

An Initiative of Development Focus
& Three Clusters of 20 Partner Organisations



Experiences from Jharkhand and Odisha on Child Marriage Program, India





#917, 3rd C Cross, 9th B Main
Kalyan Nagar, 1st Block
Bangalore 560043, Karnataka, INDIA
Email: df@devfocus.in
Phone: +91 80 2545 1823 / 4123 1813



An Initiative of Development Focus
& Three Clusters of 20 Partner Organisations



Experiences from Jharkhand and Odisha on Child Marriage Program, India

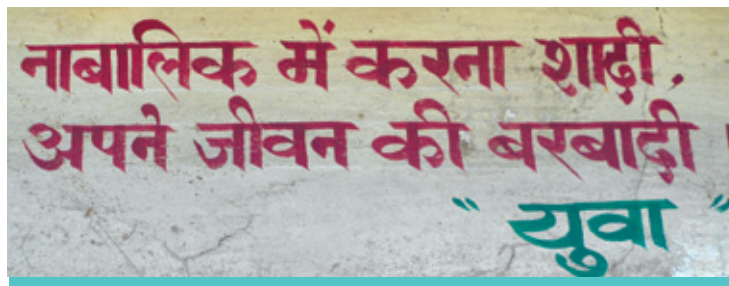


Contents



| | |
|---------|----------------------------|
| Page 1 | Preface |
| Page 2 | Acknowledgments |
| Page 4 | Acronyms and Abbreviations |
| Page 5 | Executive Summary |
| Page 8 | Introduction |
| Page 12 | Processes |
| Page 16 | Activities |
| Page 18 | At the Ground Zero |
| Page 23 | Process |
| Page 27 | Case Studies |
| Page 36 | Lessons Learnt |
| Page 38 | Moving ahead |
| Page 41 | Annexures |

Preface



Development Focus (DF) is a registered trust based out of Bangalore, focused on making Education relevant for children and youth by empowering communities to claim their rights and entitlements in education and livelihood. Working with 20 partner organizations in Jharkhand and Orissa, the program on Child Marriage has helped sensitize nearly 12000 adolescent youth on SRHR and the ill effects of early marriage. Motivated by the youth clubs in their villages and the trained 'Yuva Mithras' who facilitated their awareness and deliberations on the subject, the program has successfully initiated a silent campaign within the communities, to respect the sexual and health rights of youth, their livelihood aspirations and desire to marry at an appropriate age. It is heartening to note that the program has provided a platform for the youth-girls and boys to express themselves and aspire for a good life, gradually acknowledged and supported in their choices by their parents.

This document is about the journey of Development Focus and 20 partner Organizations in steering and implementing the program, documenting the results observed and challenges faced and lessons learnt. It is developed with a view to be used a reference document, for application in similar initiatives on SRHR and Child Marriage.

The publication unfolds an interesting narrative of the program: beginning from the initial conceptualization to the participatory planning that helped nuance the approach and strategies to the local context and challenges. It revolves around the youth- bubbling with energy, who through their expression of ideas & dreams and whole hearted participation made the collaborative venture a fulfilling one for all. The narrative itself is organized in sections, facilitating the reader ease through the document and end up with a comprehensive understanding of the overall program journey.

DF hopes this document will hugely value add to the plethora of stories and impact trends distinctly visible in the project, and that the experiences from the program initiatives will generate and add to the public discourse on SRHR and Child Marriage, positively influencing: the civil society, media and government –towards suitable programs and policies.

Acknowledgments



The collective journey of Development Focus (DF) and partner organizations actually began in March 2014, when Edukans Foundation, Netherlands sounded out DF on the possibility of support for a SRHR and Child Marriage program and our partners began collecting information on the Child Marriage and SRHR situation.

The inspiring richness of the journey and the satisfying results that followed was made possible by the support, encouragement, hard work and commitment of several individuals and institutions along the way.

The enthusiasm and energy of the youth was the spark that burned brightly through the journey. To them, the facilitating Yuva Mithras who volunteered their time, and to the parental community who ultimately accepted the need for such an initiative, we owe our thanks and appreciation.

We place on record our gratitude to Edukans Foundation, Netherlands, for their trust and generous support that made this program possible and helped touched the lives of youth in the states of Jharkhand and Orissa.

Our interactions with Simavi, Netherlands (program Consortium Lead) and their Program Coordinators in India, and implementing partners of the consortium in India- VHAI, Orissa, Restless Development and CINI, enriched our understanding of this complex and culturally sensitive issue - Thank You.

Several other friends, associates, consultants, print and electronic media, made this program journey effective and efficient, by their support and participation.

Dr. (Mrs.) Biraj Laxmi Sarangi did an admirable job of orienting the Chief Functionaries of our partners on the culturally sensitive issue of SRHR and Child Marriage, and the nuances of addressing it holistically. Ms. Srabani Das and later on Mr. Pankaj Kumar Gupta and Ms. Nasreen Jamal did a good job of building the subject understanding and program management competencies of 20 Project Coordinators. Doctors and other medical professional from the 12 districts spread across West Singhbhum, East Singhbhum, Saraikala, Lohardaga, Latehar and Palamu in Jharkhand, Boudh, Bargarh, Bolangir, Sambalpur, Sundargarh and Keonjhar in Odisha played a crucial role in sensitizing the adolescent youth and Yuva Mithras (Youth Friends) on SRHR and ill effects of Child Marriage- covering the medical, psychological and social aspects comprehensively. Thank you all.

Collectors of project districts; several functionaries, departmental heads, key staff of government departments actively supported the implementation of the project by their participation in workshop/ events and sharing of collaborative ideas. School teachers, Village Health workers, Anganwadi workers, staff of Child & Women development, Child protection, Social Welfare recognized the efficacy of the program strategy and supported Yuva Mithras and project staff in their tasks. We are grateful to each one of them.

The actual hard work was done by our partner organizations in Jharkhand and Orissa. Their diffident steps quickly translated to galloping runs as they worked hard to achieve the planned outputs and outcomes. We record our appreciation for the commitment and untiring work of the staff and chief functionaries of the implementing organizations and Cluster Leads.

Thanks to Pranav Pratyush Das who led the documentation process along with his team very professionally. Appreciate the support of Ms. Mallika Badrinath, for managing the design, layouts and edits in the document, Mr. Ratan Lal for photo credits and Aditya printers for printing work.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues in the team and our Board of Trustees for their support and hard work often silently and from behind the scene.

On behalf of the DF team
Mohan Paul Prabhu
Executive Director

Acronyms and Abbreviations



EF- Edukans

| | |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| DF | Development Focus |
| CMPI | Child Marriage Program India |
| AIDS | Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome |
| AHS | Annual Health Survey |
| ANM | Auxiliary Nursing Midwife |
| APL | Above Poverty Line |
| ARSH | Adolescent Reproductive |
| BPL | Below Poverty Line |
| CBO | Community Based Organization |
| CDPO | Child Development Projector Officer |
| CRC | Convention of Child Rights |
| DLHS | District Level Household Survey |
| HIV | Human Immuno Deficiency Virus |
| ICDS | Integrated Child Development Scheme |
| IEC | Information Education Communication |
| KGBV | Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya |
| NFHS | National Family Health Survey |
| NGO | Non-Government Organisation |
| NHE | Nutrition & Health Education |
| PCMA | Prohibition of Child Marriage Act |
| RTI | Reproductive Tract Infection |
| SC | Schedule Caste |
| ST | Schedule Tribe |
| STD | Sexually Transmitted Disease |
| SSA | Sarv Siksha Abhiyan |
| STI | Sexually Transmitted Infection |
| TFR | Total Fertility Rate |
| UN | United Nations |

Executive Summary



One of the important hurdles on the path of faster social development in India is the prevalence of the practice of early marriage. This is particularly so in the states of Jharkhand and Orissa. To help address this situation, Development Focus in association with 20 partner organizations and the support of Edukans Foundation Netherlands, launched the Child Marriage Program India (CMPI) in 12 districts of Jharkhand and Odisha. These two states are considered to have very high instances of marriage of underage girls in the country.

Planning for the project started in July 2014 although actual implementation began from September 2014. The Goal was to reduce child marriages by 50% and strengthen SRHR among adolescents and youth, by the year 2015. The strategies and interventions of the program were strategized and planned with the objective of achieving the results within a short duration of one year. Further to facilitate its sustainability, the communities were trained to propagate the message and positive effect by continuing the interventions in the long run.

Development Focus and Partner Organizations initiated the Child Marriage project in Jharkhand and Odisha, on the foundation of a good rapport with the communities and committed community organizations in these villages. These results itself being a direct outcome of a successful six year project initiative focusing on relevant and quality education and vocational training for thousands of marginalised children and youth.

The broad objectives of the program included, improvement in the knowledge of adolescents and youths on SRHR; improved access to SRHR services for youth; enhancing their access to formal education ensuring the retention amongst adolescent's girls; educating and mobilizing the communities towards change in behavioral, traditional and religious practices; influencing government policies, institutional mechanisms and services on Child Marriage and SRHR.

DF along with the Cluster Leads selected partner organizations through a participatory assessment process based on the just concluded 'Basic Education Program', while following the proven Cluster approach.



| State | Name of the Cluster | Lead NGO |
|-----------|--|----------|
| Orissa | Western Orissa Child Marriage Prevention cluster (WOCMP) | YCDA |
| | Siksha Chetna | ORES |
| Jharkhand | DAHAR | LGSS |

The year long activities mainly focused on mobilizing the communities around the issue of early marriage practices. The communities were trained on the ill effects of early marriage, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and efforts were made to increase the access of education to girl students of the area. In this run voluntary groups were formed to further mobilize the target groups in selected villages known as Yuva Mitras. The program focused on young adolescent girls at large, hence married women along with unmarried ones formed part of the beneficiaries of the educational training on sexual health. At district level, adequate emphasis was laid on the implementation of child marriage related laws through rigorous advocacy with the government departments/agencies.

The most important aspect of bringing the prevailing rates of early marriages in the program areas was a drastic change in the behavioral

pattern of the rural communities. Therefore, the interventions of the program were aimed at addressing the issues of health, education, law along with the socio-economic and cultural factors. 2,400 Yuva Mitras from 400 villages were the key people in the project.

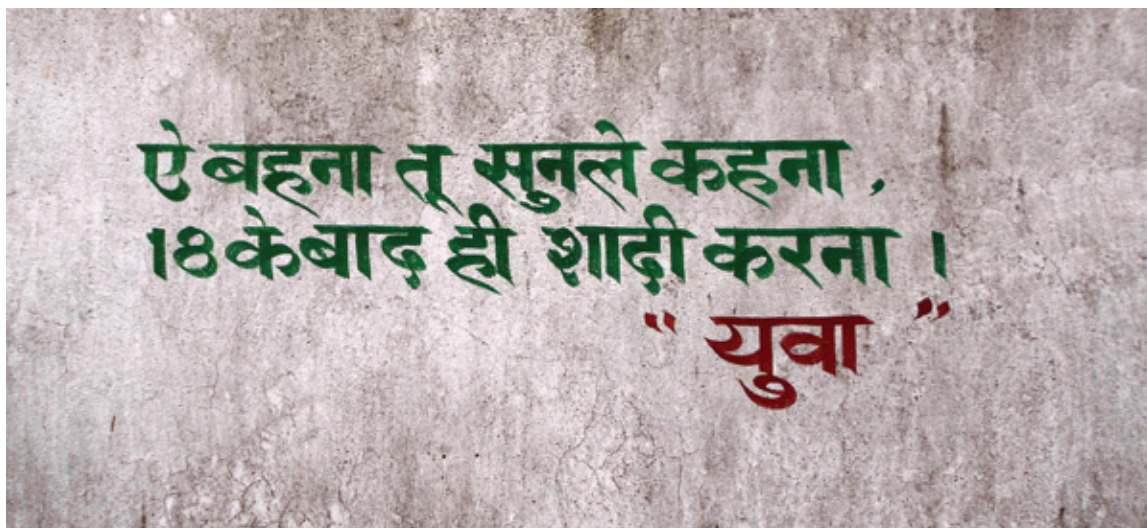
Yuva Mitras comprised of three parents and three young people (4 girls/women and two men/ boys) in each village. They were motivated to volunteer for the key role of ‘Change Agents’ in the villages, facilitating sensitization on child marriage and SRHR and training activities in the communities.

The Yuva Mitras coordinated 800 youth groups across from 400 villages in Jharkhand and Odisha whose main agenda was sensitization on SRHR and child marriage.

The most important intervention strategies included:

- ◆ Empowerment of girls -adolescent and youth
- ◆ Enhance the access to formal education
- ◆ Increasing the involvement of local communities to combat child marriage and development
- ◆ Enhance the implementation of legislation and policy formulation towards early marriage.





Nearing the completion of the scheduled duration, the project has received high praise from far and wide, for the phenomenal impact it has created in most of the villages. It is also noted that villages with high incidence of early marriages have not witnessed such incidents during the project, a credit worthy achievement.

It is significant to point out that people in the program area are now aware of the law and legal implications associated with underage marriage. The fact that girls below 18 years of age and boys below 21 years of age should not be married is equally well known, as well as the punishment for the act of Rs. 1 lakh penalty and 2 year imprisonment. Families are shunning the practise, either due to awareness or because of fear of the consequences.

One of the key focus of the program was to educate adolescents about SRHR, which has led to girls becoming more confident and motivated to learn more about the topic. Prior to this, they had limited source of information regarding this and also it was not reliable. However detailed instruction regarding SRHR helped them to

understand the issue better giving them the confidence to share the experience with their peers and friends. This new layer of confidence helped in inculcating better decision-making abilities among the girls benefitted through CMPI. They have become serious about their careers as they are free of the shackles of early marriage.

Dropouts have been mainstreamed and those who are not returning to studies have been provided vocational training by linking them with other programs. This has increased the number of literate and skilful youngsters in the area. A liaison system was established with the government officials so that more and more cases of child marriage from village-level could be brought to their attention, which would help in their timely prevention.

Another significant outcome of the programs is that it has influenced and impacted in reducing Early Marriage practices in neighbourhood villages. Residents of such villages have started following the norms and principles propagated through the project.

Introduction



UNICEF defines child marriage as marriage before 18 years of age and considers this practice as a violation of human rights. The harmful consequences of child marriage are segregation from family and friends, limiting the child's interactions with the community and peers, lack of opportunities for education.

Girl children often face situations of bonded labor, enslavement, commercial sexual exploitation and violence as a result of child marriage. Because of lack of protection child brides are often exposed to serious health risks, early pregnancy, and various STDs especially HIV/AIDS. There are many reasons why parents' consent to child marriage, such as economic necessity, male protection for their daughters, child bearing, or oppressive traditional values and norms etc.

Globally more than one third of the women between the ages 20-24 are married before they reach the age of 18. Approximately 14 million adolescent girls between the ages 15-19 give birth each year. Girls in this age group are twice more likely to die during child birth than women in their twenties. Rate of child marriage is higher in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Child marriage or early marriages has many socio economic and physical implications on the young

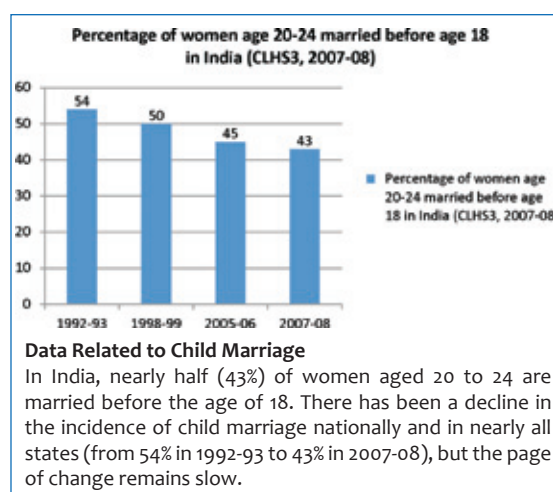
couple and especially on the girl's health. States where child marriage is most prevalent are the ones also with high population. Child marriage is low among women who have had access to higher education and secondary education. Marriages in India are often unregistered, and are socially binding if not legally, which makes it hard to survey.

In 2006 the government of India updated and amended existing legislations on child marriage and parliament passed the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.

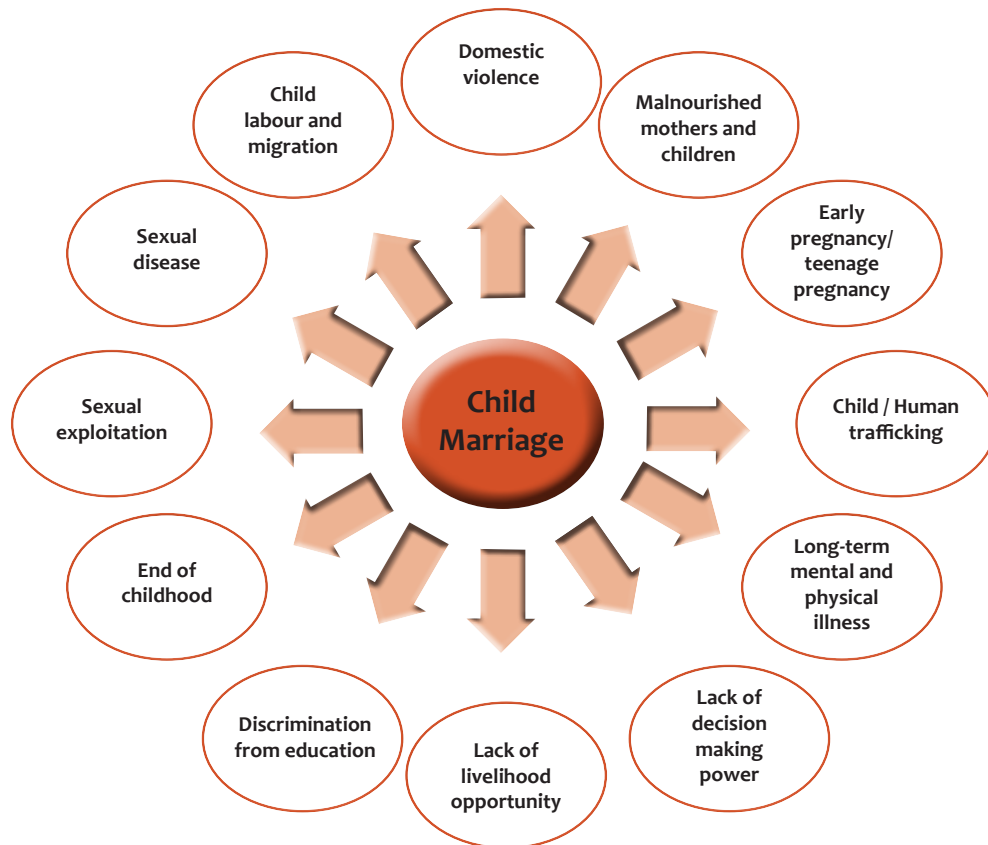
Millennium Development Goals

Child marriage constitutes an obstacle to nearly every development goal:

- Eradicate Poverty and Hunger (Goal 1): poverty is both a cause and consequence of child marriage;
- Achieve Universal Primary Education (Goal 2): Girls are compelled to drop out of school in order to get married;
- Promote Gender Equality (Goal 3): Girls face economic and cultural pressure to drop out of school, and face social isolation;
- Reduce Child Mortality (Goal 4): Babies born to adolescent mother have higher risk of dying;
- Improve Maternal Health (Goal 5): Pregnancy at a young age jeopardizes the health of young mothers; 5
- Protection from Violence (Millennium Declaration): Girls may be exposed to violence when married at a young age into the groom's household with little decision-making power.



Harmful Effects of Child Marriage:



• Child Marriage and Health

Child marriage is associated with several health risks for the young mother, as early marriage may translate into repeated pregnancies at a tender age when the body is not fully prepared for child bearing.

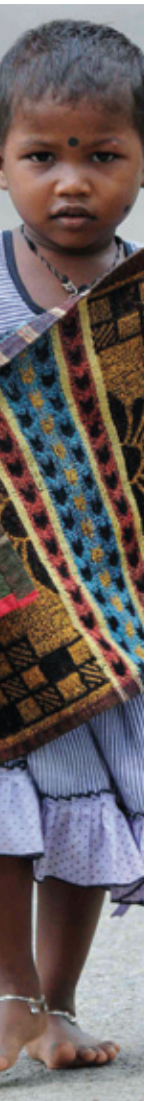
Girls in the age group of 15-19 are more likely (66.6%) to experience delivery complications compared to 30-34 year-old women (59.7%) and neonatal, infant and child mortality rates are much higher for younger girls. HIV/AIDS infection is higher among young girls as their negotiation skills and experience to ensure a healthy sexual life are less developed.

Evidence suggests that children of young mothers are less healthy. For instance, for young children under the age of 5 years, the risk of malnutrition (stunted growth and underweight) is higher in children born to young mothers (married when they were still children themselves – i.e. below the age of 18) than in those born to women married after the legal age (The effect of maternal child marriage on morbidity and mortality of children

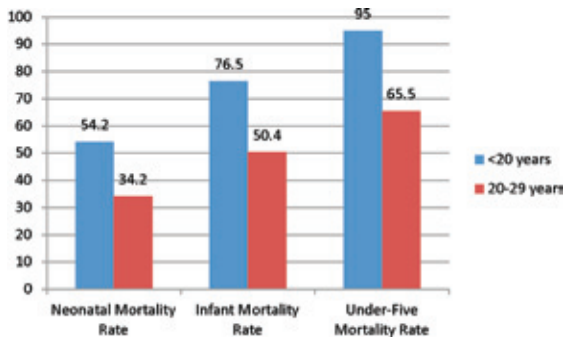
under 5 in India: cross sectional study of a national representative sample).

Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006 - Snapshot

- The legal age for marriage is 18 years for females and 21 years for males;
- Child marriage is an offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment, which may extend to 2 years, or with fine up to Rs. 1 Lakh, or both;
- Child marriage is a cognizable and non-bailable offence;
- Child marriages are voidable and can be annulled;
- Persons who can be punished: those performing child marriages; male adults above 18 years marrying a child; and persons responsible for the child (i.e. parent, guardian promoting, permitting, participating or failing to prevent a child marriage).



Child mortality rates by age-group of mothers in India - 2005-2006



• Child Marriage and Education

Investing in a girls' education is perceived as a waste of resources since families believe that a girl's education will only benefit her husband's household, and not the family of origin. Girls are married off to the groom's family and as a consequence they drop out of school.

In urban India, only 50 percent of girls between 15-17 years of age attend school. The situation is even

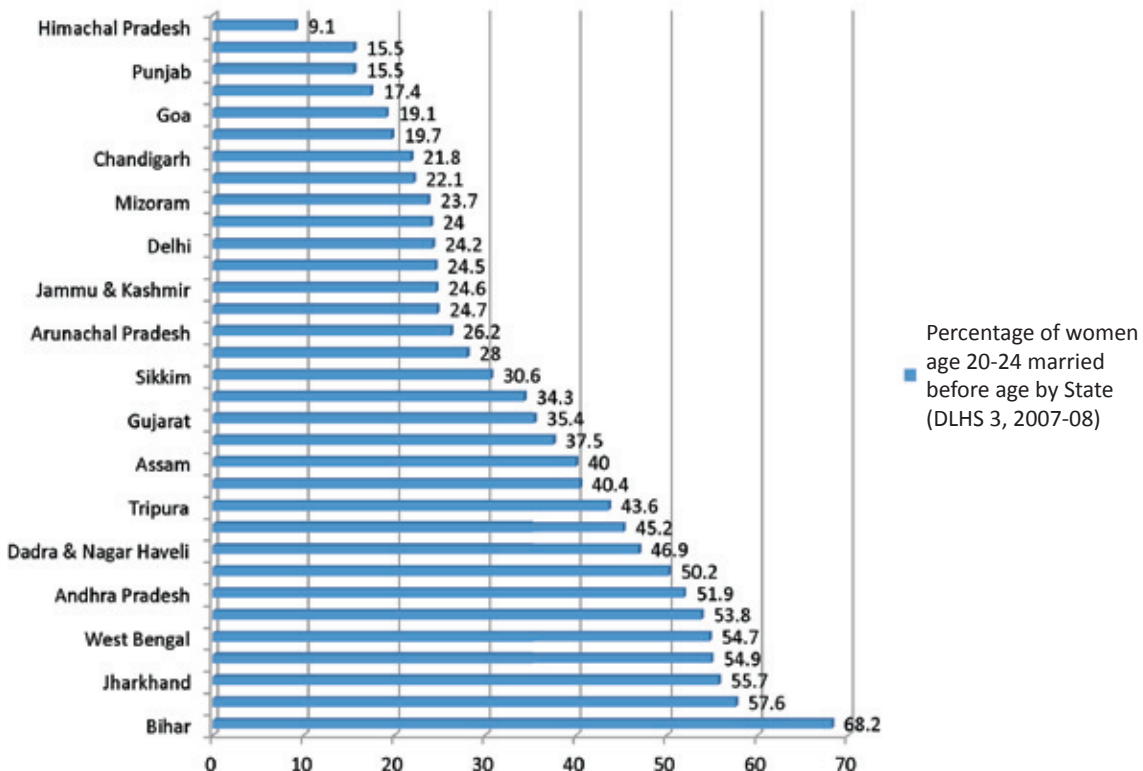
more precarious in rural areas, where less than a third of the girls in the same age group attend school. For instance 5.8 per cent of girls in the age group 6-17 years in rural areas dropped out of school as they got married (NFHS 2005-2006).

• Child Marriage and Protection

Girls who are married at a younger age are more likely to be victims of violence and abuse and are often forced to obey by the household rules as they have less power and negotiating skills. They are usually devoted to household chores with limited alternative means to earn a living. For both boys and girls, child marriage implies no freedom of choice regarding their future.

Situation in Jharkhand and Odisha

Percentage of women aged 20-24 married before age by State (DLHS 3, 2007-08)



Child marriage is a common phenomenon in tribal areas of Jharkhand and Odisha. Girls are married before the age of 18 years due to various customs and beliefs. The high numbers of child marriages in these areas are clearly reflected in the recent data released by the government of India.

The child marriage situation in these states is also reflected in the nutrition and health status of adolescent and women. Both the states have high rates of anemic adolescents and women coupled with increased number of maternal and

child deaths. These are some of the direct effects of child marriage seen in these areas.

Due to problems like unemployment and extreme poverty adolescent girls and women are pushed into the vicious cycle of early marriage, multiple births, high infant mortality and maternal mortality. Due to the absence of sufficient primary health care services and low nutritional status, women and children are vulnerable to ill health. People resort to do seasonal and temporary migration to other cities and towns to earn their

Odisha Scenario

Percentage of child marriage by district of Orissa state

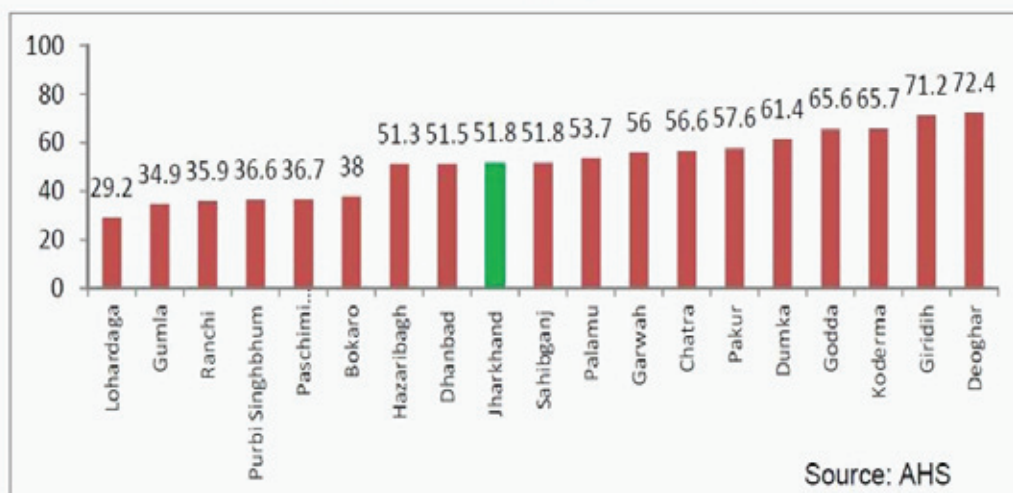
| State / District | Marriages among Females below legal age (18 years) (%)# | | | Marriages among Males below legal age (21 years) (%)# | | | Currently Married Women aged 20-24 years married before legal age | | |
|-----------------------|---|------------|------------|---|------------|------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| | Total | Rural | Urban | Total | Rural | Urban | Total | Rural | Urban |
| Odisha | 4.6 | 5.0 | 2.7 | 5.4 | 6.0 | 2.9 | 28.8 | 29.3 | 25.6 |
| Anugul | 6.3 | 6.6 | 4.9 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 2.9 | 27.9 | 27.7 | 29.4 |
| Balangir | 2.6 | 2.8 | 0.0 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 0.0 | 18.0 | 17.9 | 18.2 |
| Baleshwar | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 21.9 | 20.9 | 31.0 |
| Bargarh | 4.8 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 24.1 | 24.2 | 23.1 |
| Baudh | 6.7 | 6.7 | - | 7.5 | 8.0 | - | 38.5 | 38.7 | - |
| Bhadrak | 1.4 | 1.2 | 2.7 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.9 | 16.5 | 15.5 | 22.0 |
| Cuttack | 1.0 | 1.3 | 0.2 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 15.6 | 15.4 | 16.2 |
| Debagarh | 2.5 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 5.3 | 5.4 | 4.2 | 24.6 | 24.4 | 26.7 |
| Dhenkanal | 3.9 | 4.3 | 0.0 | 3.9 | 4.2 | 1.3 | 16.2 | 16.9 | 7.1 |
| Gajapati | 9.5 | 10.9 | 2.4 | 7.8 | 9.0 | 2.1 | 43.4 | 44.8 | 29.6 |
| Ganjam | 7.4 | 8.1 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.3 | 0.8 | 38.0 | 39.2 | 25.9 |
| Jagatsinghapur | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 15.1 | 13.4 | 24.8 |
| Jajapur | 2.3 | 2.4 | - | 1.8 | 1.9 | - | 16.4 | 16.4 | - |
| Jharsuguda | 1.7 | 1.2 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 1.9 | 3.2 | 15.4 | 11.6 | 21.9 |
| Kalahandi | 4.0 | 4.3 | - | 8.9 | 9.5 | - | 31.0 | 31.6 | - |
| Kandhamal | 6.0 | 6.1 | 4.8 | 7.6 | 8.2 | 2.9 | 36.5 | 37.3 | 27.3 |
| Kendrapara | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 8.8 |
| Kendujhar | 7.4 | 8.1 | 4.4 | 6.9 | 7.8 | 3.1 | 29.4 | 29.5 | 29.0 |
| Khordha | 2.3 | 2.9 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 2.4 | 1.8 | 23.1 | 20.7 | 26.1 |
| Koraput | 13.5 | 14.2 | 10.9 | 23.2 | 25.7 | 13.5 | 53.7 | 55.6 | 40.6 |
| Malkangiri | 12.6 | 13.1 | 4.4 | 20.1 | 21.1 | 5.4 | 48.8 | 48.8 | 47.9 |
| Mayurbhanj | 5.5 | 5.7 | 2.7 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 3.6 | 36.4 | 36.8 | 29.3 |
| Nabarangapur | 19.1 | 19.8 | - | 23.5 | 24.4 | - | 51.1 | 51.4 | - |
| Nuapada | 6.1 | 6.0 | - | 10.1 | 10.4 | - | 34.1 | 34.6 | - |
| Nayagarh | 7.0 | 7.1 | - | 3.3 | 3.0 | - | 31.6 | 31.9 | - |
| Puri | 0.9 | 0.5 | 2.4 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 2.2 | 19.3 | 16.5 | 30.0 |
| Rayagada | 9.3 | 10.3 | 4.8 | 10.4 | 12.2 | 2.2 | 38.4 | 38.2 | 39.4 |
| Sambalpur | 2.2 | 1.5 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 4.6 | 17.3 | 14.3 | 22.0 |
| Sonapur | 4.1 | 4.2 | 2.7 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 3.3 | 33.0 | 33.5 | 24.2 |
| Sundargarh | 2.7 | 2.6 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 6.3 | 2.7 | 20.4 | 19.1 | 23.9 |

based on marriages taking place during 2008-10

Source: AHS



Percentage of Child marriage by district of Jharkhand State

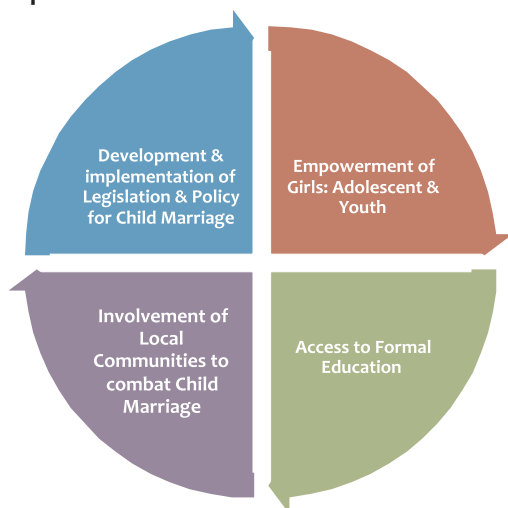


Processes

Program Strategy

This program endeavored to reduce the prevalence of early marriage in the states of Jharkhand and Odisha. The impact of this effort largely depended on the possibility to bring in a drastic behavioral change in the rural communities. The program initiatives were therefore strategized to address the relevant issues of health, health and sexual rights, education, and looked at existing laws, along with the socio-economic and religious issues.

The most important intervention strategies adopted were:



The 2,400 community volunteers or change agents (three parents and three young people, 4 women / girls and two men / boys) per village in 400 villages for implementing the program activities at the community level. They are known as Yuva Mitra and play a very important role in sensitizing the youth and community on SRHR and child marriage.

Program Area:

Jharkhand and Odisha states were selected for the project, covering 12 districts -- Boudh, Bargarh, Bolangir, Sambalpur, Sundargarh and Keonjhar in Odisha and West Singhbhum, East Singhbhum, Saraikala, Lohardaga, Latehar and Palamu in Jharkhand.

The direct beneficiaries of the program were adolescent youth- girls and boys, and parents. The target group is 12-21 years and includes both school goers and drop outs.

Summary of Child Marriage Program India

| | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|--|---|----------------|
| | | | | |
| 1.1 | Cluster Name | Western Orissa Child Marriage Prevention cluster | Sikhs Chena [Awareness through Education] | DAHAR |
| 1.2 | State | Orissa | Orissa | Jharkhand |
| 2.1 | Names of Districts | | | |
| | 1 | Bolangir | Sundargarh | West Singhbhum |
| | 2 | Bargarh | Keonjhar | East Singhbhum |
| | 3 | Boudh | | Saraikela |
| | 4 | Sambalpur | | Latehar |
| | 5 | | | Lohardaga |
| | 6 | | | Palamu |
| 2.2 | Number of villages | 100 villages | 100 villages | 200 |
| 3.1 | Start date | Jul-14 | Jul-14 | Jul-14 |
| 3.2 | End date | Aug-15 | Aug-15 | Aug-15 |
| | | | | |
| 4.1 | Total number of Partners | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| 4.2 | Lead NGO (name)/ Cluster Lead | YCDA | ORES | LGSS |
| 4.3 | Names of Partners | | | |
| | Partner 1 | YCDA | ORES | LGSS |
| | Partner 2 | ADARSA | WOSCA | BPYP |
| | Partner 3 | SIDI | WORD | LEADS |
| | Partner 4 | AJKA | VARRAT | MMKK |
| | Partner 5 | PAP | SES | MSUS |
| | Partner 6 | | | SPAR |
| | Partner 7 | | | SPARK |
| | Partner 8 | | | RCSC |
| | Partner 9 | | | VEDIC Society |
| | Partner 10 | | | YUVA |

Goals and Objectives

Goal

Reducing Child Marriages by 50 per cent and Strengthening SRHR among Adolescents and Youth by 2015'

The main objectives were:

- ◆ To improve adolescents' and youths' knowledge on SRHR and access to their services
- ◆ To enhance access to formal education and ensure retention amongst adolescent's girls
- ◆ To educate and mobilize communities towards change in behavioral, traditional and religious practices
- ◆ To influence govt. policies, institutional mechanisms and services on CM & SRHR

Stakeholders

Primary stakeholders of the project were adolescents and youths, parents, community leaders, Yuva Mitra (Change Agents/ Volunteers). Secondary stakeholders were government employees in various departments and agencies like, teachers, block level officers, staff and officers from Gram Panchayats and district officials who are responsible to render various services.

Regular training sessions and activities were carried out with the primary stakeholders during the project period. Other identified stakeholders were also identified and engaged for sensitizing with proactive involvement in bringing about the desired changes in towards achieving the goals. Advocacy and Lobby at gram panchayats, district and state level helped distinct experiences from panchayats and influencing suitable changes in the program and policies of the government.

Stakeholder Roles

1. Community Based Organisations (CBOs)

There are certain important aspects related to the functioning of CBOs:

- ➔ Community Involvement in identifying and preventing child marriage

- ➔ Regular participation in discussions on SRHR issues
- ➔ Meetings to address child marriage
- ➔ Advocacy to combat child marriage

2. Yuva Mitra

Youths, adolescents and adults at the village level took the key role of Yuva Mitra, they facilitated in sensitization of youth, parents and community stakeholders on the issue of child marriage and SRHR.

3. Community Facilitator/ Animator

The main role of animators was to organize community members and arrange meetings for them. They worked closely with Project Coordinator and providing required support. They organized regular meetings and worked closely with Yuva Mitra.

4. Project Coordinator

He / she played the key role in the managing the program implementation. He /she was responsible for organizing training, facilitating meeting, reporting and documentation, liaisoning and ensuring convergence of ideas and working closely with lead cluster coordinator.

5. Cluster Coordinator

Cluster program coordinators had the overall in charge of the program at the cluster level. He / she facilitated planning and implementing the program and provide guidance to the Partner Organizations. He / she played a key role in: the identification of a panel of resource persons for the cluster and facilitated the development of the curriculum. Monitoring and evaluating the progress of the program and preparing the monthly, quarterly, half yearly and end term reporting. As per the schedule prepared, he or she has to conduct monitoring visits to all Partner Organizations and should provide necessary programmatic inputs. He / she worked closely with DF team.



6. Partner Organizations

Responsibilities included:

- To enable CBOs and to monitor implementation of programs both project and for lobby and advocacy
- Take on responsibilities within the cluster based on their expertise
- Block level coordination
- Conducting the meeting for adolescent youth
- Sensitizing stakeholders, CBOs, teachers
- Selecting Resource person for training of Yuva Mitra (Change Agents)
- Documenting case studies
- Liaison with block officials
- Prepare Block level report and submit to Cluster Lead

7. Lead Partner Organisation

The following are the important roles that were taken by the lead partner.

- Overall program management, budget control, documentation and reporting
- Timely guidance to Partner Organization with handholding support.
- Mobilizing resource persons for capacity building of community stakeholders

8. Development Focus

DF played the key role of program conceptualization, strategic direction, monitoring and evaluation. Key tasks included:

1. Providing strategic clarity, direction and convergence
2. Developing innovative concepts and contextualizing methods and solutions (R&D)
3. Facilitate
 - Resource mobilization
 - Capacity building
 - Coordination
 - Networking
 - Monitoring and evaluation
 - Course correction and interface for cross learning among clusters.
4. Devise and promote appropriate advocacy and lobby strategy for sensitizing civil society and influencing govt stakeholder's practice and policies.
5. Program Documentation and reporting, promote program visibility for dissemination of experiences in the public domain.
6. Promoting effective lobbying and advocacy through state level workshop for dissemination of knowledge.



Activities



During the project period, well planned and context specific activities were taken up for mobilizing the community against the issue of child marriage in the state of Jharkhand and Odisha. All the activities were related to mobilizing the stakeholders at various levels and ensure a positive outcome as stated in the project objectives.

2400 youth and adults were motivated to volunteer as “Yuva Mithras”. They were trained to mobilize and sensitize adolescent youth and adults against child marriage. The six change agents are trained through a series of sessions on SRHR education. This initiative paved way to for a gradual attitude and behavioral change towards early marriage, within the community, with volunteers taking steps against the issue and mobilizing the entire community around any proposed child marriage in the area. In number of cases these volunteers helped in stopping child marriage in their neighborhood.

These Yuva Mithras in turn helped to interact and mobilize various CBOs at villages. They mobilized these CBOs in their fight against early marriage

and for raising awareness on the impact of child marriage on lives of young girls.

Another important activity was co-opting schools in the respective project areas, in the campaign against Child Marriage. Around 400 schools and 1600 teachers in the intervention areas joined hands with the community. Besides, they were also trained to keep an eye on girls’ education and initiate action against any proposed child marriage in their neighborhood. This strategy helped engage with the girls and their parents, to convince them on the value of education and support their aspirations.

The Yuva Mithras also ensured they participated in the parent teachers meeting (PTM) / School Management Committee (SMC) that is part of school activities. During these PTM deliberations focused on the necessity of abolishing child marriage from the village and the role of parents. This was an important activity as it has been found that they play an important role when it comes to deciding the exact age of marriage of their daughter and improving access to formal school with special emphasis on girls.

In yet another unique intervention, the Frontline Health Workers (FHWs) (many of whom also took on the role of Yuva Mithra) were involved in the campaign against child marriage. In Odisha they are known as 'ASHA workers' and in Jharkhand they are known as 'Sahiya'. Health workers are a key resource people in the villages, as they interact regularly with adolescent youth. Recognizing the key role they could play, communities selected and co-opted them as Yuva Mithras. They were trained on the issue of child marriage and its impact on the health of adolescent and infants that are born of early married women.

The strategy of working with the adolescent girls, entailed engaging both unmarried and married girls in the villages. The married girls were given education on broader SRHR issues related to pregnancy, contraception and methods, menstrual cycle, safe and safer sexual practices et al. The adolescent girls were mobilized against the issue of child marriage and were also encouraged

to take forward their studies. The essence of this move is based on the fact that education of young girls helps a long way in their empowerment and ensuring delay of marriage. Young age empowerment also helps to ensure that these girls take decision on their own, later in life.

Child / youth clubs organized meetings and discussed at least one time per month, in certain cases twice or even weekly on situations related to SRHR, child marriages, and the activities required to totally abolish it.

Similarly, the State level program launch, Interface workshop at block and district levels, were strategically used to flag and engage govt. stakeholders on the issue of Child Marriage and collaborate with them for effective implementation of existing laws to prevent/eradicate the same.



At the Ground Zero



Take a closer look at the picturesque villages and hamlets of Jharkhand and Odisha and the rampant evil of child marriage will stare back at us, even if it doesn't show up in the official records. Socio-economic conditions prevalent in the rural areas of the state, apathy shown at every level towards changing them and lack of better opportunities has allowed this practice to blot the future of the numerous youngsters belonging to these regions.

Odisha

Adolescent boys and girls from rural Odisha are forced to carry the burden of running a family, when others of their age are anxious about shaping their careers, all the while suffering the

physical, mental and financial consequences of marrying at a tender age.

“During the course of a project on education in Western Odisha, we learnt that due to financial constraints and unavailability of schools in proximity (to an extent), youth especially girls do not have an opportunity for vocational & livelihood training, which stunts their career aspirations and desire for economic security. As this happens, parents start considering them to be liabilities and marry them off as soon as the first suitable proposal comes to their attention,” said Srabantika Bhattacharya, Cluster Project Coordinator in Western Orissa Child Marriage Prevention (WOCMP) cluster lead by Youth Council for Development Alternatives.

Children carry out their studies mostly up to standard VIII and then drop out of schools by the age of fifteen years. They are married off at an age where they are too young to understand or fulfil the responsibilities that are associated with the institution of marriage without taking their opinions regarding marriage into consideration or their plans regarding the future lives. After being married, any educational opportunities for the dropouts are out of the picture. The health and future of a child is sacrificed to uphold the age-old obsolete system of early marriages.

Government has put in place an elaborate mechanism from village to state level, to detect and prevent child marriages. A combination of reasons including, lack of adequate knowledge and ability to deal with it firmly but with a human face, no cooperation and bullying tactics of communities, means many instances of child marriage either go unreported or cannot be prevented. Even the parents and guardians of the underage groom and bride try everything to ensure that the marriage goes on without any hiccups. From concealing the actual age of their wards to try to bully the authorities into inaction, stubborn parents leave no stone unturned to marry their children against the set legislations.

Marriage at an early age forces the girls into early pregnancy. Unprepared physically and mentally, the underage mothers delivers physically and mentally weak or challenged offspring, in addition



to serious harm to their own body. The boys, or the supposed men of the family, are expected to bear the expenses of his family that too without any educational qualification or vocational skill. This pressure of being the breadwinner for their family at such an early age strains their mental well-being inciting quarrels in and outside the household.

Thus, “Child Marriage” - a blatant violation of Child Marriage, is endangering the physical and mental health of the children who fall prey to this social evil.

Despite being absent from the urban areas of the state, child marriage is found to be a deep-rooted social evil in the villages of Odisha. It has been common practice in Indian villages that the issues related to the village are usually solved by its inhabitants without much intervention from external organisations. As the issue of child marriage is a social one, the Partner Organisations ensured the direct involvement of the village communities and the existing social mechanisms and platforms, in order to uproot the problem of child marriages rampant in the rural parts of Jharkhand and Odisha.

Being a close-knit social structure, the rural community can be influenced only by those who belong to it, who understand its dynamics. This can be achieved by directly involving all stakeholders ranging from village leaders-elected and otherwise; youth- who directly face the brunt of child marriage; representatives from every age group and social section residing in the village.



Also, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) is a topic barely touched in the rural areas of the country. Without understanding the effect child marriage has on the well-being of the adolescents and their rights pertaining to their sexual and reproductive health, the stakeholders cannot be sensitised towards this social malady.

Jharkhand

The practice of Child Marriage is widespread and accepted by majority in the predominantly tribal areas of rural Jharkhand. Development Focus and a cluster of 10 partner organizations has worked in 6 selected districts.

In the first phase of the program, two training programs for the coordinators and facilitators of the CMPI were organized in November 2014 and March 2015. The participants were provided rigorous training on the ways to implement the program. The training covered effective group



leadership techniques and the skills required for coordination/facilitation roles. It covered key areas of facilitative leadership including facilitation, planning and communication skills and explored how to develop strategies for identifying and reaching different audience.

Experience from East Singhbhum district: YUVA had been working in several villages of Potka block of East Singhbhum district where child marriage incidents were regularly being reported. Children between 12 to 15 years were being married off. A total of 20 villages of four panchayats Chakri, Podahatu, Nachosai, and Ramgarh were identified for the program .In Potka, children were forced on a daily basis into a relationship, of which they have only the faintest knowledge and for which they are not at all prepared.

Ms Chandmani Sawaiyan, program coordinator, said that while child marriage in India has been on a decline in recent years, the practice is still more common in rural areas of East Singhbhum, and girls growing up in low-income, rural parts of the district are especially at risk of marrying early.

During the course of the program in Photka village - inhabited by Bhumij and Sabar tribes, it was found that tribal customs and cultural beliefs played a key role in influencing child marriage practices.

The village community in turn, instead of playing

a watchdog role, is an enthusiastic participant in making child marriages. Tradition and superstition are further reinforced by necessity. The benefit of child marriages for poor people is that it is cheaper for the family than adult marriages, since a child marriage does not need to be as prestigious and costly as an adult marriage.

Ms Sawaiyan said that members of Bhumij community consider marrying off child at an early age as a matter of pride and prestige. Those persons who married off their child at an early age are considered to be superior in various realms of social life.

As part of their initiative to address the issue, YUVA formed a team of 120 'Yuva Mitras'. These 'mitras' comprised of four youths and two guardians (aged 30 to 35 years). The task of these mitras was to counsel the parents and children on the ill effects of the child marriage and how it would create harmful social and biological impacts on to the society.

"Through these Yuva Mitras our job is to visit schools and villages and conduct sessions. We teach girls that their bodies are often not prepared to bear children, early pregnancy leads to extreme peril, including death, during delivery and jeopardizing the health of these young mothers as well as their babies," says Ms Chandmani Sawaiyan.

Recalling her experiences she said that spreading word against child marriage was challenging because even parents who were aware of its negative impact might find it too difficult to resist the economic and social pressures from the village community.

A change in psyche of the backward and illiterate people was required, so they conducted several sessions in these villages and connecting to as many people as possible. Apart from formal and informal sessions, wall writing with messages against the child marriage proved crucial in this endeavor.

Education and the empowerment of girls were, beyond a doubt, two of the best remedies addressing this issue. YUVA had also started several vocational training program like jewellery making, mushroom cultivation etc. In association with Self Help Groups these training programs were being conducted. In the villages of Chakri and Sidisai jewellery making program had been conducted and 60 youths had benefitted from the program.

Furthermore, the girls learnt practical, land-based livelihood skills and had become aware of government resources that could help them to be more independent and improve their long-term economic and social existence.

According to Usher Sabina Deogam, Community Facilitator, they also formed clubs comprising 30 members in each club. Their activities included community meetings and conversations during which participants expressed their hopes and concerns. The group also facilitated meetings for boys to help address the broader environment that enables the practice of child marriage to prosper.

She went on to state that apart from this; YUVA had also formed football teams in different villages of operational areas. Separate teams of boys and girls had been formed in Chakri, Podahatu, Nachosai, and Ramgarh in which the youths were engaged in healthy activities.

The efforts of YUVA has brought fruitful results. Families in project villages are now seen to be letting (even encouraging) their children continue their school/college education, rather than continue their studies rather than marrying them off at a very early stage of their life.

Experiences from Saraikela district: Technology Resource Communication and Service Centre (TRCSC), another PO engaged in the CMPI, worked in Ichagarh block of Seraikela Kharsawan district for Child Marriage Program. TRCSC covered 20 villages of four panchayats comprising





Gudri, Goruncha, Bandu, and Patkum as part of the program.

Bina Kumari Mahato- Project Coordinator says, “Yuva Mitra is trained volunteers who make the students and parents aware of the side effects of child marriage”. TRCSC had also formed Yuva Club in every village.

Yuva Mitra Naveen Mahatoof Sildah Village says, “We are witnessing the change but at a very slow pace. We mostly target students of class 7, 8 and 9”.

Sildah Primary School in Sildah Village of Ichagarh Block had 300 students

This project was started in October 2014 and since then there had been several success stories.

Most of the people here were daily wage earners and the amount they earned daily was mainly expensed on liquor. Naveen who was in class 10 and would be appearing for matric exams in 2016 had been associated with the project since the very beginning.

Naveen said that several marriages were stopped after their intervention. People in the village didn't know about the complications a girl had to face, physically or mentally if she gets married before 18 years.

Anganwadi workers were also associated and worked as a team in making the parents aware when they came to know about the girl who was getting married at an early age.

According to Bina that one of the reasons behind early marriage is the lack of education among the villagers. The Sildah School of 300 students had only one teacher, so one could just imagine what sort of teaching would be imparted among the students.

Sandhya Devi, Sahika at Anganwadi centre says, “we regularly help in organizing health camps for girl students where doctors are called in to inform the parents and girls about the ill effects of child marriage which can lead to death also. Teenage girls are also informed about what to eat and also about how to maintain cleanliness”.

Process



Development

Focus has partnered with committed partner organizations in Jharkhand and Odisha for the last 9 years, co-implementing successful programs on Basic Education, Vocational training, Livelihood development, Micro entrepreneurship in Clean Energy devices. This program on Child Marriage has been an excellent opportunity to address the needs and aspirations of the youth from marginalized and predominantly tribal communities from these 2 states.

“We have been working in the field of education and reproductive and child health (RCH) in Paikmal. Much emphasis has been put on these issues, but the well-being of adolescents, the future of our country, is more or less neglected. Almost all of the adolescent boys and girls in this area were alien to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR),” said Santoshini Mishra of Agranee Jan Kalyan Anusthan, the Project Coordinator for CMPI in Paikmal.

A meeting of DF team and heads of partner

organizations helped put together an appropriate program strategy and a Action Plan for putting an end to child marriage in Odisha. It was decided that in Odisha the initiative would begin from two clusters, YCDA leading the program in Western Orissa Child Marriage Prevention cluster (WOCMP) spanning over four districts of Bargarh, Boudh, Bolangir and Sambalpur and ORES running it in Siksha Chetna cluster covering Sundargarh and Keonjhar districts for a period of ten months.

After Formal launching and participatory selection of partner organisations along with the cluster lead in September 2014, the Partner Organisations identified their intervention areas and called the inhabitants of villages for a general meeting to discuss the formation of framework required for implementation of CMPI.

“In Ranjitpur, we began the meeting in the hours of dusk after SHG members, Anganwari and ASHA gathered the adolescents of the village in the Anganwari centre and it went on even after 9 o’ clock in the night. The interest of the villagers towards this project was evident,” said Santoshini



Mishra. After the general meeting, it was time for appointing Yuva Mitras, a group of six change bringers comprising of adolescents (preferably both a girl and a boy), members of village SHG, Anganwari, ASHA and public representatives.

They were sensitised about a myriad of issues: SRHR, physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence, adolescent health, nutritious diet and its importance for adolescents, sexually transmitted infections (STI), child marriage, legislations pertaining to underage marriage, its physical effect on the mother and child, how it affects the boy and girl, communication skills, vocational skills and others. They were the agents responsible for implementing CMPI from the village level.

They monitored the village for any upcoming cases of underage marriage and tried to counsel the involved parties themselves. But if that fails, they used to request the village leaders, elected, religious and otherwise to address the issue at a village-level meeting. If the wedding is on even after this, the case is reported to the higher authorities or government officials, although it is uncommon.

Outputs and outcomes

The Child Marriage Program, India was kicked off in Jharkhand and Odisha to address the issue of adolescents being married in these two states. The goal was to lower the occurrence of child marriage by 50 per cent by spreading awareness about SRHR among the youth during the ten months of the project.

Primarily, CMPI intended to spread education and awareness about the sexual and reproductive health among the youngsters in the project area. As the discussion on sexual health and organs is given a berth in India, the topic remains alien to the youngsters, especially in the rural areas. Oblivious to the effects of child marriage on their body and sexual health, the difficulties they have to face increase manifold.

In addition to this, school dropouts are very common in the rural areas of Jharkhand and Odisha. Without receiving any formal education,

inculcating professional skills for earning livelihood become difficult. CMPI aimed at ensuring proper and complete education to all the adolescents residing in the project area and mainstreaming any dropouts, especially girls.

Particularly among girls, the number of adolescent dropouts was found to be more prone to child marriage as parents considered them to be liabilities and intended someone else to bear her responsibilities. And once married, any chance for her to advance in academics would be out of question. By carrying on with their studies, youngsters could be encouraged to focus more on their careers. With an increase in the literacy rate, people tend to understand the aspects of child marriage more easily when explained to them.

Out of all, the most challenging task was to bring about changes in the traditions and religious practices inherent in the tribal-dominated society of the region as they tend to cling to their beliefs and refuse to accept any attempt to bring about a change in this regard. So instead of introducing the individuals from outside the community, the involvement of locals was to be ensured in order to combat child marriage.

And lastly, invoking swift and positive response from the government organisations related to prevention of child marriage and SRHR and influencing government policies, institutional mechanism and services related to these topics were given adequate importance. Partner organisations had worked to activate the newly formed authorities and sensitising the existing ones towards their roles in checking underage marriage.

The Yuva Mitras, during their training, were tutored about the legal aspects of child marriage and the government authorities they could appeal to in order to prevent a case of child marriage.

According to Mr. CP Yadav of the LGSS, the Lead NGO in the Jharkhand Dahar cluster one of the most significant impact of the program was that the PRIs sensitized the parents as well as the youths in the villages. “The Yuva Mithras are the key people in the communities, who will continue

spreading the word even when the project is withdrawn,” he says.

“Significantly, the Yuva Mitra have also earned respect in their communities and many others are now willing to come forward and join the program”, said Shaba Kumari, Project Coordinator of the Mahila Samagra Uthaan Samittee in Daltonganj, Palamu. She added that a visible impact of the CMPI on the communities was that the people had started taking youths seriously and act on their advice. Also, she says that government officials have become more sensitive towards the problem and are providing support to the communities to stop child marriages.

Mr. A. H. Ansari, the lead Program Coordinator of the Jharkhand cluster said that continuation of education program helped in retention of girls in schools and that in turn helped much in making them aware of the ill effects of child marriage and basics of SRHR.

“Impacts are many. This program is also empowering adolescent youths for becoming change agents in their communities. We are able to think of starting new projects and plans working in this sector. This is another impact of the program. And, ultimately it is possible only because of a good team work, “he said.

Mr. Yadav also stated that a number of volunteers would be included in the Village Child Protection Committee (VCPC). The VCPCs would further be the cause and channel of action against child marriages as an institution with the government, he added.



Case Studies



Saraswati Bariha

A mother's resolve to stop child marriage

Ranjitpur village in Paikmal Block under Bargarh district, Odisha

The breath-taking view of Western countryside of Odisha gives no hint of child marriage being rampant here once. With a tribal-dominated population, it used to be common practice for adolescents of the region to get married despite being below the legally mandated age. Even in this region where deep-

rooted traditions are revered above all, the determination shown by a mother became an example for others to follow.

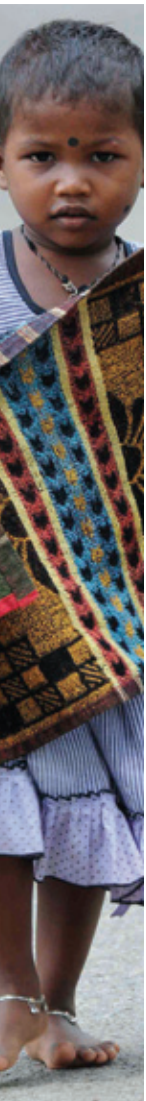
Saraswati Bariha, an inhabitant of Ranjitpur village in Paikmal Block under Bargarh district, Odisha emerged as an ideal for those who give way to social evils in name of customs. She stopped the marriage of her underage son, Naresh, after getting to know the ill effects child marriage will have on him and pledged not to accept a marriage proposal for him for the next five years.

When the Child Marriage Program, India was implemented in the year 2014, her village was among the 20 villages to be covered by AJKA. Saraswati, being a member of Maa Nishani Self Help Group, was nominated as Yuva Mitra.

After receiving the Part-I training in December 2014, Saraswati was sensitized about the disadvantages of child marriage. By this time, her 18-year old son was to be married of to a girl who too was below the permissible age. She took up the matter with her husband, telling him about the difficulties their son would have to face if he was married right then.

Her husband understood her reasons and agreed to postpone the marriage. Though she had to tolerate some harsh words from the girl's family for doing this she resolved that she won't marry off Naresh for the coming five years.

In the course of the entire project, Saraswati is unique for being the only mother who exhibited her determination against child marriage by stopping the marriage of her own son; after all, charity begins at home.



Rita Mahanand

A sister comes to rescue her underage brother

Ranjitpur village in Paikmal Block under Bargarh district, Odisha

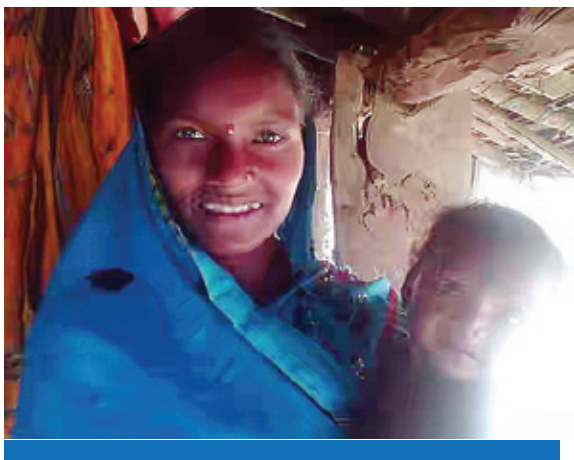
It is not common for the youngest female member of the family to be heard in matters of significance like marriage in rural communities of this country. But when such an instance comes to pass, it becomes an example of how even the ones considered to be the least influential can uproot rampant social evils by sheer determination.

Such is the story of Rita Mahanand, a young girl from the Ranjitpur village in Paikmal Block under Bargarh district, Odisha. After her village was brought under the aegis of Child Marriage Program, India, Rita became a member of the

Jagruti Kishori Sangh, the adolescent group formed in her village under the project. After receiving the Part-I training of a Yuva Mitra in December, 2014 at AJKA headquarters in Paikmal, she began counselling the inhabitants of her village against the issue of child marriage with other Yuva Mitras and members of the adolescent groups.

It was during this period that her brother Sudhir Mahanand, who was 19 years old then, was to be married. Rita took it upon her to stop this marriage at talked to her brother about it. Successful in convincing her brother to call off the wedding, Rita confidently proceeded to talk to her parents.

After listening to her arguments against marrying off Sudhir right then, Rita's parents changed their minds and decided to go on with the wedding after their son completes the age of 21 years. A proud Yuva Mitra of Ranjitpur village, Rita has been a source of motivation for others since then.



Sangita Toppo

Tragedies of her life become lessons for others

Birda village, Birkara Panchayat, Lathikata Block, Sundergarh, Odisha

No one can explain the ill effects of a social evil than one who has faced its consequences. Usually such victims of rotten social customs tend to hide themselves from public scrutinising, and this goes to show how much heart one

needs to present one's own example to sensitise others.

Sangita Toppo, a 19-year old girl coming from a poor economic status and family background from Birda village of Lathikata Block, Sundergarh district, Odisha, is one such example. Her father Mathias Toppo

works as a truck driver and spend most of his earnings on alcohol, with little to spare for the family expenses. Her mother, Malti Toppo, is a cook for other households and sells logs to make ends meet for the family. With her small earnings out these vocations, she somehow manages to take care of her children, but that fell short in their proper upbringing.

Sangita dropped out of school in Std. III because of negligent attitude of her parents towards her education. After some years in 2009, she went Delhi to work and there she got married at the age of 15 years to a teenager through love affair.

Sometime later she became the mother of two baby girls. After two years her husband passed away and Sangita, mother of two baby girls, was plunged into a sea of tragedy. Suffering the loss of her husband's death she was left without any helping hand. At that time she had absolutely no knowledge about child care, how to earn a livelihood and to sustain a family.

She returned to her native place and came to know about the CMPI initiative to check the social evil she has suffered from. To prevent others from repeating the mistakes she made, Sangita joined the project as a Yuva Mitra. Since then, she has pledged to put an end to early marriage and educate the community, particularly teenagers, how crucial education is for girls and how a rash decision can turn one's life around towards the wrong direction.

Sanjukta Meher

A life saved at the cost of parents discontent

Gochhapada village, Gochhapada Panchayat, Boudh Block, Boudh district, Odisha

Delayed detection of a problem may create more problems for everyone that it solves. This proves to be true in some thwarted cases of child marriage in Boudh district of Odisha where delayed action from the authorities met with strong dissent from the parents of prospective bride.

Sanjukta Meher, a 16-year old girl from Gochhapada village of the Panchayat of the same name in Boudh Block of Boudh district, Odisha lives with her father Madhusudan Meher, mother Malati Meher, one elder sister and two younger brothers. Her elder sister dropped out of school in Std X and the two brothers are in Std. VI and VIII in Gochhapada UGH School.

Sanjukta fell in love with a boy of Sambalpur two years ago when she was in class VIII. Heused to come to Boudh to visit his relatives and met Sanjukta many times during these visits. As their family members came to know about this affair, it was decided to get them married after Sanjukta passed her matriculation exams. Shortly after the publication of her matriculation result, the marriage date was finalised by both family on June 12, 2015.

Sanjukta and her elder sister were members of the adolescent group operating in the village under CMPI. Even though her elder sister came to the adolescent group meeting regularly, she did not turn up for the meeting on regular basis. Noticing her irregular attendance, when the members of the adolescent group visited her place and he family tried to convince them that Sanjukta had been irregular at the group meetings due to the pressure of her studies and is not interested in attending them either.

On May 28, 2014 Yuva Mitras came to know of her marriage was finalized after a fortnight. The issue was discussed in village child protection meeting on April 31, 2015 in the presence of the Sarpanch of the Gochhapada Panchayat. When asked why are they marrying off their younger daughter when their elder daughter is yet unmarried and is of age, Sanjukta's parents replied that the proposal they got for her was a good one and turning it down will be a wrong thing to do; no more proposals might come for Sanjukta after this.

It was decided during this meeting the groom's parents should be called so that the matter can be

convinced to postpone the wedding date till the bride and groom attain ages legally permissible for getting married. The next meeting went by in vain. Finally, the Collector, CDPO & DCPU, who are the appropriate authorities to deal with this case, were informed about the entire case.

After their intervention, in the presence of CPC members and Sarpanch, her parents agreed not to marry Sanjukta then and she will continue her studies.

But the parents were outright agitated with the YCDA members for reporting the marriage of their underage daughter to the authorities as the wedding ceremony was to be held in less than two weeks before it was cancelled, resulting in monetary losses to Sanjukta's parents. They are still unhappy with the decision and are yet to be fully convinced that their decision was wrong.

Yuva Mitras save four kids from nasty knots of child marriage

It came as a shock for Yuva Mitras of Dhengam village in Potka block of the East Singhbhum district that two minor girls belonging to the Sabar community had vanished from the village.

The incident that took place in the month of March, 2015 made the Yuva Mitras search for the two girls in the nearby localities and they got a setback to learn that 12-year-old Bali Sabar had left home for marriage and she is accompanied by 10-year-old Bari Sabar.

The volunteers immediately acted on the information and took their parents to Lango village in Dumaria, where the marriage was to be solemnized. Even the groom-to-be was a minor and was a student of 10th class. Bali and Bari were brought back to the village after a lot of counseling by the volunteers.

Similarly, Puja Sabar and Milan Sabar of Tangrain village in Potka village were also saved from child marriage. Puja Sabar, an orphan, was admitted into a girls' hostel in Sundernagar. A person from Tangrain village reached the hostel and told the hostel administrators that Puja's mother has died. He took Puja Sabar with himself and then got her married with a middle-aged person.



Puja Sabar

Yuva Mitra Jayanti Sardar of Chakdi village informed other Yuva members about this. With a lot of efforts and persuasion by the Yuva Mitras Puja Sabar was freed from the village and was re-admitted to the hostel in Parsudih.

After only a few days, it was learnt that another girl from Tangrain village was sold off for Rs. 3,000. It was further learnt that the girl who was sold off was none else but the younger sister of Puja, 8-year-old Milan Sabar. The father of Puja and Milan Sabar had died some six years back, while their mother had married off and gone somewhere else leaving them as helpless. Another Sabar from the same village was supposed to act as a guardian of these two girls, but he himself had sold them off for marriage to a middle-aged person from Lango village.

Milan Sabar was saved from child marriage and was brought back. Later, Mukhiya Rajaram, Gloria Purty, district in charge, Mahila Samakhya, Child Protection Officer and other officials were contacted and she was admitted in the hostel run by Mahila Samakhya at Khunti.



Milan Sabar



Phool Kumari

Her tale inspires others to stop Child Marriages

Harmu Village, Harmu Panchayat, Lohardaga

The lessons of one's life can help many, especially if one shares them to enlighten the communities around them. Such is the story of Phool Kumari. Coming from an economically backward family, Kumari is a victim of child marriage from Harmu village of Lohardaga district in Jharkhand. Now she shares the difficulties she underwent due to being married at a tender age.

Owing to her family's economic crisis, Kumari had to migrate to Chhattisgarh to earn a living as a domestic help. Upon her return home from Chhattisgarh, her parents promised her hand to Partill Oraon. At this point of time, she was 14 years of age and was about to get admitted to a Middle School. Against her wishes, she was married to Partill and was not allowed to continue her studies.

Early marriage, led to early pregnancy, which further resulted in serious health issues. While delivering her first child, Kumari was spared any serious health problems; it was her second pregnancy within a year of the first one that troubled her greatly. Already weakened by her first issue and unable to recover from it, the second pregnancy was hard on her.

Considering the toll two quick pregnancies took on her young body, Kumari's doctor advised her to go through the surgical procedure for tubal ligation (tubectomy). Even after the surgery, Kumari had to endure severe problems related to uterus due to going through two pregnancies in quick succession with an immature body.

After Child Marriage Program, India was launched in her village; Kumari actively took part in the initiative to check the prevalence of the evil of child marriage. She sensitises the adolescent as well as adults of her community about the physical and mental problems one has to face as a result of child marriage. She substantiates her explanations with her own example and forbids everyone to encourage child marriage.

Kumari, today, is considered one of the most resourceful persons in her community to make people aware about the SRHR issues.



Rekha Kumari

Social pressure sends a minor to 'conditional marriage'

Naudhor village, Lalahe Panchayat, Sadar block, Daltonganj, Jharkhand

Deep-rooted dogmas, when backed by many, have the power to lead a man astray from the righteous path. It is the same in cases of child marriages; those with traditional mindsets keeping the

malpractices alive in the name of traditions and customs force others to adhere to the same, even if unwillingly.

Such is the story of Rekha Kumari, which shows how the parents are often weighed down by the social notion which dictates that their only duty to their daughters is to ensure that she is married as early as possible.

In the Naudhor village of Lalahe Panchayat, situated 19 kilometres away from Sadar block, Daltonganj, lives Dharmendra Bhuinya with his family of four, including his wife, son and daughter, Rekha. They belong to the scheduled caste (SC) category. This family usually migrates six months in a year to other places in order to find work and earn their livelihood.

Dharmendra promised Rekha's hand in marriage when she was only 16 years old. At that time, the Development Focus-sponsored Child Marriage Program, India was running in the village. When the Yuva Mitra members came to know of the underage wedding, they approached the family about it, counselling them regarding the negative effects of child marriage and why it needs to be uprooted.

But all these talks and advices held no sway over Dharmendra. Failing to convince him, Yuva Mitras informed the members of Bihar Pradesh Yuva Parishad about the Rekha's wedding, a minor, and Dharmendra's rejection of their pleas to postpone it, following which the partner organisation called for a village-level meeting regarding this act of child marriage.

During the meeting, in the presence of villagers and the representatives of the BPYP, Dharmendra admitted that his hands are tied. He would not be able to adjourn his daughter's marriage as the groom's family will not agree to it. Having said that, he also assured that Rekha would not go to her in-laws' house until she is 18 years of age. He also agreed to let her complete her formal education.

In some cases, the parents, here Dharmendra, cannot be blamed, as there is a social section pressurising them to marry off their children even if they are not of legal age, in accordance to irrelevant customs. But with the intervention of responsible organisations and individuals who understand the ill-effects of child marriage, things can definitely be turned around, or at least any further damage can be avoided.

Kavita Kumari



It is never too late to mend

Barkinebhi village, Sarja Panchayat, Sadar block, Daltonganj, Jharkhand

The ideal time to make amends for one's mistakes is as soon as they see the error in their ways. The living example to this is Kavita Kumari, whose parents arranged her marriage despite her being under the legally mandated age for marriage, but changed their minds once came to know of the ill-effects she will have to face as a result of underage marriage.

Kavita hails from Barkinebhi village under Sarja Panchayat, located 18 kilometres from Sadar Block in Daltonganj district of Jharkhand. Without proper roads or P.C.C. pathways, reaching the village is a tedious task. Kavita lives here with her family of five; she the eldest daughter of her parents. The family belongs to the Scheduled Tribes (ST) category.

Unaware of the consequences underage marriage will have on her health and legal implication pertaining to it, Munna Oraon, Kavita's father, accepted a marriage proposal for Kavita, presented by a

family from Khura village of Barwadih block. Kavita was only 17 years of age when this proposal came.

Coming to know of the wedding of a minor girl, members of Bihar Pradesh Yuva Parishad called for a village-level meeting to sensitise the residents of Barkinebhi village about the physical and mental demerits of child marriage along with the legal action that can be taken against those who are associated with it.

At this meeting, Munna confessed that it was due to poverty that he was marrying off her daughter at such a young age. But coming to know how it will trouble her physically and emotionally and its legal implications, he decided to postpone the nuptials till Kavita was 18 years of age.

This goes on to show how intervention at the right time prevented one more girl from falling prey to child marriage. This case underlines the need of extensive campaigns to sensitise and make the people aware about the negative consequences of child marriage.



Yasu

Even a little ray of hope brightens up society

Kuruktopa, Bundu Panchayat, Ichagarh Block, Saraikela

The strong will of a little girl, with some help from others, is enough to fight the age-old malpractices of the society even if they are backed by money and power. 13-year-old Yasu signifies this notion most effectively.

Yasu lives with her parents, Gurupado Kaibart and Basu Devi, in Kuruktopa hamlet under Bandu panchayat in Ichagarh block of Saraikela Kharsawan district of Jharkhand. The tribal couple has four girl children.

Living life in penury, they married off their eldest daughter at the age of 13. Yasu, the youngest of her sisters, was studying in Standard VII at Saraswati Vidya Mandir, Chowka when her mother engaged her to one 40 year old Bhalubasa from Jamshedpur. He even gave 25,000 rupees to Basu Devi and agreed to bear the entire expenses of the wedding in a bid to entice her and prevent her from changing her mind.

Yasu is a bright student and wanted to continue her studies for carving a niche for herself in the society. But the poor economic conditions of her family compelled her to consent to the wedding.

Coming to know of the wedding, the Yuva Mitras of Technology Resource Communication and Service Center (TRCSC), led by Kapura Manjhi and Chanchala Manjhi, told Yasu's family about the ill-effects child marriage has on the physical and mental health of underage girls and boys and the legalities pertaining to the social evil. When asked, Yasu admitted that she wants to continue her studies instead of marrying, which the Yuva Mitras conveyed to her parents.

They succeeded in motivating her family to drop the plan to marry her off. When the news of the incident came to the ears of Saraswati Vidya Mandir school management, they also agreed to provide her free education till the completion of her matriculation. The school authorities said that since she is a bright child and dared to fight against the social evil of child marriage they agreed to waive off her monthly fees.

Yasu, today, is pursuing her education from the same school and want to become a teacher. "I am very grateful to the Yuva Mitra who guided my parents to call off the wedding. I am keen to become a teacher and spread the message against child marriage so that more girls like me can be saved and can lead a happy and healthy life," said Yasu.



Gita Devi

Village head saves her daughter, enlightens people

Alagdigha village, Chainpur Block, Palamau, Jharkhand

Sometimes, holding an office of importance in the community may help in making the right decision at the right time. Gita Devi, the head of her village, arranged the marriage of her daughter but changed her decision when she came to know the ill effects

of underage marriages.

The Alagdigha village is located 12 kilometres away from Chainpur Block of Palamu district. The village is mostly inhabited by Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) families. The Pramukh/Sarpanch of the block under the Panchayati Raj system is Gita Devi.

Mother of two daughters and a son, Devi is married to a farmer. After the Child Marriage Program, India was kicked off in Alagdigha, she was invited by the MSUS staff to the meetings of adolescent clubs and SHG members committee. By this time, she had already fixed the marriage of her daughter, Anjali Kujur, who was only 17 years old and was continuing her studies in the nearby high school. It was decided that Anjali would drop out of school after her wedding.

During this meeting, she came to know about the legal implications of child marriage. When she heard the provision of punishment, imprisonment for two years and fines worth one lakh rupees, she at once decided to withdraw her decision for getting her daughter married at an age below the legally permissible limit. She decided to get her married only after she completes 18 years, and admitted that she wanted her daughter to complete her education.

Devi believes that she was able to take a firm stand in this matter only because as a Panchayat Raj Institution member, she understood the laws pertaining to child marriage, and more importantly, followed them.



Ghulab Khatoon

Gulab chooses education, not child marriage

Bada Aamda of Gudadi panchayat at Ichargarh of Seraikela Kharsawan

Life was fun with friends and studies at school for 13-year-old Gulab Khatoon of Bada Aamda village in Gudadi Panchayat at Ichargarh of Seraikela Kharsawan district. The adolescent girl hardly had an idea that her parents were planning to marry her off to free themselves from a 'social burden'.

Few months back in early 2015 Gulab's parents started searching a groom for her. Even her relatives started coming up with proposals for marriage.

When the news of her parents trying to find groom for the class 8 student reached Yuva Mitras active in the village, they started interacting with the parents. Initially, Gulab's mother refused to oblige the members stating that the marriage would ensure the safety of her daughter. She said that they are poor they have to ensure that their girl gets protection at her groom's house. She said that she was helpless as neither could she afford her daughter's education nor would she leave her alone at home.

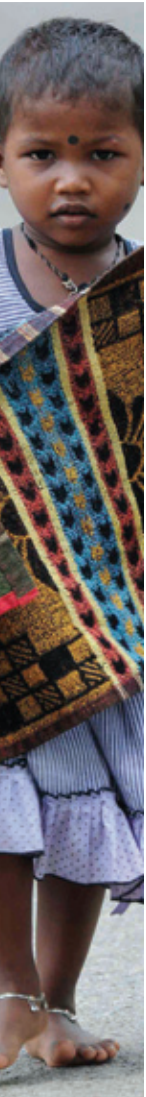
However, Yuva Mitras' trained by Technology Resource Communication & Service Center (TRCSC) in Jamshedpur convinced the woman that they would try to get her help for her daughter's education and future.

However, the girl initially refused to come along with the helpline members as she was "tutored" by her mother and relatives that marriage is the only way to be safe. The Yuva Mitras had to counsel her and make her aware about the ill effects of child marriage, how it destroys an underage girl's life and impacts her health adversely. The task was not easy. However, after a long course of counseling and regular interactions with the Yuva Mitras she finally agreed and said no to the marriage if she is provided with an opportunity to study further.

The Child is now enjoying her studies at school and has also turned out to be a messenger to stop child marriages.



Lessons Learnt



The implementers of Child Marriage Program India were local organizations that had worked for long in their respective intervention areas. They knew the social scenarios that prevailed there but still had a lot to learn when it came to a topic as sensitive as child marriage. They started their work keeping in mind what they already knew, but as time went by, they came to understand why this social evil has continued for so long. The lessons learnt by partner organizations during the course of project included:

Empowering close knit village communities

Social fabric of village communities are complex and interestingly woven. Even as a combination of expressed and felt need gives shape to a program of this kind, participatory program design has to give space and scope for village dynamic to play out and channelized towards taking ownership and participate in program implementation. The Yuva Mitras have to interact with all sections of

society in an amicable environment and make them comfortable enough so that they pay heed to the important messages. Making decision makers understand the messages pertaining to Child Marriage may be easier because they get information from other sources too. However, one has to be very calm and persistent in talking to individuals from a cross section of communities. This way they would also be able to pass on the message to their peer groups.

Nowhere else to go

The school dropout percentage is astounding in the states of Jharkhand. Leaving their formal education unfinished, these dropouts, especially girls, did not had any kind of vocational training either to enhance their skill set. With no professional career to look forward to, their parents come to think of them as liabilities and wish to handover their responsibility to someone else, i.e. their spouses. This is why dropouts had a higher probability of being dragged into child marriage.

Age confirmation a difficult task

In absence of a well-defined system to do confirm one's age, parents often withheld the actual age of their children who were to be married. To know their authentic ages, a tedious routine had to be followed. And often, it was too late to do anything.

Difficult to get through gender-based stereotypes

The gender gap prevalent in the rural regions dismissed the notion of any productive interaction between a boy and a girl. Seeing a girl and a boy together was taken to be an indication of their consent to marry each other; any other issue being discussed was ruled out or was not considered at all. It was hard to convince the elders otherwise.

Peer pressure

The dogma of many often dominated the radical thinking of a few. It was a frequent occurrence that parents who had consented not to marry off their underage children were forced to go back on their words due to pressure from family and relatives, both theirs and those of the other party involved in the wedding.

More time needed, bigger area should have been covered

For a revolution, like CMPI, to leave a lasting effect on the psyche of many, they need to be reminded of it till the motive of the movement is completely achieved without exceptions. Also, people from far and wide should have been brought under its aegis so that the practice to be eradicated does not crawl back into the people's mindsets again. The time invested and area covered needed to be extensive to ensure complete elimination of child marriage.

Migration

Lack of job opportunities forces the youngsters to move towards far off cities where the old-fashioned mindset follows them. Underage boys and girls migrating from one state got married in another which somewhat diminished the efforts made to check the practice.

Much greater focus may be needed to enable community shun gender stereotype of 'soft skills and jobs for girls' to address their changing needs and livelihood aspirations.

Moving ahead



The combined effort of 20 partner organizations and Development Focus through the Child Marriage Program has been a successful endeavor as seen in the results it has produced, the lives of youth it has touched. A lot has been done in these ten months, but for a complex social issue of this kind, what matters is how best the community takes forward and sustain the initiatives in uprooting the social evil, that can help bring change and transformation in the lives of its youth.

In that sense, the journey has only begun, and there is still a long way to go. It is however to good reflect upon the share of challenges and shortcomings. They included:

1. Most Significant Changes

Even in mere ten months, a lot has been achieved in the project. The most significant changes achieved under this initiative are listed below.

Eye-opening experience for communities

The CMPI initiative has sensitized people and made them aware of the ill-effects of child marriage and its legal implications. After those who have suffered due to being their at a tender age were given a platform to share their experiences, people realized child marriage for the evil it is. With POs and local communities spreading information about the legal consequences of child marriage, people now know the laws have they been violating and refrain the laws they have taking up the practice themselves.

Involving the PRIs

The Panchayati Raj Institution representatives in the villages and blocks enthusiastically joined hands with the staff and community in the project implementation, giving the much needed fillip to coordinated efforts for desired outcomes. These representatives are expected to make good use of best use of the knowledge and resources

gathered through the interventions of the CMPI and help bringing the desired behavioral change in the communities.

Capacity Building of PCs

The CMPI helped significantly in capacity building of the Program Coordinators through various training workshops and meetings at the local and state levels. There were three workshops organized – two in Bhubaneswar and one in Ranchi to equip them with adequate knowledge on SRHR, Child Marriage and strategies to address them. The coordinators cherish the learning through the in depth understanding and practical exposure in the 2nd training held in Ranchi. The PCs in turn passed on valuable inputs to the Yuva Mitras for community sensitization.

SRHR sensitization encouraged the teens

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) were given a wide berth given the conservative mindset prevalent in the rural sections. Unaware of what toll child marriage took on their health and what were their rights pertaining to the issue, teens accepted the decision imposed on them. But with knowledge about SRHR, they are now strongly voicing their dissent against underage marriage. Even the girls who used to be shy about these matters are now actively participating in sensitizing others towards the cause.

Liaison with government authorities

A two-way channel was established between those at the grass-root level suffering due to child marriage and government bodies responsible for preventing it. Now even the youngsters know who to go to if they come across a case of child marriage they cannot stop. On the other hand, child development and protection officials and establishments have extended their full support to help the cause. They show greater receptivity to people's needs and the demand for firm and sensitive intervention when the situation so demands.

Organic influence and impact on the neighborhood

Word of mouth spreading of the message and community discussion on the changes happening in a nearby village has been a powerful medium, influencing discourse and changes in the neighborhood villages. Yuva Mitras conducting school sessions, in schools and colleges attended by children from villages beyond the intervention areas, helped in spreading the ideas beyond the intended area. Though the initiative was not taken as intensively as within the intervention area, interest was definitely shown by those coming from regions under the aegis of CMPI.

Mindsets were changed

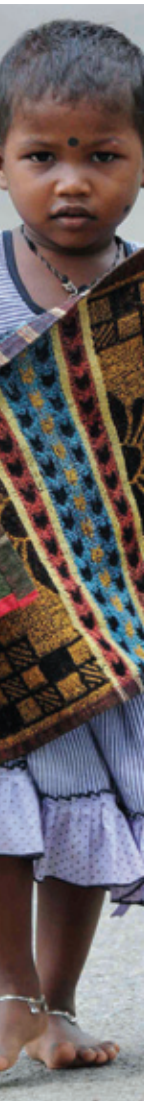
Last but definitely not the least- CMPI was able to bring about a change in the way people perceived underage marriage socially and legally. Once told how child marriage is not only current generation, but can affect future generations too, and substantiating these claims with example from amidst them, people begin to realize how dangerous this practice is. Even though the change is subtle, there is a growing change visible.

2. Way Forward

Even though Child Marriage program India has come to an end, the fight against child marriage will go on, although not in a project mode.

The stakeholders in implementing CMPI remain hopeful about future of anti-child marriage efforts. 'We will be working here even if the project is over-', was a common answer heard in all the project villages. The intensive sensitization and awareness spread during the project have developed enough understanding to effectively fuel the continued work towards eradicating child marriage.

The Yuva Mitras, both young and the old, cheerfully answered in affirmative when asked whether they would continue what they were doing under CMPI. But some of them suggested provision of incentives, in the form of some vocational training or skill development, to encourage enthusiastic approach towards the initiative.



The POs are trying their best to re-enlist dropouts in schools and colleges so that they can focus on their lives ahead instead of being declared prone to child marriage. Those who cannot continue with their schooling are enrolled into some form of vocational training so that they can become self-dependent. All these, are the efforts in investing their mind and energy in something productive so that they do not fall back to the option of getting married in the absence of a better life choice.

Although the approach of the government agencies is typically in a 'enforcement framework' (which is also needed), the need to see it a part of larger comprehensive effort along with other stakeholders, was felt in the discourse with officers and staff.

The implementing organizations engaged with the govt stakeholders, to achieve desired results. More importantly, emphasis was put on strengthening the VCPC operating at Panchayat-level and was formed recently so that the problems can be identified right at the grass-root level and dealt with swiftly.

It was also proposed that the marriages in villages should be mandatorily registered with the Panchayat, for which the proof of age for both the bride and groom will be requisite. This was to screen any underage wedding.

Several vulnerability mapping practices have been implemented so that close watch can be kept at any prospective victims of child marriage. Society's contribution in this initiative has also been encouraged as it is common practice in Indian villages that matters are solved within the community without much external intervention.

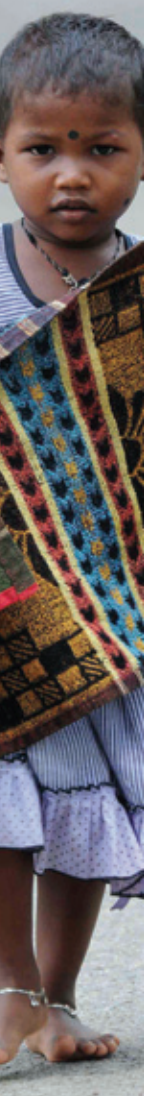
The framework which was prepared during CMPI has been strengthened to such an extent that it can function on its own without any external help. Therefore the outcome of the program will definitely elevate the quality of life of people in all sense. However to maintain the intensity required for eradicating the evil of child marriage needs a more institutionalized approach if better results are to be achieved.

Conclusion

The CMPI program had been initiated with a special focus on abolishing the social evils associated with early marriage practices, widely prevalent in some of the backward states in India. It has its roots on traditions and customs of the people, so that it is very much attached to the behavioral pattern. It is influenced, to a large extent, by the misperceptions of people regarding the education of girl children, their marriage, and financial burden and so on. Thus it was a very tedious task in front of the task force to uproot this kind of a practice. Again it can also be noticed that unless and until the awareness of the positives of education and the negative effects of early marriages reach to the grass root level, it is difficult for any program to make an impact on the society in a short period. Thanks to the dedication of the partner organizations and the Yuva Mitra, the program could touch the minds of thousands of people across the program areas and also adjacent places. Undoubtedly, the success of CMPI program would ensure a social transformation in terms of the uplift of villages. The socio-economic progress is an outcome of the educational attainment and the changes in the thinking pattern. The greatest outcome of the program, a reorientation towards the need for empowerment of girls and women, reproductive health, financial stability, career focus among youngsters and gainful employment will ensure far reaching impact on the society. It will certainly touch forthcoming generations, showing the path of sustainable progress which is well connected to the fruits of CMPI program.

Annexures

| Child Marriage Program, India (UFBR) July 2014 - August 2015 | | | | | | INDIA | | | |
|--|---|-------------------|--|---|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------|
| Result Area | Outcome Indicators | Output Indicators | Activities- Edukans/ DF | EF /DF Targets | Dahar- 10 POs | Shiksha Chetna - 5 POs | Western Orissa- 5 POs | | |
| 1. Empowerment of girls ; Objective: Adolescents and Youths / To improve adolescents and youth's knowledge on SRHR and access to their services | | | | | | | | | |
| Outcome 1.1: Young people, women and men are able to make informed decisions on SRHR-issues | The target group (girls and boys) have more knowledge, changed attitudes and relevant skills that enable them to make informed decisions on SRHR-issues | 1.1.1.a | Number of trained educators for SRHR-issues | Training of Trainer 2400 volunteers (three parents and three young people, 4 women / girls and two men / boys) per village in 400 villages by 20 resource persons from the government in SRHR. | 2,400 | 1,200 | 600 | 600 | 600 |
| | | 1.1.1.b | Number of young people, women and men participating in SRHR education sessions | The 6,000 members of Youth Clubs regularly participate in SRHR training sessions of the club. 25% of Youth clubs actively involved in SRHR discussions | 6,000 | 3,000 | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| | | 1.1.1.c | Number of young people who take leadership in SRHR-issues in their community | Trained volunteers, half of them young people (1200), form a committee of 6 persons in each village to make conscious community organizations, schools, parents and the local authorities of the importance of school attendance and prevention of child marriages, especially girls. | 1,200 | 600 | 300 | 300 | 300 |
| | | 1.1.1.d | Number of (youth) clubs involved in prevention of child marriage | 800 child / youth clubs organize meetings and train members how to prevent child marriage. | 800 | 400 | 200 | 200 | 200 |



Child Marriage Program, India (UFBR) July 2014 - August 2015

| INDIA | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|----------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Result Area | Outcome Indicators | Output Indicators | Activities- Edukans/ DF | EF /DF Targets | Dahar- 10 POs | Shiksha Chetna - 5 POs | Western Orissa- 5 POs |
| 2. Access to formal education for girls; Objective: To enhance access to formal education and ensure retention amongst adolescent girls. | | | | | | | |
| Outcome 2.1: Improved access to formal education | Children (both boys and girls) in the intervention area attending school | Schools in the intervention area with staff trained on gender didactics | Trained volunteers in 400 schools discuss the importance of education to fight dropout as a tool against child marriage, and monitor this guided by the Project Facilitator. | 400 | 200 | 100 | 100 |
| | 2.1.1.a | | | | | | |
| | 2.1.1.b | Activities undertaken with / for School Management Committee, Parents Teachers Association, to promote (continued) school attendance of children, especially girls | Trained volunteers organize 2000 meetings with SMCs and PTAs in the interest of school attendance of the children. | 2,000 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 |
| | 2.2.1.a | Number of children (especially girls) finishing school | Qualified teachers at school | 1,600 | 800 | 400 | 400 |
| | | | 1600 teachers are trained and as a member of the PTAs asked to cooperate in the program, and to give space to consentize the students of the school about the risks of child marriage. | | | | |

| Child Marriage Program, India (UFBR) July 2014 - August 2015 | | | | | INDIA | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------|---|---|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------|--|
| Result Area | Outcome Indicators | Output Indicators | Activities- Edukans/ DF | EF /DF Targets | Dahar- 10 POs | Shiksha Chetna - 5 POs | Western Orissa- 5 POs | | |
| 3. Involvement of local communities to the combat of child marriage; Objective: To educate and mobilise communities towards behavioral, traditional and religious practices | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 Outcome: Girls and young women are able to exercise their SRHR-rights and not forced into early marriage by their environment | Increase in the number of initiatives of adults in the local community (incl. local leaders) and local clubs/associations to combat child marriage | 3.1.1.a | Number of trainers/peers trained to provide awareness-raising activities on (the risks of) child marriage | Training of 2400 volunteers (three parents and three young people, 4 women / girls and two men / boys) per village in 400 villages in organizing awareness activities around the dangers of child marriage. | 2,400 | 1,200 | 600 | 600 | |
| | | 3.1.1.b | Number of members from the local community reached (also via clubs/associations) with awareness-raising activities on (the risks of) child marriages (direct) | Trainer-volunteers organize meetings with the Self Help Groups in the Community reaching 25.000 members to make them aware and involve them in fighting child marriage and using mechanisms such as parent visit to prevent concrete threats. | 25,000 | 12,500 | 6,250 | 6,250 | |
| | | 3.1.1.c | Number of members of the local community (incl. local leaders) reached with awareness-raising activities on (the risks of) child marriage via (new) media, campaigns (indirect) | The trainer-volunteers organize campaigns to involve 100.000 members of the community in fighting child marriage | 1,00,000 | 50,000 | 25,000 | 25,000 | |



Child Marriage Program, India (UFBR) July 2014 - August 2015

| INDIA | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|----------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Result Area | Outcome Indicators | Output Indicators | Activities- Edukans/ DF | EF /DF Targets | Dahar- 10 POs | Shiksha Chetna - 5 POs | Western Orissa- 5 POs |
| 5. Development and implementation of legislation and policies to prevent child marriages; Objective: To influence government policies, institutional mechanisms and services. | | | | | | | |
| 5.1 Outcome: There is a adequate legislation and policies in place to prevent child marriage and those being implemented | About 45 new case studies regarding implementation and reinforcement of law and policies to preventing child marriage at local, regional and national level | 5.1.1.a Number of partners with an Action Plan for advocacy and policy-influencing activities on prevention of child marriage | 20 partner NGOs design a plan of action aimed at intervention and sustainability of activities for the prevention of child marriage. | 20 | 10 | 5 | 20 |
| | | 5.1.1.b Number of partner organisations active in networks for advocacy and policy influencing and prevention of child marriages | 20 Partners and Self-help group federations participate in networking meetings at block, district, and state level to advocate together the implementation and monitoring of the legislation on child marriage with governments at these levels. | 20 | 10 | 5 | 20 |
| | | 5.1.1.c Number of meetings for advocacy and policy influencing on prevention of child marriage to which partners participate. | 20 Partners and self-help groups participate in at least two meetings per level to advocate combating child marriage. | 28 | 14 | 7 | 7 |

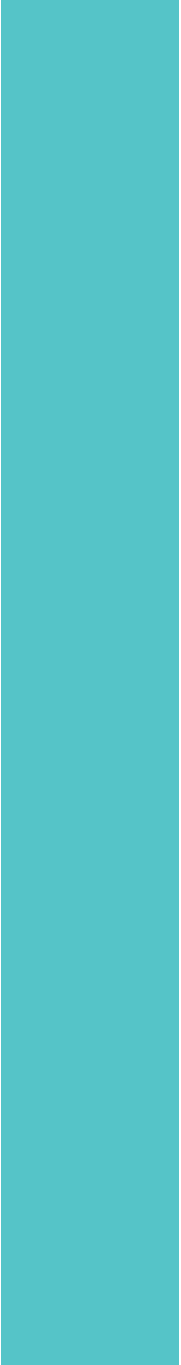
Partner Organisations of the Program

| Dahar Cluster, Jharkhand | |
|---|---|
| Name of Organization | Organization Address |
| Lohardaga Gram Swarajya Sansthan-LGSS | Near Block More, Main Road, Lohardaga, Jharkhand, Pin 835302, Jharkhand |
| Technology Resource Communication & Service Centre (TRCSC), Jamshedpur | Welfare Tower, Flat No.109, Dimna, Road (Besude Transport Nagar), P.O-MGM College, Dimna, Jamshedpur-831018-Jharkhand |
| Society for participatory Action and Reflection (SPAR) | 301, Shree Maa Apartment, P.N. Bose Compound, Purulia Road. Ranchi 834001-Jharkhand |
| Vedic Society-Latehar | At: Mako, Latehar, Near Forest Chowk Naka, District-Latehar, P.O-Latehar-829206 (Jharkhand) |
| Bihar Pradesh Yuva Parishad-(BPYP) | At : Abad Ganj, Dalton Ganj, Near Mission School Dist-Palamu, Jharkhand, India-Pin:822101 |
| Mahila Samagra Uthaan Samittee-MSUS | At: Professor Colony, G.L.A. College Road, Dalton Ganj, Palamu, Jharkhand-822102 |
| YOUTH UNITY FOR VOLUNTARY ACTION (YUVA) | YUVA, Munshi mohallah, Makdampur, Parsudih, Jamshedpur-831002. Jharkhand. |
| Life Education and Development Support- (LEADS) | 203, Shree Maa Apartment, P.N. Bose Compound, Purulia Road. Ranchi 834001-Jharkhand |
| MAHARSHI MENHI KALYAN KENDRA (MMKK) | SukhDeo Nagar, P.O: Hehal, ratu Road, Ranchi-834005, Jharkhand India |
| SOCIETY FOR PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE (SPARK) | Ramazan Colony, Kanta toli, GPO Sadar, Ranchi-Pin Code:834001 (Jharkhand) India. |
| Western Orissa Child Marriage Prevention Cluster, Orissa | |
| Palli Alok Pathagar (PAP) | At/Po. - Nagaon (B), |
| | Via. - Loisingha, |
| | Dist. - Bolangir – 767 020 |
| Agranee Jana Kalyan Anusthan (AJKA) | At/Po. - Paikmal, |
| | Dist. – Baragarh - 768 039 |

Partner Organisations of the Program

| | |
|--|--|
| Association for Development And Research In Socio Economic Activities (ADARSA) | At - Gourapara (farm Road), Po. - Modipara, Dist. - Sambalpur – 768002 |
| Sambalpur Integrated Development Institute (SIDI) | At/Po. - Jamankira, Dist. - Sambalpur – 768 107 |
| Youth Council for Development Alternatives (YCDA) | At/Po. - Baunsuni, Tikirapara Road Dist. - Boudh – 762 015 |
| Shiksha Chetna Cluster, Orissa | |
| Voluntary Association for Rural Reconstruction & Appropriate Technology (VARRAT), | At - Boulakani, Po – Baradanga, Via – Mahakalapada, Dist- Kendrapara- Pin-754224 |
| Sundargarh Education Society (SES) | At-Mahesdihi, Po/Dist- Sundargarh Pin-770001 |
| Women Organisation for Rural Development (WORD) | At-Khajuria, Po-Akul, Via-Sirigida, Dist- Keonjhar- Pin-758076 |
| Women Organisation For Socio-Cultural Awareness (WOSCA) | At/Po- Mandua, Dist-Keonjhar, Pin-758014 |
| Old Rourkela Education Society (ORES) | At/Po-Nabakrushna Nagar, Rourkela ,Pin-769016 |







#917, 3rd C Cross, 9th B Main
Kalyan Nagar, 1st Block
Bangalore 560043, Karnataka, INDIA
Email: df@devfocus.in
Phone: +91 80 2545 1823 / 4123 1813