

बाल विवाह मुक्त भारत CHILD MARRIAGE FREE INDIA

सुरक्षित बचपन, सुरक्षित भारत | SAFE CHILDHOOD, SAFE INDIA

About your Organization

Bundelkhand Sewa Sansthan (BSS) is dedicated to the development of the deprived people ,backward and poor rural women, people with disabilities, child labour, ,victims of trafficking and violence for Health,Education,water ,sanitation,hygiene, Family Planning and safe abortion , Food, Nutrition and social security,Sustainable agriculture of Lalitpur district Uttar Pradesh. The organization is working on the following issue of Child Marriage, Child Trafficking, Child Labour and Child Sexual Abuse, Legal and counselling support to POCSO Case victims. The organization participated and organized Child Marriage Free India Campaign in Jhansi **district of UP** covering over 2 Block and 150 villages under the project Access to Justice Project Phase Two with support of **Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation** .

The Campaign Activities included:

1.Awareness for elimination of child labour, child marriage , child sexual abuse, child trafficking to Anganwari worker, Adolescent group, Community others Male and Female .School teachers and Students,

2. June To November Action Month -Bundelkhand Sewa Sansthan conducted the action month with the objective of Child labour Free Jhansi and, Rescued 33 children from shops and Dhaba's and 6 FIRs got registered and children were present before CWC and sent to Home . The campaign was conducted in collaboration with Police, and child line departments and covered by newspaper with an outreach of 40,000 directly and 20000 through online.

3. 16 October 2023 - Child Marriage Free India Campaign Event – The campaign event was conducted in more than 150 village in collaboration with all line departments (ICDS, Gram Panchayat, Adolescent girl group, community people, school teacher and students , Government officials)

Campaign highlights: Candle light and Torch Fire Rally ,Prabhat Ferri in 150 villages villages, Signature Campaign Gram Panchayat Level to District Level covering all district offices, Poster and Banner release and distribution, Book Release of "When Children have Children." by DDO ,DPO,and also book was given to DM,SDM, DCPU,SP,DSP, ICDS Child marriage survivor.

4.Jagrukta Yatra Rath was Flagged off by DM,SDM,SP,DSP, DCPU,ADM, ICDS, DPO , GOVT Officials and Media persons . TO aware community for elimination of child labour, child marriage , child sexual abuse, child trafficking .

5.Nukkad Natak and Puppet show in all the 150 village for awareness to community for elimination of child labour, child marriage , child sexual abuse, child trafficking

6. Identification of child labour and children out of school done for admission in school.

7. Parents UNDERTAKING has take for not to Marry their Girl before 18 years of age and Boys before 21 years of age

8 ALL the Mukhiya and Sarpanch have taken PLEDGE and Signed for making Child Marriage Free Panchayat

9 District,Block,Panchayat and Ward level Child Protection Committee (CPC) has Formed and their capacity has been done ,

10. Wall writing and hoarding at important place like school ,panchayat bhawan ,water tank, temple, masjid for child marriage free INDIA

Campaign Photos: SENDED

Campaign Media Coverage: SENDED

And other activities etc. SENDED

Background

Child marriage is not just an age-old social evil, but also a heinous crime that robs children of their childhood. Child marriage is a “crime against children” that violates basic human rights, minor girls are forced to marry and live a life of mental trauma, physical and biological stress, domestic violence including limited access to education and increased vulnerability to domestic violence. The consequences of child marriage are severe and extensive. Some of the specific consequences include: early pregnancies leading to complications and higher rate of maternal mortality and death of infants, malnutrition among both the infant and the mother, increased vulnerability to reproductive health, disruption in girl’s education and thereby reduction in opportunities of her personal and professional development, domestic violence and abuse, limited decision making powers in the household, and mental health issues.

India’s Census 2011 revealed 12 million children were married before attaining the legal age, of which 5.2 million were girls. Globally, child marriage is identified as a crime and a menace that needs to be eliminated. It finds space in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, under target 5.3 of Goal 5 that states elimination of all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation by 2025.

The latest National Family Health Survey (2019-21) shows that although there is a drop in the overall rate of child marriages, from 26.8% in the National Family Health Survey (NFHS 4) to 23.3% in NFHS-5, it is still high despite laws, program’s and schemes in place to address the issue.

Child Marriage Free India Campaign

Understanding the seriousness of the issue, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in W.P. Civil 382 of 2013 pronounced that the sexual intercourse committed by the husband upon his wife being under the age of 18 years with or without her consent can be constituted as rape. To address this, the most definitive and audacious commitment to end child marriage was made with the launch of [Child Marriage Free India campaign](#).

[Child Marriage Free India \(CMFI\)](#) is a nationwide campaign led by women leaders and a coalition of more than 160 NGOs spanning more than 300 districts working to eliminate child marriage in India. CMFI is working to attain the tipping point of child marriage, after which the society does not accept this evil practice and that will happen when the prevalence of child marriage is brought down to 5.5% by 2030, from the current national prevalence rate of 23.3%. This is being done by initially targeting 257 high-prevalence districts and gradually focusing on all the districts of the country.

Child marriage results in child rape, resulting in child pregnancy, and in a large number of cases, may lead to child deaths. For decades, we have been losing generations of our children to child marriage. The [Child Marriage Free India campaign](#) has received extended support from various Departments and Institutions of over 28 States. So far, across India more than 5 crore people have taken the pledge to end child marriage over the last one year through the efforts of the [Child Marriage Free India Campaign](#).

Know more about the **Child Marriage Free India (CMFI) Campaign**: <https://www.childmarriagefreeindia.org/>



THE GOAL

Reduction of Child Marriage to 5.5% by 2030

as proposed in WHEN CHILDREN HAVE CHILDREN - TIPPING POINT TO END CHILD MARRIAGE
(Ribhu, 2023)

DEMANDS OF THE CAMPAIGN



Ensure **access to free and quality education** for all children till class 12 (or 18 years of age, whichever is later)



Dedicated **budgetary allocation** for schemes and infrastructure for education and vocational training till class 12



Enable **real-time attendance data analysis** and intervention when irregularities occur



Effective **implementation and enforcement of laws** against child marriage for all sections of society

The Way Forward: PICKET Strategy to End Child Marriage

Addressing the issue of child marriage, requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach of different government departments, institutions, statutory bodies, and civil society organisations.

For India as a nation to end child marriage by 2030, the PICKET Strategy as proposed in **WHEN CHILDREN HAVE CHILDREN - TIPPING POINT TO END CHILD MARRIAGE** (Ribhu, 2023)



Policy for prevention, protection, prosecution: It is important to ensure parity in the enforcement of laws, and special laws must prevail over customary or personal laws.

The effective implementation and enforcement of existing laws and policies that prohibit child marriage along with swift and decisive justice delivery mechanism are most important steps in checking the prevalence of this crime against children. When prevention of crime is incorporated as a policy, it ensures that the state machinery as well as citizens feel responsible and accountable to prevent child marriage.



Investment in infrastructure, incentivisation and institutions: Investing in child protection institutions, education, healthcare, justice delivery, and rehabilitation framework builds layers which work to prevent and protect children from abuse and exploitation apart from providing legal and mental health support for girls in child marriages.

Infrastructure to support girls at imminent risks of marriages, like institutional alternative care and residential educational facilities are urgently needed to stop their marriages, abuse and exploitation, and provide them with resilient alternatives.

Incentives in the form of conditional cash transfers have shown impact in communities to keep girls in schools delaying marriage decisions. Universalization of these to at-risk families has the potential to stop child marriages and trafficking and abuse of girls for both labour and sexual exploitation.



Convergence of departments, governments and stakeholders in the community: All schemes and interventions geared towards the protection, prevention, education, health and awareness of children and adults affected by child marriage need to operate in sync with each other. Child participation and empowerment is at the core of such convergence aimed at child centric community development.



Knowledge which equips all the stakeholders to combat child marriage: Enhancing knowledge empowers children, especially boys, to say no to child marriage. When a young man refuses to marry a minor girl, he breaks the cycle of generations of conditioning. It also gives agency to girls to raise their voice and complain when they are forced for marriage against their will or in violation of law. When children, parents, community members and stakeholders participate in decision making equipped with correct and latest knowledge, it can lead to collective action to prevent child marriage.



Ecosystem where child marriage does not thrive: Central to the PICKET strategy is an ecosystem where child marriage is non-existent. In a society where child marriage is pervasive, multi-pronged intervention at all levels is required. To change the societal perception, behaviour and acceptance towards child marriage, the response at scale requires an ecosystem level retaliation.



Technology for monitoring and deterrence to combat child marriage: Enabling real-time attendance data analysis will help reduce child trafficking, child marriage and drop-out rate in schools. Different states are already using technology for awareness campaigns, supporting and monitoring programme interventions, augmenting education and skills outreach. The use of machine learning and artificial intelligence needs explorations in support of child protection and creating a safe and harm-free ecosystem for children.

Case Study – Preventing Child Marriage

[EXAMPLE] Entangled in the clutches of child marriage with the promise of love rescued

Varsha: A Triumph Over CHILD MARRIAGE

Code Name: Varsha

Father: Nashram Adivasi

Age: 17

Background: Varsha, a young girl with the code name Varsha, is the daughter of Nashram Adivasi, residing in the village of Garhmau in the Badagaon block of Jhansi district. At 17 years old, she hails from a family where her father toils as a laborer to make ends meet. Unfortunately, the family faces financial hardships due to the lack of sustainable livelihood options. Despite her potential, Varsha's education was neglected by her parents, contributing to their lack of awareness about social issues such as child marriage. Tragically, they arranged for Varsha, still a minor, to be married off to a 23-year-old man.

The intervention began when community social workers from Bundelkhand Sewa Sansthan were conducting a household survey in Garhmau village. During their visit, they encountered Varsha's family and learned of the impending marriage. Varsha's aunt corroborated the information, confirming the imminent ceremony. Observing Varsha's youthful appearance, the team suspected her to be a minor.

With swift action, the workers requested Varsha's Aadhar card from her aunt. Upon inquiry about her school records, Varsha revealed her illiteracy. Armed with this information, the team promptly reported the case to the coordinator and assistant on June 1st.

Intervention and Legal Measures: Upon receiving the report, immediate steps were taken. On June 9th, formal written notifications were sent to the District Probation Officer and the District Magistrate to halt the child marriage. The Child Welfare Committee swiftly acted on the information and alerted the nearest police and Child Line team to intervene.

The police and Child Line team acted promptly, thwarting the marriage on the same day. Varsha, along with her parents, was brought before the Child Welfare Committee for appropriate action. The committee educated the parents about the legal repercussions of child marriage and emphasized the importance of waiting until Varsha reached the age of 18.

A Turning Point: The intervention proved to be a turning point for Varsha and her family. Through counseling, Varsha expressed her discontent with the forced marriage. Witnessing the legal ramifications and societal repercussions, Varsha's parents submitted a written undertaking to the Child Welfare Committee, pledging not to proceed with the marriage until Varsha reached adulthood.

Varsha's Joyous Outcome: The decision brought immense relief to Varsha, who had feared the loss of her childhood. The news of the halted marriage resonated throughout the community, sparking discussions in every household. This successful intervention marked a historic moment, showcasing the power of legal measures in combating child marriage.

The Impact: The news of Varsha's case spread far and wide, garnering attention from local newspapers and authorities. Varsha, now empowered with the opportunity to pursue her interests, is currently engaged in learning sewing and embroidery work, symbolizing a beacon of hope amidst adversity.

This case serves as a testament to the importance of vigilant community efforts, legal interventions, and awareness campaigns in safeguarding the rights and well-being of minors like Varsha.