeting was organised on 7th September, 2012 in Gandhi Bhawan, Bhopal to have a discussion on the men as responsible fathers in securing and promoting Child Rights with the wide focus on issues relation to Child Rights in Madhya Pradesh. This meeting was attended by 19 people from different backgrounds and various organisations. Participation from various organisations can be seen in the following list:

No.	Organisation/networks	Number of members
1.	Partners from Sajhedar Project	2
2.	Partners from PACS	3
3.	Feminists	2
4.	CHSJ	3
5.	Child Rights group	1
6.	Child and Human Rights group	8
	total	19

The participants were strategically chosen in order to ensure their long term partnership in terms of:

1. Those organisations or groups working in the area of Child rights, women's rights, human rights / Dalit rights or feminist organization or groups working on Gender equality or women's rights with men.
2. Including those organisation or group whose interest is in the protection of child rights and are ready to with men and in partnerships.
3. Including those organisations which are based in that area where CHSJ or its partners are working so that a collective and shared campaign can be started.

After Virendra Rai, coordinator from CHSJ welcomed the participants there was a round of introduction by all the participants and the following meeting objectives were shared to all the participants-

1. To organise state level meetings with groups and organisations with whom there could be a possibility to have partnerships to initiate work on men's role as responsible fathers.

2. To form a core group which will undertake the leadership to take forward the initiatives and play a major role in developing and starting the campaign.
3. To discuss and make action plans work at the intervention level of those government and non government organisation with a child rights perspective in the state.
4. To discuss on the initiatives, planning, coordination and structure of the different initiatives.

After clarification of the objectives by Virendra, Satish from CHSJ spoke about the historical background on gender equality, violence against women, and women's health rights. He also shared CHSJ's past experiences and successes and clarified the vision to work on men's role in order to secure child rights. This was followed by watching films five of CHSJ's films based on previous work with men and then a group discussion.

The group was divided into three sub groups, as per the nearest locations namely, Baghelkhand, Chambal Bundelkhand and Bhopal(along with nearby places). Each sub group was facilitated by Virendra Rai, Satish Singh and Shahbaz Khan respectively. Three sub- groups discussed by sharing ideologically with each other for almost two hours on the following topics:-

1. What are the issues related to Child rights?
2. What are the different kinds of interventions being done?
3. What are the beliefs and local statements that affect Child Rights and Gender?

The groups had to discuss under the heads of 1) Issues related to child rights 2) Intervention needed to be done 3) Existing beliefs. After the long discussion each group came up with a list of issues which was presented among the larger group and discussed upon.

Satish then combined all the issues that were raised into the following points:-

1. There is a need to highlight the underlined factor of sexual abuse on male children.
2. Public advocacy to be done for coming up with a child centered law which will address violence against children.
3. We talk about rights but work as social workers.
4. Mentioned strategies are activist centered. Need to define the role of PRI, VEC, community based organisations and family for accountability focusing on the role of the father.
5. There is lack of alliance/ common platform among different groups such as feminists, human rights, child rights, dalit rights etc. coordination work needs to be done among all these groups.
6. Emphasis on working towards social as well as public accountability.
7. History of child rights in Madhya Pradesh needs to be reviewed(Literature review).
8. Need to look into the current picture of the role of men as responsible fathers.

Based on the above points activities that can take place at different levels-

State level

- Formation of a core group at the state level
- Preparation of references
- Public accountability
- Exchange of knowledge in and out of the state

Community level

- NGOs should add more people from different stakeholder groups
- One of the major tasks should be to establish platforms for starting change processes where men are becoming responsible fathers.
- Conducting campaigns- Devendra Bhadoria was asked to discuss regarding the planning and preparation of the campaign.

Some of the points that came up from the groups and were mutually accepted by all for the campaign were such-

- Violence against children(girls and boys)
- Sexual violence/ sexual exploitation
- Sex ratio
- Discrimination against girl child
- Child marriage

After the discussion a state level core group was formed which had the following framework-

Organiser- Devendra Bhadoria

Bhopal area

1. Prarthana Mishra
2. Dr. Sen
3. Rekha Gujre

Bangelkhand

1. Arun Tyagi
2. Savitri Singh
3. Sushil

Bundelkhand

1. Raghvendra
2. Ajay

A campaign was planned addressing the issues of education, nutrition/health and gender equality for the month of January/ February 2013 and its planning activities will start from December, 2012. The focussed issues will be

- One of the major tasks should be to establish platforms for starting change processes where men are becoming responsible fathers.
- Ensuring public and social accountability.
- Alliance building among different groups such as feminists, human rights, child rights, dalit rights etc. and engage in coordination among the alliance.
- In context of MP do a study/research(In the realm of child rights- exploring culture, current status, interventions, gap,etc)
- To identify people working in this area and build their capacities.

There was a discussion on the National networks and a listing was done of all the networks. 'Men's action for equity' was decided by consensus of all participants as the name for the MP network. Apart from the network name a name was also decided for the community campaign which was "Bal Adhikar Sanghrakshan ke liye Pitritva abhiyan."

Capacity building

- A training of trainers workshop was planned for the 27th to 29th October, 2012.
- A capacity building workshop was planned for the tentative date-15th to 20th December,2012

Establishing of the campaign

The organisations in the partnership committed towards establishing and expanding the campaign at their level across 380 villages. Some of their plans are-

1. Chalbal/ Bundelkhand area- 110 villages,55000+5500 (Campaign + Phamplet)

Guna- 30 villages

Morena- 40 villages

Tikamgarh- 20 villages

Shivpuri- 20 villages

2. Bhopal area- 100 villages and 20 city areas, 60000+6000(Campaign+ Phamplet)

Chhindwada – 40 villages

Bhopal – 20 city areas

Betul- 40 villages

Raisen- 10 villages

Vidisha- 10 villages

3. Baghelkhand area- 170 villages, 85000+8500(Campaign + Phamplet)

Sidhi- 40 villages

Satna- 40 villages

Rewa- 30 villages

Anpapur- 40 villages

Shahdol- 20 villages

