

Second Edition of

# Leadership Dialogues

**Empower. Strengthen. Innovate.**

*Towards a Safer Future for Our Children*

**Frequently Asked and Most  
Important Questions**

## Elaborate on the concept of child-friendly villages in India.

The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) at the Gram Panchayat level are the first unit of governance that is closest to children, and therefore their actions can uphold the rights of children. Child-friendly local governance, therefore, is a principle and practice wherein local governments play an important role in ensuring all rights of children, as prescribed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Child (UNCRC), are fulfilled. India, as a signatory to the UNCRC, is committed to ensure that all children enjoy their right to survival, development, protection and participation. It is an approach to guarantee children's rights to all their rightful entitlements such as health, nutrition, education, safe drinking water, sanitation, protection from abuse and exploitation, social protection, etc. Child-friendly local governance is also a way to ensure child participation. This can be defined as opportunities that empower children to express their views and opinions freely regarding issues and matters that affect their well-being. A true child participation is a transformative process wherein the power shifts from adults to children and alleviates children from the status of being passive recipients to active stakeholders having power to influence decisions that have an implication on their wellbeing. Participation is also an essence of Sustainable Development Goals; SDG 16.7 in particular emphasizes to 'ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision making at all levels.' Therefore, child participation in matters and functioning of local self governance is a right in itself that would lead to the realization of other rights of children. To read more, please refer to the resources given below.

### Resources:

1. [Child-friendly Villages](#)
2. [Child Friendly Panchayat Initiative](#)

## What is the role of Village level Child Protection Committees?

Mission Vatsalya focuses on activating standing committees of The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in ensuring child welfare and protection. However, the role of Village Child Protection Committee (VCPCs) are as mentioned below:

- To prepare a village need assessment report on the status of children in the area broadly under two categories viz., 'Children in conflict/contact with law' and 'Children in need of care and protection'.
- Mapping of villages to identify the most vulnerable children and encouraging parents for protection of children in the villages.
- Orientation of community & children on raising voices against any form of violence on children.
- Awareness raising in community to combat child trafficking, to prevent child marriages, child labour practices & migration of children for labour purposes.
- Awareness & sensitization of parents to send their children regularly to school.
- Time-to-time campaign to raise awareness on child protection issues in villages.

- Submitting periodic report to Block Level Child Protection Committee (BLCPC) to appraise them about the key challenges, achievements & opportunities for child protection.
- Drafting annual child protection plan of villages and appraising Block Level Child Protection Committee (BLCPC) about the need to finalize and implement the plan and seek inputs.
- Maintain record of children in the villages, who are not attending school, migrated out of village for child labour, missing children etc.
- Forwarding application to Block Level Child Protection Committee (BLCPC) of specific cases for referral service.
- Discouraging harmful practices that are against child protection for example, sex selective abortion, child marriages, corporal punishments, etc.
- Promoting good practices like birth registration, Aadhar Card registration, school enrolment, migrant register maintenance.
- The VLCPC should liaison with Block Level Child Protection Committee (BLCPC) and District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) for restoration and rehabilitation of rescued trafficked victims, orphan child and unaccompanied children.
- Community-level foster care services as mentioned in Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) shall be promoted by the Village Child Protection Committee (VCPC) on case to case basis, if any child in need of Foster care is present in village.
- Any such activities instructed by Block Level Child Protection Committee (BLCPC), District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) or State Child Protection Society (SCPS) for child protection.
- To promote & encourage child participation and formation of 'Children's Group' in village level.

#### Resources:

[Village Child Protection Committee Toolkit](#)

### **Why is Mission Vatsalya important for Indian society?**

Mission Vatsalya is a roadmap to achieve development and child protection priorities aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. It lays emphasis on child rights, advocacy and awareness along with strengthening of the juvenile justice care and protection system with the motto to 'leave no child behind'. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 provisions and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 form the basic framework for implementation of the Mission.

#### Resources:

[Mission Vatsalya - Implementation Guidelines](#)

### **How can a Superintendent in a CCI contribute to develop a child-friendly village? Will it be beneficial for children at the CCI?**

Superintendents have an important role to play. They can raise awareness in the community about Government programmes and schemes for children. Through their work, they can also identify vulnerable children in the community and prepare Child Protection Plan covering each child and sharing it with competent authority (Child Welfare Committee, Juvenile Justice Board, Police & Judiciary). Yes, it will be beneficial for the children to live with their families for their growth and development. Do let us know how we can assist in this regard.

### **How to ensure utilisation of fund available at local for gatekeeping & welfare of children?**

It is envisaged that the Child Welfare and Protection function needs to be supported and strengthened by the PRIs (Panchayati Raj Institutions) and ULBs (Urban Local Bodies) to ensure a synchronized ecosystem for the welfare and protection of children. Accordingly, provision may be made for these functions from their own revenue resources and the 5% of the untied grant available with Panchayati Raj Institutions and urban local bodies which has been earmarked for women and child related activities.

### **What are the Governmental programs for child protection and how are they to be utilised?**

The overall framework and policies for child protection as mandated by the Government of India are - (A) Mission Vatsalya, (B) Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, and (C) The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. The Government of India has specific programs on child protection such as Sponsorship (state as well), Foster Care, various child protection schemes such as Ladli Yojana.

#### **Resources:**

[Welfare Schemes under the Government of India](#)

### **What is the role of Child Welfare & Protection Committee (CWPC)?**

Major Functions of the Child Welfare and Protection Committees:

- Ensuring safe public spaces and child-friendly atmosphere in the villages/block/ward areas.
- Advise all Village Gram Panchayats to include in Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) provision for support to women and child related activities.
- Ensure provision of municipal budget for women and children in urban ward areas.
- Inspection and assessment of implementation of schemes and programs for children in the area.
- To ensure survey of all children with special needs likely to be in difficult circumstances, orphans, street children etc., and take appropriate actions so that no child is left behind.

- To discuss the status of vulnerable children who are missing, school drop-outs, trafficked victims, migrant children, beggars, orphan, and take appropriate action for their wellbeing.
- To hold special campaigns and awareness drives for promoting child rights and ensuring child protection.
- Ensure support to DCPUs (District Child Protection Unit), CWCs (Child Welfare Committee), JJBs (Juvenile Justice Board) and SJPU (Special Juvenile Police Unit) in carrying out their roles under Juvenile Justice Act/Rules.
- To boost volunteerism in the area of Juvenile Justice and Child Protection.
- To roll out convergent activities fostering rehabilitation and social re-integration of children such as career counselling, skill training enrolment, apprenticeship enrolment, sports clubs/camps, etc.
- Reporting to District Magistrate through DCPU (District Child Protection Unit) regarding vulnerability hotspots and strategy devised for addressing it.
- To organize Bal Panchayats and appoint Child Ambassadors in Villages from amongst children in schools etc.; and, lay down necessary inputs from children on various issues before Gram Panchayats for appropriate action.

#### Resources:

[Mission Vatslaya - Implementation Guidelines](#)

### **How to make the child welfare and protection committee active ?**

In case the Child Welfare and Protection Committees are not active, the District Magistrate and the District Child Protection Unit can be engaged and supported to make them robust and working.

### **How can we develop the care plans and collaborate with government stakeholders?**

Every child is unique and has a unique set of needs. Individual Care Plan (ICP) is required for understanding and assessing the progress of the education, vocational training, physical and mental health needs of a child while in the care system. The Juvenile Justice Act, Sec. 8.3(h) specifies that to dispose of a case or a final order, there is a need for an ICP for a child's rehabilitation. The role of Management Committee comprises of various government stakeholders and CSOs play an important role in developing and finalizing the care plan. There is also a follow-up included in this care plan by a Probation Officer or the District Child Protection Unit or a member of a non-governmental organisation. Now as per the amendment in 2021, the ICP is to be used for children in non-institutional care too. Please refer to Form 7, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Amendment Rules. In addition, you can access the ICP prepared by Miracle Foundation India where necessary additions (in red) have been made in the ICP form without deleting any point from the existing ICP form in Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2015. It was realised that in the absence of any guidelines related to areas of concerns and proposed interventions, most of the domains remained either

empty or checked as not applicable in the ICP form. These guidelines will be particularly useful to the Social Worker/Probation Officer who prepares plans and to the District Child Protection Units (DCPU) which monitor them. The ICP form not applicable in the ICP form. These guidelines will be particularly useful to the Social Worker/Probation Officer who prepares plans and to the District Child Protection Units (DCPU) which monitor them. The Individual Care Plan (ICP) form with addendum by Miracle Foundation India has been widely used by the social workforce since 2018, and they found a transformational difference in the child and family assessment with a crisp and clear intervention plan. It helped them in making a decision about the child through the case management process in consultation with the child and family members. Recently, the Government of Tamil Nadu approved the use of Miracle addendum ICP under a joint partnership of Miracle Foundation India with the Tamil Nadu State Department.

Resource:

[Individual Care Plan Form](#)

### **What are the guidelines or safeguarding measures for individuals working at a community level to identify at-risk children?**

In the Mission Vatsalya, the roles and responsibilities of District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) are mentioned (2.7, (A), 6) as per which DCPU must undertake local vulnerability mapping of the district, in terms of children in difficult circumstances, analyze and monitor trends and patterns for taking appropriate action. In the major functions of the Child Welfare & Protection committee, the Mission Vatsalya says that they must report to District Magistrate through DCPU regarding vulnerability hotspots and the strategy devised for addressing it. In addition,

- There is a study available on the Vulnerabilities assessment of children and families to understand the risks and possibilities of Non-Institutional family-based care models conducted in 3 blocks of Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh by Udayan Care. This study can be helpful in understanding the safeguard measures to be taken for children.
- The Child Safeguarding Policy guidelines of Miracle Foundation India can be considered to understand what measures can be taken to safeguard children.

Resource:

[VM Report - Children & Families](#)

### **Has there any evaluation been done on the process of deinstitutionalization?**

In this regard, it will be good to study the pilot project spearheaded by Miracle Foundation India with its two partner organizations which were two Children's Care Institutions (CCIs) in the Indore District in central India.



The goal of the pilot was to ‘create a replicable model for other CCIs to effectively implement family based and alternative care through systemic change by engaging multiple stakeholders’. The four key objectives for pilot project included:

- Creating a model for other CCIs by putting together learnings and best practice
- Showcase a true transformation by incorporating family-based care into the CCI model
- Strengthening the processes, develop steps for systemic change and gather data for comparative analysis (supporting children in a CCI vs. in a family)
- Engage government and non-government agencies to promote Family-Based Alternative Care (FBAC) for creating sustainable impact

The link to this pilot can be found on the Better Care network. For better understanding on deinstitutionalization in South Asia, please refer to 5th Bicon report.

**Resource:**

[Alternative Care for Children in Asia](#)

### **What is the role of Government institutions in gatekeeping?**

Gatekeeping is a systematic process of referring children and families to appropriate services or care arrangements with the aim of caring for children in their families and preventing unnecessary separation. Hence, the Government institutions play a very critical role in gatekeeping children and safeguarding them. Under the Mission Vatsalya, the Panchayati Raj Institutions and the Urban Local Bodies are meant to act as the first safety net and help identify the issues of safety related to children. Under the Juvenile Justice Act, institutions such as the Child Welfare Committees and the Juvenile Justice Boards play the role of gatekeepers. There is a very important role played by the child helplines as well. Additionally, the role played by institutions such as schools, anganwadi centres are also very important in identifying risks and acting upon preventing children from getting out of safety nets. A closer look at the Mission Vatsalya, Juvenile Justice Act will help elucidate more on the roles of government institutions in safeguarding children and protecting their best interest. Please refer to the link.

**Resource:**

[Gatekeeping as a Systematic Process](#)