

**SNEH**



# **Supporting, Nurturing & Enabling Happy Families**

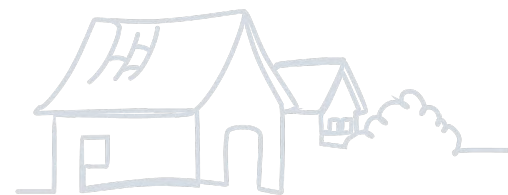
**A Compendium of Perspectives & Practices on  
Family-Based Alternatives from the  
Governments, Practitioners & Stakeholders**

Volume 1: 2025

**Anchored by:**  
Miracle Foundation India

**Launched at:**  
**1<sup>st</sup> National Family Summit**  
February 13-14, 2025, New Delhi







## Table of Contents

<b>Message from the Founder, and Global CEO, The Miracle Foundation.</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Foreword from the Regional Director's Desk.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Acronyms.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2. Care Reforms in India - An Accolade.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>3. Overview of Leadership Dialogue.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>5. Summative Reflection.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Reference Sources for the Compendium.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>QR code for Reference Resources from the Leadership Dialogue.....</b>	<b>79</b>



## Message from the Founder, and Global CEO, The Miracle Foundation

Dear Friends,

For 25 years, Miracle Foundation has been working to ensure that every child can reach their full potential—because we know that children do not just need shelter; they need love, stability, and a family that nurtures them into thriving adults.

This summit is a culmination of that work. It is a gathering of changemakers, thought leaders, and advocates who understand that we must move beyond outdated systems and reimagine child care in a way that truly serves children, families, and society.

India stands as a lighthouse—a beacon of hope for the world—demonstrating what is possible when we take a system that does not work and transform it into one that prioritizes children's well-being, sustainability, and long-term success. Instead of funneling resources into institutions, India has taken bold steps to put support directly into the hands of loving mothers and fathers. This shift isn't just better for children—it's better for everyone. Strengthening families:

- **Prevents unnecessary separation**—imagine losing your child simply because of poverty.
- **Is more compassionate**—no institution can replace the love of a parent.
- **Is five times more cost-effective**—keeping a child in an institution is expensive and less effective.
- **Has been proven to work**—time and again, we have seen that children thrive in families.

We know that institutions cannot raise children. It takes someone who loves them, listens to them, and provides individualized care. It takes a family—one that offers stability, protection, and guidance. These are the things families have given children for millennia, and they remain the foundation for a child's success.

We are so inspired by the work happening in India that we have taken these lessons and this proven methodology to the United States—because no matter where a child lives, they deserve a family.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for caring. Thank you for working to build a future where every child grows up in a strong, supported family. Together, we can create a world where children not only survive—but truly thrive.

**With gratitude,**

**Caroline Boudreaux, Founder & Leslie Beasley, Global CEO  
The Miracle Foundation**



## Foreword from the Regional Director's Desk

It is with great optimism and gratitude, we welcome you to the **National Family Summit**, the first annual event convening government leaders, practitioners, and key stakeholders to champion family-based care, is being launched with the vision of making it an annual platform that celebrates and promotes best practices to ensure that children grow up in loving families. A key highlight of this summit is the **Leadership Compendium**, which captures insights from five leadership dialogues, reflections from expert panels, and recognition of the significant progress made in child care reform—particularly in the post-COVID era. More than a collection of perspectives, this compendium is a testament to the collective efforts driving systemic, sustainable change in India's child protection landscape.

This year, **Miracle Foundation celebrates 25 years** of transforming lives. Our journey began with a focus on **Child Care Institutions (CCIs)**, improving the lives of over 10,000 children. Along the way, we asked fundamental questions—who are the children in CCIs, why are they there, and do they truly need institutional care? Our findings were eye-opening: most children in CCIs had living parents or extended families. They were not orphaned but separated due to **poverty, lack of support, and systemic gaps**. This realization changed everything. Instead of focusing solely on CCIs, we turned to **strengthening families**, guided by the **Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act, 2015**, and now the **Mission Vatsalya (2022) guidelines**.

In 2017, our friends, **Hope and Homes for Children** took us to Rwanda, where we saw firsthand how strengthening families could serve as an alternative to institutional care. They shared their model that inspired the work we do today. We learned from incredible organizations in India, including CINI, Leher, Udayan Care, Changing the Way We Care, Catalyst for Social Action, Save the Children (Bal Raksha Bharat) Prerana, and Where Are India's Children (WAIC), who demonstrated how stronger families and communities create better environments for children.

By 2019, we piloted our work with **UNICEF**, scaling family-based care and family strengthening in four states. When the **COVID-19 pandemic** hit, it reinforced what we had long believed—children could thrive in family settings when the right support systems were in place. This led us to adapt our intensive work into an **Expedited Case Management System (ECM)**, ensuring some structured, timely, and effective support for safe reintegration.

Over time, we realized the scale of the issue extended beyond children already in institutions. While children in the system receive some level of intervention, those living on the margins, in **unsafe, unsupported families**, remain largely invisible. The real challenge is reaching them before they are separated. **Prevention must be at the core of our efforts**—by addressing **poverty, lack of services, and the absence of a social safety net**, we can keep families intact and reduce the need for alternative care. The focus must shift from intervention after separation to **strengthening families before separation happens**.

This shift has driven our work, leading to the transformation of CCIs into **family support centers**, where staff and infrastructure are repurposed to help children remain with their families. Two of our long-term



CCI partners Cornerstone and Aarambh have already completed this transition and continue to inspire many others as probably the first of the few who made a structured shift in strategy from institutional care to family based care.

As we continue to work towards our goal of a family for every child, we remain committed to fostering collaboration, empowering communities, and creating sustainable solutions for vulnerable children and their families. One such network that Miracle Foundation India actively engages with is the India Alternative Care Network (IACN).

Today, our commitment is stronger than ever. Over the past year, we have placed over 2,000 children into safe, nurturing families, improved the lives of more than 276,000 children, connected over 1,000 families to social protection schemes, and trained thousands of social workers and government officials to better support vulnerable families across 10 states in India. Looking ahead, we continue to innovate, with **ThriveWell**, our **technology-driven case management tool**, enabling social workers to provide individualized support and scale impact. We continue to invest in the belief and alongside all of you, we are sure this will be a reality one day and soon. With the support and as part of networks like the **India Alternative Care Network (IACN)**, **Neev Collective** and the **Care Collective** we are bringing together the brightest minds and boldest solutions to create a future where **every child belongs in a family**.

We deeply acknowledge the contribution of all the stakeholders featured in the compendium, across the Government, Civil Society Organisations building a supportive ecosystem around the child. As we celebrate this milestone, we do so with **deep gratitude**. To our **government partners, civil society organizations, donors, and frontline changemakers**—thank you. Your unwavering support has made this journey possible. Together, we will continue to build a future where **every child grows up in a strong, supported family**.

**With Gratitude,**

**Kusum Mohapatra**

Regional Director (Asia & Africa) & CEO India



## Acronyms

<b>BICON</b>	:	Biennial Conference on Alternative Care in Asia
<b>BCN</b>	:	Better Care Network
<b>CCI</b>	:	Child Care Institution
<b>CSO</b>	:	Civil Society Organization
<b>CWC</b>	:	Child Welfare Committee
<b>CWPC</b>	:	Child Welfare & Protection Committee
<b>DCPU</b>	:	District Child Protection Unit
<b>DSWO</b>	:	District Social Welfare Office
<b>FS</b>	:	Family Strengthening
<b>F-BAC</b>	:	Family-Based Alternative Care
<b>GEET</b>	:	GIS Enabled Entitlement Tracking System
<b>GHAR</b>	:	GO Home and Re-Unite
<b>IACN</b>	:	India Alternative Care Network
<b>ICDS</b>	:	Integrated Child Development Services
<b>ICB</b>	:	Institutionalised Children Explorations & Beyond
<b>IAP</b>	:	Individual Aftercare Plan
<b>ICP</b>	:	Individual Care Plan
<b>JJA</b>	:	Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection) of Children Act 2015
<b>LBSNAA</b>	:	Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration
<b>LIFT</b>	:	Learning in Fellowship Together
<b>MWCD</b>	:	Ministry of Women & Child Development
<b>MoPR</b>	:	Ministry of Panchayati Raj
<b>NCPCR</b>	:	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
<b>NIPCCD</b>	:	National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development
<b>NCLN</b>	:	National Care Leavers Network
<b>PAPs</b>	:	Prospective Adoptive Parents
<b>POCSO</b>	:	Protection of Children from Sexual Offence Act 2012
<b>PRIs</b>	:	Panchayati Raj Institutions
<b>SAMVAD</b>	:	Support Advocacy & Mental Health Interventions for Children in Vulnerable Circumstances And Distress
<b>SDG</b>	:	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SIR</b>	:	Social Investigation Report



## 1. Introduction

Miracle Foundation India's tryst with what is called today as 'Leadership Dialogue' by the organisation goes back to December 2020, when a year long webinar series was organised on case management process in transitioning children from Child Care Institutions (CCIs) into families, family-based alternative care, as well as prevention of children' separated from families.

During the Covid era, the Government and civil society organisations (CSO) leveraged the virtual medium of webinars to reach out to the child protection functionaries, the frontline case workers of NGOs, Government, care experienced youth, ICDS workers, families. The intent was to respond to the emergency situation created by the pandemic, with specific practical guidance, inputs for making available support for children, families as far as possible. This included hands-on capacity building in expedited case management, remote followup, psycho social support etc.

Through its own experience, observation and learning from significant others in the child protection ecosystem, Miracle Foundation India was clear about its responsibility to strategically carve an inclusive platform that enables every child to thrive in a loving and safe family. The platform was titled as 'Leadership Dialogue', a series signifying continuity in dialogues rather than closure, which serves to:

- Amplify narratives, influences the ecosystem, and deepens the impact of work done in the area of Family Strengthening (FS) and Family-Based Alternative Care (F-BAC) in India.
- Foster collaboration among government bodies, civil society organizations, experts, and youth with lived experiences while facilitating the exchange of best practices, recognition, celebration of the contribution of the child protection workforce.
- Initiative will be carried out in joint partnership with the Government stakeholders, care experienced youth, and practitioners, not influenced by any one organization's mandate.

For each Leadership Dialogue, the panelists comprised a diverse group intended to generate rich and insightful discussions during the session, contributing to a holistic approach to children and family well-being. The panel speakers included:

- Senior Government officials with seasoned stints in the domain of child protection and allied areas, as well as





- ➔ Experienced practitioners who were well-versed in areas such as transition, prevention, continuum of care.
- ➔ Representation from youth, individuals with lived experiences affiliated with various networks and CSOs.
- ➔ External subject matter experts

With due preparation, Miracle Foundation India launched the first leadership dialogue on 26th October 2023. Chapter three in this compendium delves into an overview of the five leadership dialogues held between 26th October 2023 and 25th September 2024. The seeds of the ideas from the leadership dialogue is at the root of instituting the 1st National Family Summit by Miracle Foundation India in February 2025. Miracle Foundation India definitely wanted to present a consolidated glimpse of the reflections generated, a compendium of resources collated in the five leadership dialogues over one year.

We realised that we would not do justice to this publication if this was not supplemented with an expression of our gratitude to the remarkable contribution, work done by diverse stakeholders towards child care reforms in the country. Therefore Miracle Foundation India came up with ***'SNEH: Supporting Nurturing Enabling Happy Families', A Compendium of Perspectives & Practices on Family-Based Alternatives from the Government, Practitioners & Stakeholders.*** The compendium will be an annual feature of the National Family Summit every year henceforth.

The Volume 1 of this compendium harbours a recollection of the landscape of child care reforms in India over the last four years (covid and post covid); conceptualisation of the series and an overview of the five leadership dialogues; commentary from the panel of speakers who steered us to reflect on the subject, pick up learning insights, set in food for thought for innovative thinking, courage to be in action in spite of odds; a repertoire of FAQs tabled from among the participants, basket of reference resources from across the sector.





## 2. Care Reforms in India - An Accolade

The chapter is an acknowledgement to all the work that has happened over the years within the child protection sector in India which exhibits the realisation of the power of families in shaping the development, future of children. The time span considered for this recollection is the post covid era, over the course of the last four years.

The chapter throws light on the significant shifts in legislative, policy areas and its implementation through initiatives taken by the Central, State Governments, intergovernmental organisations; strategies for a child centric ecosystem reflected in the work done by the CSOs. A deep dive is taken into the strategy of building a supportive ecosystem around the child, building on areas of capacity building of the social workforce, data driven decision making, children & youth voices in care reforms, collective action, media & public awareness, technology as an enabler, funding support, such that every child can grow up in a family, where they are loved and supported, fulfilling their potential and contributing to a brighter future for all.

### 2.1 Shifts in legislative and Policy Space

---

The term "care reforms" in the context of family-based alternative care in India finds its genesis in the convergence of global principles, national legal frameworks, and grassroots work, which collectively aim to prioritize the best interests of children and uphold their right to grow up in a safe nurturing family environment. There is a global and national consensus that children can achieve holistic development and mental well-being only in a family and related setup. In December 2019, the UN General Assembly adopted a Resolution on the Rights of The Child on the same lines. In the Resolution, all of the 193 member states of the United Nations agreed that institutions harm children and recognized that the vast majority of children in institutions having living families should be reunited with or supported to remain with their families. As a signatory to the Resolution, India has witnessed significant progress in aligning its policies and practices with this global commitment.

- In recent years, India has witnessed a pivotal shift in its legislative and policy landscape, emphasizing care reform by reducing reliance on institutionalization and prioritizing prevention and gatekeeping measures. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and Mission Vatsalya (2022) reflect a



promising commitment in this direction. **The JJ Act 2015 Amendment 2021<sup>1</sup>, JJ Model Amendment Rules 2022<sup>2</sup>** strengthened India's child protection framework by promoting non-institutional care, focus on quality assessments, expediting processes, and ensuring accountability through enhanced oversight of Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) and CCIs. The amendments reclassified certain crimes against children as serious offenses, making them non-bailable, and mandated stricter criteria for appointing CWC members to ensure competence. The amendments also streamlined adoption processes, integrated technology, and reinforced mechanisms for care and justice, prioritizing the welfare and rights of children.

- ➔ **The Adoption (Amendment) Regulations, 2022<sup>3</sup>** aimed to simplify and streamline the adoption process in India, ensuring transparency, accountability, and a child-centric approach. Key changes included faster timelines, improved mechanisms for prospective adoptive parents (PAPs), and stricter oversight of adoption agencies. The amendments aligned with the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, enhancing the role of CWCs and empowering District Magistrates (DMs) to issue adoption orders. There was also a simplification of inter-country adoptions for NRIs and OCIs (Overseas Citizens of India), ensuring compliance with international standards. By leveraging technology, the regulations prioritized the rights, safety, and well-being of children, making adoption more efficient and equitable.
- ➔ The **Guidelines of Mission Vatsalya<sup>4</sup>** articulated the vision and commitment and increased the focus, visibility, funding, and emphasis on preventing family separation and promoting a safe, nurturing, and protected environment for children's holistic development. The Mission Vatsalya Guidelines 2022 center on strengthening families and promoting family-based alternative care to ensure the holistic well-being of children. The guidelines prioritized family preservation as the first line of support, aiming to prevent the need for institutionalization by addressing vulnerabilities within families through community-based interventions and support services. For children without parental care, the focus shifted to family-based alternative care avenues like adoption, foster care, and sponsorship, reducing reliance on institutional care. By enhancing the capacities of CWCs, District Child Protection Units (DCPUs), and CCIs, and integrating technology for accountability and transparency, Mission Vatsalya reinforced the principle that every child deserves the stability and nurturing of a family environment.

<sup>1</sup> [https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/JJ%20Amendment%20Act%20-2021\\_.PDF](https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/JJ%20Amendment%20Act%20-2021_.PDF)

<sup>2</sup> [https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/JJ%20Model%20Amendment%20Rules%202022%20\(english\)\\_27.pdf](https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/JJ%20Model%20Amendment%20Rules%202022%20(english)_27.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/adoption%20regulations%202022%20english\\_27.pdf](https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/adoption%20regulations%202022%20english_27.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://missionvatsalya.wcd.gov.in/public/pdf/children-related-law/vatsalyaguideline.pdf>



- The Government of India has **restructured CHILDLINE 1098** by integrating its services with the Ministry of Home Affairs **112 ERSS** to enhance its efficiency, accountability, and integration within the national child protection framework. By transitioning its management from NGO-led operations to direct oversight by the Ministry of Women & Child Development (MWCD), the Government aimed to standardize services, leverage advanced technology for case management, and ensure seamless coordination with statutory bodies like CWCs and DCPUs. This serves as a prime example of systemic change, with CHILDLINE integrated and mainstreamed within the Government framework. However, achieving the successful integration of CHILDLINE into the system will require more time and sustained efforts.
- The **Foster Care Guidelines 2024**<sup>5</sup> emphasized a stronger shift toward family-based care, prioritizing foster care as a sustainable alternative to institutional care for children in need. The key shifts included expanding eligibility criteria to include a broader range of vulnerable children, such as those from families experiencing domestic violence, substance abuse, or extreme poverty. In the order of preference for placing a child in foster care, the extended family of the child was given the highest priority. The guidelines introduced increased financial support for foster families, now ₹4,000 per child per month, to ease the financial burden and encourage more families to participate. The guidelines ensured a more structured, transparent adoption process, allowing foster parents to apply for adoption after a minimum of two years, once the child was legally free for adoption. Additionally, the guidelines integrated aftercare services to support children transitioning out of foster care into independent living, enhancing their prospects for holistic development and successful reintegration into society.
- The **Model Guidelines under Section 39 of The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012**, issued by the MWCD in September 2013, aimed to enhance the support system for child victims of sexual offences during legal proceedings. These guidelines focused on the involvement of professionals and experts to assist children at pre-trial and trial stages, ensuring a child-friendly and sensitive approach throughout the judicial process. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act, 2019 and POCSO Rules 2020 included new categories of offenses, such as child pornography and sexual assault committed during a natural calamity or in situations of distress.

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://cara.wcd.gov.in/pdf/MODEL%20FOSTERCARE%20GUIDELINES,%202024.pdf>



- ➔ **The Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act 2023** provided for safeguarding children's personal data and ensuring that their online privacy was protected, which was especially important as the Government pushes for alternatives to institutional care and enhances support systems for children within family environments. The Act emphasized the need for informed consent when collecting personal data of children, which indirectly supported family-based care models by ensuring that families were well-informed and involved in decisions related to children's data. As part of deinstitutionalization efforts, many children were interacting with digital platforms for education, healthcare, and welfare services. The DPDP Act mandated strict guidelines to prevent the collection and misuse of children's data by online platforms, thereby minimizing the risk of online exploitation, trafficking, and harmful exposure.

## 2.2 Next Steps towards implementation of the legislative, policy shifts

---

The **State Governments in collaboration with UNICEF and the CSOs have developed strategic action plans**, comprising comprehensive plans and guidelines for care reform on deinstitutionalization and promoting Family-Based Alternative Care (F-BAC) and preventing family separation. Improvement in case management systems through building capacities and supporting family strengthening services, led to increased placements of children in family-based alternative care, family tracing for reintegration and identification of children who were vulnerable to abuse, violence and exploitation. Support for aftercare for care-leaving youth through the mobilization and collectivization efforts led to the formation of a **The Association of Indian Care Leavers** (erstwhile National Care Leavers Network) and linkages with the private sector for job readiness and vocational training.

- ➔ The MWCD issued **directives under Mission Vatsalya to all States and Union Territories (UTs) to enhance non-institutional care mechanisms for children**. The scheme offered a monthly grant of ₹4,000 per child for sponsorship, foster care, and aftercare, aiming to ensure that children receive care within family settings rather than institutional environments. In a recent communication, the MWCD highlighted a significant increase in the number of children under non-institutional care, noting a fourfold rise between 2021-22 and 2023-24. The



number of children in non-institutional care (foster care, aftercare, sponsorship, adoption) has risen from 29,331 to 1,21,861<sup>6</sup>.

- ➔ Further the Ministry also issued **guidelines under Mission Vatsalya to strengthen child protection mechanisms through local governance**. These guidelines envisaged the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to ensure a synchronized ecosystem for the welfare and protection of children. The PRIs and ULBs would incorporate child welfare and protection functions into their existing committees. Local bodies were tasked with issuing official notifications to establish Child Welfare and Protection Committees (CWPC) at various levels—state, district, block, and village—to oversee the implementation of child protection programs. Accordingly, provision was made for these functions from their own revenue resources and the 5% of the united grant available with PRIs and ULBs which was earmarked for women and child related activities.

Additionally, the guidelines stressed the importance of training local personnel, building community engagement, and ensuring local ownership of child welfare initiatives. Through these measures, the MWCD aims to create a robust, multi-level system for child protection, ensuring that children's safety and well-being are prioritized across the country.

- ➔ The **NCPCR Guidelines for 'Support Persons' under Section 39 of the POCSO Act (2023)**<sup>7</sup> build upon earlier frameworks with several key enhancements. Unlike previous guidelines, the NCPCR mandated the appointment of a support person for every child victim of sexual abuse, ensuring that all children receive consistent assistance throughout the legal process. Additionally, the guidelines introduced real-time tracking of cases through the **NCPCR's POCSO Tracking Portal**, enhancing accountability and case monitoring from pre-trial to trial completion. The guidelines also emphasize the creation of a comprehensive rehabilitation plan for victims, linking them to relevant support services and compensation mechanisms. Moreover, the guidelines required an annual review of support persons' performance by the

DCPO, ensuring continuous improvement in service delivery. These revisions signify a more structured, accountable, and holistic approach to supporting child victims of sexual abuse.

<sup>6</sup> Children in non- institutional care rise fourfold between 2021-2024, Business Standard, [https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/children-in-non-institutional-care-rise-fourfold-between-2021-2024-govt-124071000928\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/children-in-non-institutional-care-rise-fourfold-between-2021-2024-govt-124071000928_1.html)

<sup>7</sup>[https://ncpcr.gov.in/uploads/172422913166c5a60bbfda7\\_final-guidelines-on-section-39-of-pocso-act-2012-dated-18032024-1-33.pdf](https://ncpcr.gov.in/uploads/172422913166c5a60bbfda7_final-guidelines-on-section-39-of-pocso-act-2012-dated-18032024-1-33.pdf)



- ➔ In its order dated November 20, 2023, the Supreme Court emphasized the need for expeditious **identification of children in the "Orphan, Abandoned, and Surrendered" (OAS) category, as well as those without parental visitation**, and to facilitate their adoption. The Court noted that, out of 760 districts in the country, only 390 districts had Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs), highlighting the necessity for all districts to establish SAAs to facilitate the adoption process. These measures aimed to streamline the adoption process, ensuring efficiency, transparency, and child-centric outcomes<sup>8</sup>.
- ➔ An MOU was signed for the **E-SAMPARK program** between the MWCD and Indian Academy of Pediatrics to provide free online consultation to children residing in CCIs run by or funded by the Government of India across the country. Around 2,100 CCIs with 70,000 children would benefit from this program. The initiative was taken in the backdrop of COVID pandemic, so as to ensure expert medical advice was made available to children living in CCIs without getting impacted by COVID related constraints on physical movement<sup>9</sup>.

### 2.2.1 State Strategy / Action Plans

- ➔ The **Revised Plan for Building Alternative Care for Children and Deinstitutionalization in Kerala (2024-2029)**<sup>10</sup> represented a strategic shift toward family-based care solutions, aiming to reduce reliance on institutional settings. The State Government launched a comprehensive five-year action plan targeting a 50% reduction in the number of residents in CCIs. This initiative seeks to reintegrate children into family environments, thereby promoting their psychological well-being and development.

A significant aspect of this plan was the profiling of children currently residing in care homes to identify their specific needs and family backgrounds. Approximately 60% of over 11,000 children in these institutions had family connections. By addressing underlying issues such as financial constraints, lack of education, and parental substance abuse, the government aimed to strengthen these families and facilitate the reintegration of children into their homes.

<sup>8</sup> <https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/IEC%20Website.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> MWCD Annual Report 2023-24: <https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/five-year-strategic-plan-to-reduce-by-50-the-number-of-children-living-in-institutions/article67835417.ece>



The de-institutionalisation strategy also included pilot campaigns in select districts to ensure that children do not return to institutional care. These campaigns involved assessing individual family situations and providing necessary support to prevent re-institutionalisation. However, concerns were raised by the child rights activists regarding the safety and well-being of children post-reintegration, highlighting the need for robust follow-up mechanisms to monitor and support these children effectively.

- ➔ The **Madhya Pradesh State Action Plan for Child Protection (2023-2027)** focused on strengthening family-based alternative care<sup>11</sup> and de-institutionalization. The plan aimed to reduce reliance on institutional care by promoting foster care, sponsorship, and family reunification, with regular identification drives to reconnect children with their biological parents. A comprehensive five-year action plan would outline strategies for family strengthening, and nodal officers would be appointed to oversee alternative care and aftercare services. Vulnerability mapping would be conducted across districts to link children in difficult circumstances to appropriate care programs. Additionally, the development of a Management Information System (MIS) would ensure comprehensive data on alternative care services.

## 2.3 The Civil Society Initiatives

---

### 2.3.1 Strategies for a Child Centric Ecosystem

As per the **Let's Go Home report**<sup>12</sup> published by DASRA in 2022, children and families in distress, and the child protection system at large faced several challenges in ensuring family for every child. In order to address these gaps, the Indian civil society organizations spearheaded some innovative and impactful strategies to build a more child-centric ecosystem. Engagements with sector leaders, experts and review of existing literature pointed towards five priority areas of action that if invested in, had the potential to catalyse the vision of a family for every child.

As laid out in the report and also in addition to that, the section below is a description of these strategies, correspondingly calling out examples of organisations doing that work:

---

<sup>11</sup>[https://mphc.gov.in/PDF/web\\_pdf/JJC/PDF/publication/Madhya%20Pradesh%20State%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Child%20Protection%202023-2027.pdf](https://mphc.gov.in/PDF/web_pdf/JJC/PDF/publication/Madhya%20Pradesh%20State%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Child%20Protection%202023-2027.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.dasra.org/individual-resources/112>





- ➔ **Empower families and existing community based safety nets:** Regular mapping and assessment of families in distress by the State and identifying their vulnerabilities was key to family strengthening. Understanding family strengthening as a comprehensive bouquet of services and its integration as an essential component in the continuum of care was essential. Community-based child protection groups, local self-government bodies, and other community stakeholders serve as the strong conduits and proponents of family strengthening services. Convergence of community mechanisms and stakeholders with child protection mechanisms at all levels enabled gatekeeping, referrals, and linkages with services on a needs basis. Exemplified through the work of Save the Children India, Leher, Child In Need Institute (CINI), ECHO Centre for Juvenile Justice.<sup>13</sup>
- ➔ **Equip nodal points within the child protection system:** Formal (Child Protection Committees CPCs,CWCs) and informal community led (Self Help Groups SHGs, allied) systems of gatekeeping had the potential to prevent the child from entering the child protection system. Effective gatekeeping required coordinated efforts across multisectoral community-based systems that children, families and communities regularly interacted with, including but not limited to schools, day care centres, healthcare units, local police, and child protection committees. Strengthening such nodal systems could help keep the child within families and communities instead of within institutions. Exemplified through the work of Where Are India's Children (WAIC), leveraging technology to enable tracking of children within the system, Gatekeeping work facilitated with CWCs, Panchayats across states by Miracle Foundation India.
- ➔ **Strengthen aftercare support to care leavers:** Gradual and supported transition out of Alternative Care settings was the key to ensure that young adults “aging out” of the system prosper in their lives as they move forward. The transition to aftercare demanded youth to have emotional stability, functional skills and financial independence. The role of a well-designed aftercare program was to ensure sustained delivery of key rehabilitative services required by youth emerging out of care systems, as well as hand-holding them until they learn to cope on their own. Exemplified through the work of Udayan Care, Make a Difference, Catalyst for Social Action.
- ➔ **Build and collectivize the ecosystem surrounding the child:** In addition to programmatic priorities to strengthen service provision, it was critical to foster

<sup>13</sup> ECHO Centre of Juvenile Justice: <https://echoindia.org/>





an inclusive and supportive environment to ensure positive life outcomes for children across all stages in their journey through the child protection system. This required:

- Capacity Building of the Social Workforce
- Data driven Decision Making
- Children & Youth's Voices in Care Reforms
- Collective Action
- Public Awareness
- Technology as an Enabler
- Funding Support

### 2.3.2 Capacity Building of the Social Workforce

Capacity-building efforts represent a vital investment in human resources that was central to the effective implementation of child rights frameworks. By empowering social workers and stakeholders with comprehensive training and practical tools, these initiatives pave the way for a more resilient, informed, and compassionate workforce, ensuring that every child receives the care, protection, and support they deserve. Over the years, capacity building of the child protection workforce in spheres of child protection, family strengthening, family-based alternative care was extensively carried out by the MWCD through the National Institute of Public Cooperation & Child Development (**NIPCCD**)<sup>14</sup>, the State Government training institutes, UNICEF and various civil society organisations e.g. Miracle Foundation India, Udayan Care and others.

- ➔ Under Mission Vatsalya Scheme, NIPCCD has conducted 129 training programmes during the financial year 2023-24. A three day consultation was organized by the Ministry in March 2023 at NIPCCD to improve adaptability of Mission Vatsalya portal by its user/stakeholders. A virtual technical training session on the training modules of Institutional and non-institutional care in the Mission Vatsalya Portal for North Eastern States (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura) was organized by the Ministry in November 2023.
- ➔ **MWCD collaborated with NIMHANS<sup>15</sup>** which established a National Initiative & Integrated Resource Centre for Child Protection, Mental Health, and Psychosocial Care named “**SAMVAD**” (**Support Advocacy & Mental Health Interventions for Children in Vulnerable Circumstances And Distress**) at

<sup>14</sup> MWCD Annual Report 2023-24: <https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report>

<sup>15</sup> MWCD Annual Report 2022-23: <https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report>



NIMHANS, in Bangalore. SAMVAD worked in four key thematic areas, namely Mental Health, Care & Protection, Education and Policy & Law. During 1st Jan, 2022 to 31st December, 2022, SAMVAD reached out to a total of 27,940 stakeholders in 33 States/UTs through various training and capacity building programs and through public discourse series conducted via virtual knowledge network systems.

- ➔ The **MWCD has partnered with the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA)**<sup>16</sup> to develop an online training module for capacity building of multiple stakeholders for strengthening implementation of child rights with a special focus on the Juvenile Justice Act in India. The online course was launched on Child Rights on 2nd July, 2023 during Regional Symposium on ‘Child Protection, Child Safety and Child Welfare’ in Delhi. The course is available through digital platforms such as “iGOT”, as part of ‘Mission Karmayogi’ (a capacity- building programme for civil servants, with an aim to upgrade the post-recruitment training mechanism of the officers and employees at all levels”), with the following content:

- Introduction to Child Rights & Juvenile Justice System.
- Child in Need for Care and Protection
- Child In Conflict With Law
- Institutional & Non-Institutional Care

- ➔ Social Work with Children and Families as a field has grown considerably in terms of perspective, scope and requirement of professional expertise for the potential social workforce. In this direction, **the Centre for Equity and Justice for Children & Families at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)**<sup>17</sup> offers a Masters course in Social Work with Children and Families. The course provides students with a critical understanding of the diversities of childhoods, family as a context for individual development, as well as policies, legislations and macro level developmental processes impacting children and families. The students will have improved capabilities to translate theory into practice. They will reflectively work with children and families in addressing particular problem situations and vulnerabilities such as children on the streets, abandoned and destitute children, child labour, children of sex workers, children with disabilities, children in conflict with law and other children and families in difficult circumstances.

<sup>16</sup>MWCD Annual Report 2023-24: <https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report>

<sup>17</sup><https://www.tiss.edu/view/6/mumbai-campus/school-of-social-work/centre-for-equity-and-justice-for-children-and-fam/about-8/>



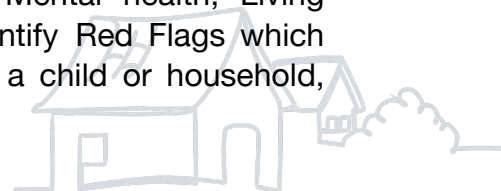
The initiatives outlined highlight a robust and multifaceted approach to capacity building within the social workforce, aimed at enhancing the care and protection of children in India. From Mission Vatsalya's extensive training programs to SAMVAD's integrated psychosocial and mental health interventions, these efforts emphasized the importance of equipping stakeholders with the skills and knowledge necessary to address the diverse needs of vulnerable children. Collaborative initiatives with institutions like NIMHANS, LBSNAA, and TISS further underscored the value of specialized training, innovative digital modules, and advanced academic programs in fostering a more responsive and professional social work ecosystem.

### 2.3.3 Data Driven Decision Making

Data-driven decision-making was pivotal in child care reforms, as it enabled a deeper understanding of vulnerabilities, enhanced targeted interventions, and informed systemic transformation. By leveraging tools, frameworks, and research, stakeholders could create holistic care systems that responded to diverse needs, ensured child safety, and built sustainable, family-centered care models. This integration of evidence-based strategies not only optimizes resources but also sets the foundation for a future where every child thrives in a supportive and nurturing environment.

- The use of **JJA tools of Individual Care Plan (ICP), Social Investigation Report (SIR)** was integrally used in child and family assessment by the social workforce. These tools helped to assess unique child specific characteristics, needs, support correspondingly family specific background factors, strengths, vulnerabilities, insecurities.
- The **Thrive Scale™ tool** was a family participatory evaluation tool developed by Miracle Foundation India which enabled the child protection workforce towards conducting risk assessment, intervention planning, progress tracking, data-based decisions, for reintegration of children from CCIs to families & preventing separation from families, ensure a holistic and effective approach to family strengthening.

The tool aided in determining whether intervention was needed and assisted in planning immediate and long-term actions across the wellbeing areas of Family and Social Relationship, Education, Health including Mental health, Living Conditions, Household Economy. It also helped to identify Red Flags which were urgent concerns that signal immediate threats to a child or household,



requiring swift interventions, timely responses, ensuring child safety and preventing harm.

- ➔ The State Government departments were coming up with / using the **vulnerability mapping frameworks, The Department of Women, Child Development & Social Security, Government of Jharkhand as well as the Directorate of Women & Child Development, Government of Madhya Pradesh**<sup>18</sup> laid out the structured framework designed to assess and quantify the risk levels of children in vulnerable situations. It evaluated key components such as family composition, health status, education, age, living environment, safety, nutrition, emotional well-being, and parental responsibilities. Ultimately, the tool facilitated targeted action to address the immediate needs of children in vulnerable situations and supported long-term child protection planning.
- ➔ The **NCPCR's Vulnerability Mapping Tool** and Madhya Pradesh's (MP) Vulnerability Mapping Tool shared the common objective of identifying and addressing risks faced by children in need of care and protection. However, these differed in scope, methodology, and specific focus areas. While the MP Government vulnerability mapping tool was more tailored to the specific needs and challenges of Madhya Pradesh, emphasizing localized implementation and grassroots engagement, the tool developed by the NCPCR was broader, standardized, and designed for national application. The Commission initiated an exercise of vulnerability mapping through the programme Samvardhan to Combat child trafficking along with other existing mechanisms.
- ➔ The **India Alternative Care Network (IACN), in collaboration with Changing the Way We Care (CTWWC), Better Care Network (BCN), and UNICEF India**, were in process of working to strengthen the transition from residential care models to community-based family services in *India*. The initiative aimed to bring together key actors to build a shared understanding of the transition process, and the necessary support mechanisms, and to adapt the **global transition framework and tools**<sup>19</sup> to the Indian context. This would lead to the formation and training of a pool of Master Trainers to support those working with CCIs in transitioning to family-based services. The **Residential Care Service Transition Framework tool**<sup>20</sup> was developed by Better Care Network & Kinnected - an initiative of ACC International Relief, with support from Changing the Way We Care.

<sup>18</sup>[https://mpwcdmis.gov.in/Downloads/Consolidated%20Vulnerability%20Mapping%20Tools\\_Revised%2024-03-2021.pdf](https://mpwcdmis.gov.in/Downloads/Consolidated%20Vulnerability%20Mapping%20Tools_Revised%2024-03-2021.pdf)

<sup>19</sup><https://bettercarenetwork.org/transitioning-models-of-care-assessment-tool-overview>

<sup>20</sup><https://bettercarenetwork.org/phases-of-transitioning>



- ➔ **Institutionalised Children Explorations & Beyond (ICB)<sup>21</sup>**: is an international, multi-disciplinary, double anonymized peer-reviewed academic journal launched in March 2014 by Udayan Care to deliberate on policy, practice and gaps in family strengthening and alternative care for children and youth without parental care. Since the year 2020, this journal has been published in partnership with SAGE Publications. The journal included manuscripts from across the globe with more regional focus on the eight South Asian countries. So far 20 issues of the journal were released with key cover themes over the years including Aftercare & Care Leavers, Child Trafficking & Family Strengthening, Way forward for Alternative Care in SAARC region, Child Sexual Abuse in Alternative Care, Deinstitutionalisation, Alternative Care for Children & Young Persons with Disabilities, kinship care etc. It has been a voice for alternative care for over a decade and is now recognised by the UGC (University Grants Commission) in India.
- ➔ **Space 2 Grow**: a social impact consulting firm, conducted a comprehensive study post covid, titled "**Digital Safety of Children: Creating Safe Online Spaces<sup>22</sup>**," supported by Omidyar Network India. The research provided an in-depth understanding of children's online behaviors and the associated risks, aiming to enhance digital safety measures for young users.

The research findings highlighted significant online risks faced by children, including exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and exploitation, compounded by a lack of awareness among children and parents about digital safety practices and available tools. It underscored the critical roles of parents, educators, technology companies, and policymakers in ensuring safe online environments. The key recommendations included introducing digital literacy programs to educate children, parents, and educators about online risks and safe practices; developing and enforcing child-protection policies such as age-appropriate design standards and stricter content moderation; encouraging technology companies to create child-friendly platforms with robust safety features like parental controls and content filtering mechanisms. A collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach was essential to fostering safer digital spaces for children.

---

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.udayancare.org/research-and-publication/journal>

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.space2grow.in/\\_files/ugd/d2759d\\_1d02f7bd0f964d94bee83459677254ad.pdf](https://www.space2grow.in/_files/ugd/d2759d_1d02f7bd0f964d94bee83459677254ad.pdf)



As part of the research, Space2Grow developed the "URBKAP" framework, which offered a structured approach to evaluate and enhance digital safety strategies for children:

- Usage (U): How children use the internet, including time spent online and the types of platforms accessed.
- Risks (R): The potential dangers encountered during online activities.
- Behavior (B): Children's actions and interactions in digital spaces.
- Knowledge (K): Awareness of online threats and digital safety measures.
- Attitude (A): Perceptions and mindset towards digital safety.
- Practice (P): Implementation of safety measures and responsible online behavior.

Space2Grow actively engaged with various stakeholders to promote child digital safety. A notable collaboration was with Vedantu, an online education platform, to launch the Online Child Safety Benchmarking Framework<sup>23</sup>. The framework aimed at setting benchmarks and best practices for creating secure online learning environments, particularly in educational contexts.

From tools like the Individual Care Plan (ICP) and Social Investigation Report (SIR) that support child-specific assessments to innovative frameworks like Miracle Foundation India's Thrive Scale™ and the vulnerability mapping tools employed by state governments, these initiatives demonstrated the power of evidence-based approaches in strengthening child protection systems. Research endeavors such as Space2Grow's study on digital safety and Udayan Care's *Institutionalised Children Explorations & Beyond* journal further highlight how data and insights could drive critical conversations and reforms in family-based care, alternative care, and child safety. Collectively, these initiatives exemplified the transformative potential of data in shaping policies and practices that prioritize the well-being of children.

### 2.3.4 Children & Youth's Voices in Care Reforms

One of the significant lessons from the Government of India and UNICEF country programme 2018-2022 was about institutionalizing adolescent and youth participation through formal decision-making platforms at the block, district, state, and national level. A positive consequence of the pandemic was an emerging youth volunteerism, illustrating the powerful role young people can play and the need to engage them as active change-makers.

---

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.space2grow.in/in-media>



- ➔ Through **UNICEF and YuWaah** more than 4 million young people were engaged in youth engagement/volunteering networks. This reinforced the need to further focus on meaningful engagement of adolescents and youth. Volunteerism and civic engagement, that was found to facilitate linkages with employment pathways, and mentorships to open-up opportunities to mainstream meaningful adolescent and youth participation more broadly<sup>24</sup>.
- ➔ In recent years in India, Care Leaver Networks are formed in Delhi, Rajasthan, Bihar, Assam, Gujarat, Odisha and Telangana to provide a platform to care for experienced youth to voice out their challenges, advocate for their rights, and explore possible opportunities for the wider group of care leavers (Kalra, 2022)<sup>25</sup>. **The Association of Indian Care Leavers (AICL) launched in 2021, stands as a testament to collective action and empowerment.** Born out of a collaboration between UNICEF and Yuwaah, AICL was established as a platform to bridge care leavers with representatives from the Government and private sectors. Its foundation was marked by the launch of AICL Charter, addressing critical issues like housing, health, education and legal identity. In 2023, this initiative gained new momentum with a partnership between UNICEF and Aide et Action, fostering its mission to support care leavers across the country.
- ➔ **Learning in Fellowship Together (LIFT)**<sup>26</sup>: “Embracing Care Leavers as Change Makers”, is a one-year program Initiated by Udayan Care, with support from UNICEF. The Fellowship program focused on developing and nurturing care experienced youth in India as agents of change, who will further the cause of improving the overall situation of youth transitioning out of the care system in India. The academic curriculum of the Fellowship was tied together through a year-long, hands-on, community project to design innovative solutions for the community of youth with lived experiences in India.
- ➔ Recently completed, was a noteworthy initiative designed to bring the **voices of care experienced individuals to social work capacity building.** The project was led by the Global Social Services Workforce Alliance (GSSWA) with the support from Child Frontiers and Martin James Foundation. The project was

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/india/reports/country-programme-document-2023-2027>

<sup>25</sup> <https://iacn.in/resource/tracing-the-evolution-of-alternative-care-for-children-in-india-in-the-last-decade-and-the-way-forward/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.udayancare.org/advocacy-programme/learning-fellowship-together-lift>







carried out with NGO partners in Brazil, India and Uganda. In India, the project was led by the Miracle Foundation India, which carried out a consultation exercise with 97 children, youth and parents / caregivers in South India. These individuals had experience of residential or foster care, with some also having insights into reintegration from residential care to families and communities. The findings were used to develop training tools that encourage social workers to reflect, transform their practices to better meet the needs and wishes of care experienced youth. The findings are also being used to advocate for broader changes to policies and guidance around the role and capacities of social workers. The significant highlights and findings from this project in India will be launched during the national summit.

The initiatives highlighted showcase the growing emphasis on amplifying the voices of children and youth in care reforms, ensuring their lived experiences drive meaningful change. From UNICEF and YuWaah's large-scale youth engagement to the establishment of Care Leaver Networks and the Association of Indian Care Leavers (AICL), these platforms empower young individuals to advocate for their rights and shape policies that address their unique challenges. Programs like Udayan Care's LIFT Fellowship and the GSSWA-Miracle Foundation project further underscore the importance of integrating care-experienced perspectives into capacity building and systemic transformation. Collectively, these efforts mark a significant shift toward inclusive care systems that prioritize the aspirations, agency, and well-being of children and youth transitioning out of care, positioning them as key architects of reform.

### 2.3.5 Collective Action

Collaboration fosters knowledge sharing, resource mobilization, and systemic reforms that holistically address the challenges faced by children without parental care or at risk of separation. Initiatives such as multi-stakeholder consultations, cross-sector partnerships, and evidence-based amplification empower communities and systems to prioritize family strengthening and alternative care solutions. These coordinated efforts create a unified vision for the care and protection of children, amplifying impact and ensuring sustainable reform.

- ➔ Established in 2019, the **India Alternative Care Network (IACN)**<sup>27</sup> is a collective committed to promoting the exchange of learning and dissemination of knowledge on issues related to children without parental care or at risk of separation. The collective strives to improve care solutions for family

---

<sup>27</sup> <https://iacn.in/>



strengthening and alternative care through building and sharing knowledge, capacity building of stakeholders and influencing policy and actions. IACN is supported by UNICEF and runs under the leadership and guidance of a Steering Committee composed of 12 practitioners and academicians with rich and diverse experience working on the care and protection of children in different contexts from Save the Children (Bal Raksha Bharat), Catholic Relief Services, Udayan Care, Child in Need Institute, Railway Children India, Youth Council for Development Alternatives, Butterflies, Miracle Foundation India, Family for Every Child, UNICEF. Through its website, social media presence and quarterly newsletter, IACN disseminated knowledge on the emerging and pressing issues regarding the care and protection of children. It has four working groups on family strengthening & gatekeeping, Non-institutional Care (Foster Care and Kinship Care), Transitioning Institutional care to Family Based Care and Strengthening Aftercare. In collaboration with its partner organizations, IACN made available knowledge products in the form of FAQs: Every Child's Right to Family Life<sup>28</sup>, Compendium<sup>29</sup> on family strengthening and alternative care practices, Kinship Care in India: A Case Study Documentation<sup>30</sup> across the country among others.

- ➔ The **National Annual Stakeholders Consultation on 'Protecting the Rights of Children Living with Disability** (focus on CiCL and CNCP) and Intersectionality of Disabilities' was the ninth Round of consultation organised in September 2024, under the aegis of the Juvenile Justice Committee, Supreme Court of India in association with UNICEF India.

A significant highlight of the consultation was the release of ***"Invisible No More: A Statement for Inclusion by Children with Disabilities"***. An engagement tool was developed comprising questions focusing on everyday experiences, aspirations, accessibility customised to different disability types. FGDs were facilitated by experts from the disability rights sector with six groups of 40 children online and in person. A snapshot from the statement is as follows:

---

<sup>28</sup><https://iacn.in/resource/faqs-document-every-childs-right-to-family-life-an-introduction-to-family-strengthening-and-alternative-care-in-india/>

<sup>29</sup><https://iacn.in/publication/compendium-on-family-strengthening-and-alternative-care-programmes-practised-across-india/>

<sup>30</sup> <https://iacn.in/resource/kinship-care-in-india-a-case-study-documentation/>



### Children's Appeal for a Better Future

- Inclusive Access: We want to participate, travel & take part in community life without barriers and biases.
- Inclusive Education: We want to study, learn and grow.
- Inclusive Protection, Participation & Breaking Stigma: We want to feel safe, play and form friendships without fear of exclusion.
- Inclusive Healthcare: We want to be healthy and strong.
- Inclusive Ambitions: We aspire to turn our dreams into reality.

The statement reinforced the appeal to the actors within the child protection and disability movement to come together towards a more cohesive and collective effort to ensure that all children, including children with disabilities, grow up in their families and in their communities.

In pursuit of collective efforts, The Children and Families Together – India (CAFT-India), a consortium comprising Keystone Human Services International (KHSI) as the lead, Home and Homes for Children (HHC), Child in Need Institute (CINI), and Keystone Human Services India Association (KHSIA), supported by USAID and the Rural India Support Trust (RIST), initiated a program to be implemented across various States in India and at the national level, beginning with the State of Jharkhand. Over the past several months, they have undertaken activities to lay the groundwork for evidence-based collective action on inclusive care reform. This initiative aims to create a shared space for the care reform and disability movements to converge.

- ➔ **Transforming NEEV Collective**<sup>31</sup> is a collective impact program in the state of Maharashtra supported by UBS Optimus Foundation as part of its Global Transform Collective, with Dasra acting as the backbone. Transform aimed to demonstrate a systems change model of collective impact engaging parents, communities, government, non government child protection functionaries, CSOs, elected representatives at both the local and state levels working together, determined on keeping children within families or family-based environments; by implementing and codifying interventions in prevention and family-based alternative care. The key partner organisations as part of the

<sup>31</sup> <https://transformneevcollective.org/>



Collective included: Leher, Prerana, Sambodhi, UNICEF, Miracle Foundation India.

- ➔ **The Biennial International Conference on Alternative Care in Asia** Since 2014, the Biennial International Conference on Alternative Care for Children in Asia (BICON) has been a major event focusing on the rights of children and young people without parental care. Having grown from its original focus on South Asia to covering the whole of Asia, it is a forum that captures the growing momentum for care reform for children in Asia, it has emerged as a forum that captures the growing momentum for care reform for children in Asia. The fourth BICON was held online in December 2021. The fifth BICON took place in Kathmandu, Nepal, in September 2023. Over 53 speakers and 300 participants, including over 50 young people with care experience, from across Asia and beyond joined and shared their perspectives. The heart of the fifth BICON was care experienced youth from different countries placing their voices and experiences as an integral part of driving the changes in care reform. The organising committee for BICON included - Better Care Network, Family for Every Child, Forget Me Not, Hope and Homes for Children, Lumos, Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages International and Udayan Care.
- ➔ **Changemakers for Children**<sup>32</sup> initiated by Family for every Child is an open, collaborative, global movement of people working in local civil society to improve the lives of children and families around the world.

The initiatives highlighted underscore the transformative power of collective action in advancing family-based care. IACN exemplified a vibrant platform for knowledge exchange and amplification, while the national annual stakeholders consultation brought intersectional issues like disabilities and child care into focus. Programs like CAFT-India and Transform NEEV Collective in Maharashtra showcased evidence-based strategies to integrate care reform with broader social movements. On a broader scale, platforms such as the BICON amplify the voices of care-experienced youth, children without parental care and foster regional collaboration. Together, these initiatives demonstrate how collective action can bring about meaningful, scalable, and inclusive reforms that place children's well-being and family-based care at the heart of child protection systems.

---

<sup>32</sup> <https://familyforeverychild.org/resources/changemakers-for-children/>



### 2.3.6 Media & Public Awareness

Building awareness lays the foundation for collective understanding, action, and amplification of narrative around the rights and well-being of children, families. By sensitizing communities, policymakers, and key stakeholders to the importance of trauma-informed care, child protection laws, and accessible support systems, public awareness initiatives serve as catalysts for systemic change.

- ➔ **Protsahan India Foundation**<sup>33</sup>: Promoting the best interest of the child at its core, **Hriday Dialogues** is Protsahan Foundation's annual stakeholder consultation that aims at facilitating dynamic, collaborative conversations for nurturing and strengthening trauma-informed care in India. With vibrant experiential masterclasses integrating neurobiology, arts, and psycho-socio-legal child rights practice to create trauma-informed learning environments and justice systems to center the often missed or forgotten marginalized voices, the consultation spotlighted best practices and pathways of cross-learning between experts that help vulnerable children, adolescents and youth, heal and thrive in educational and social work settings.
- ➔ In November 2024, **Arpan** carried out one of its kind large scale public awareness campaign **#ProtectedByPOCSO**<sup>34</sup> during the Child Safety Week 2024. The campaign reminded offenders that child sexual abuse is a punishable offence and sent a clear warning to them – **Stop Right Now or Get Caught**. The campaign built awareness on what constituted child sexual abuse and emphasised that India's children were protected under the POCSO Act (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences, 2012). It warned offenders that the community hereon would not be mere bystanders, but were united in their fight to protect children from sexual abuse.
- ➔ **Prerana**<sup>35</sup> - Prerana NGO conducted public awareness webinars during and post-COVID to educate families about government support schemes aimed at enhancing family resilience. These webinars focused on disseminating information about welfare programs, financial aid, healthcare services, and other essential schemes. The initiative helped vulnerable families access necessary resources, navigate the application processes, and utilize available benefits effectively to mitigate the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic and ensure stability in the recovery phase.

<sup>33</sup> <https://protsahan.co.in/hriday-dialogues-2024/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.arpan.org.in/child-safety-week/>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.preranaantitrafficking.org/>



Initiatives like Protsahan Foundation's *Hriday Dialogues*, Arpan's campaign #ProtectedByPOCSO, and Prerana's webinars exemplified the power of public engagement in addressing critical issues such as child abuse, family resilience, and access to justice. These efforts served to amplify marginalized voices as well as to raise informed, united communities committed to creating nurturing environments where children could heal, grow, and thrive.

### 2.3.7 Technology as an Enabler

Technology has emerged as a transformative enabler in advancing family-based care reforms, revolutionizing how child protection systems operate and deliver services. By integrating innovative digital solutions, these initiatives were enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accessibility in addressing the needs of children in vulnerable situations. From unified digital platforms like the Mission Vatsalya portal, which consolidated critical data and tools for stakeholders, to specialized applications like the ThriveWell app and GHAR, these technologies were equipping the social workforce with powerful tools for monitoring, tracking, and facilitating the reintegration of children into family-based care.

- ➔ **Mission Vatsalya portal:** As per the guidelines of Mission Vatsalya, a digital platform for various MIS related to children in difficult circumstances which included missing, orphaned, abandoned, and surrendered children was developed by the MWCD in consultation with States/UTs. The different portals under erstwhile Child Protection Services Scheme and Juvenile Justice Act i.e. TrackChild Portal for Missing/Found Children; ICPS Portal for monitoring the scheme and; Khoya-Paya Citizen Centric Application for Missing and Sighted Children were integrated under one single portal. This may be used by SCPS, DCPU, CWC, JJB, CCIs, SJPU as well as citizens through respective dashboards for all MIS purposes. The soft launch of Mission Vatsalya Portal was done by the MWCD during a virtual meet with all States/UTs on 27th June 2023<sup>36</sup>.
- ➔ **GHAR (GO Home and Re-Unite)<sup>37</sup>:** developed by NCPCR, is a digital platform designed to streamline the tracking, monitoring, and repatriation of children within the Juvenile Justice (JJ) system across countries, states, and districts. The platform facilitated the digital transfer of cases to the relevant Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) or CWCs, ensuring speedy repatriation. The portal enabled CWCs and DCPOs to oversee the restoration and rehabilitation of children while addressing requirements such as translators or experts through

<sup>36</sup>MWCD Annual Report 2023-24: <https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report>

<sup>37</sup><https://ncpcr.gov.in/ghar/main>



State Governments. It incorporated a checklist to identify children facing repatriation challenges or those deprived of entitled benefits, and provided a list of government schemes to support families during the restoration process, ensuring the child's reintegration and long-term stability within the family.

- ➔ **ThriveWell App:** The Thrive Scale™ is now digitally available as the mobile first Thrive Well app and web platform developed by Miracle Foundation. It will be like a one-stop platform for data collection, analysis, and intervention to support children in the system, unite children with families, and prevent them from entering the system.

The technology provides a multi-stakeholder mobile app platform that will allow the social workforce to efficiently and effectively make decisions in the best interest of the child, online/offline access, reminders of deadlines and assessments, Interventions planning, follow-up on the Interventions. The web platform provides for custom reports and dashboards to make data-driven decisions, centralized portal for data collection, exporting reports option for customized analysis. The technology platform is currently being tested and used by Miracle India in its work with some of the State Government departments after due approval from the Government.

- ➔ **Where are India's Children (WAIC)<sup>38</sup>:** WAIC developed a technology solution, Child Lifecycle Management Solution (CLMS), to address critical gaps in the implementation of child protection mechanisms, with a focus on streamlining and promoting the pre-adoption process. CLMS is a comprehensive, open-source technology solution that digitises, manages, tracks, and audits ground-level processes for children in Child Care Institutions (CCIs). This solution is designed to be utilised by CCIs and relevant government bodies to efficiently manage the status of vulnerable children entering CCIs. Its primary objective is to ensure that eligible children are transitioned into the legal adoption pool, allowing them to find their forever families. Currently, WAIC is collaborating with the State WCD Departments of Maharashtra, Telangana, and Karnataka. WAIC identifies children eligible for adoption evaluation and presents their cases to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and District Child Protection Unit (DCPU). It further ensures that eligible children are added to the CARINGS portal. By leveraging CLMS, WAIC is helping bridge critical gaps in the child protection system and offering vulnerable children the chance to secure a permanent, loving family. #ChildsRight2Family.

---

<sup>38</sup> <https://waic.in/>



- ➔ **Haqdarshak<sup>39</sup>**: The model of Haqdarshak used technology to bridge the information gap by digitizing and codifying welfare schemes data on the platform thereby building a rich repository of government services in local Indian languages. An easy eligibility-discovery engine which provides results in minutes, trains select field agents for on-field implementation to implement the assisted-tech model, and provides end-to-end application support to community members.

The key offerings of the organisation included training field cadres as last-mile support agents — 'Haqdarshaks' — who provide application support services to communities for a fee. They use the Haqdarshak agent app for implementation. Customized scheme-linkage program for predefined beneficiary cohorts. Tangible impact with focus on improving the standard of living of citizens through schemes across thematic areas including health, education, employment and social security.

- ➔ **GEET - GIS Enabled Entitlement Tracking System<sup>40</sup>**: GEET is a technology-driven platform designed to streamline and monitor the delivery of social welfare entitlements to beneficiaries. By leveraging Geographic Information System (GIS) technology, GEET enabled real-time tracking and visualization of entitlements and their distribution across various geographic regions. The system integrates technology with governance to streamline social welfare delivery. Its key features included GIS-based real-time tracking of entitlements, a centralized beneficiary database to ensure transparency and prevent duplication, and robust monitoring and reporting tools to assess scheme progress. By enhancing accountability, GEET ensured that benefits reached intended recipients and supported policymakers with data-driven decision-making. Its applications range from improving government scheme implementation to identifying underserved regions and optimizing welfare distribution processes efficiently and transparently.

The integration of technology into family-based care reforms underscores the critical role of innovation in ensuring accountability, improving service delivery, and empowering stakeholders. Initiatives such as the GIS-enabled GEET system and the Haqdarshak platform demonstrate how data-driven approaches and last-mile connectivity can address the complex needs of children and their families. By embracing these advancements, the child protection ecosystem in India is better

---

<sup>39</sup> <https://haqdarshak.com/>

<sup>40</sup> <https://geet.observatory.org.in/>





positioned to ensure timely interventions, holistic support, and sustainable outcomes for children, ultimately enabling their safe reintegration into nurturing family environments.

### 2.3.8 Funding Support

Strengthening families, tackling poverty, social exclusion called for greater financial commitment, to help build parents' capacity to care for their children, developing good-quality family-based alternative care service base The support of philanthropists, funders helped meet the evolving needs of vulnerable children and ensure their protection. The UN Guidelines for Alternative Care of Children 2009 emphasised that donors must ensure that funding is directed at preventative community and family strengthening and at family-based alternative care by:

- supporting deinstitutionalization efforts and the development of good-quality family-based care alternatives
- promoting the training and accreditation of social work professionals
- initiating or expanding social protection programmes
- developing community-based services that support families to care for their children<sup>41</sup>.

Referring to the earlier sections on the initiatives of civil society organisations, the compendium acknowledged the valuable support of USAID-Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity (APCCA) for the CAFT India program, UBS-Optimus Foundation for the Transform Neev Collective, Global Social Service Workforce Alliances & Martin James Foundation for the project in India on bringing voices of care experienced individuals to social work capacity building, to name a few among others.

The Child Opportunity Fund of **British Asian Trust**<sup>42</sup> is an ambitious 10-year initiative to help millions of children in India live their lives to the fullest potential. Their work is spread across Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, and Delhi. Their program focussed helping vulnerable families access better livelihood opportunities, minimising the chances of them sending their children to work, or forcing them into early marriage. Our programmes also address regressive social and cultural norms and gender biases in communities.

<sup>41</sup><https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/keeping-children-out-harmful-institutions-why-we-should-be-investing-family-based-care/#:~:text=Reports-,Keeping%20children%20out%20of%20harmful%20institutions%20%E2%80%93%20Why%20we%20should,investing%20in%20family%2Dbased%20care&text=One%20of%20the%20biggest%20myths,feed%2C%20clothe%20and%20educate%20them.>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.britishasiantrust.org/our-work/child-protection/>



One of the most significant areas of **Azim Premji Foundation**<sup>43</sup> grants are dedicated to the welfare, protection and well-being of children. Through their grants programme, they support more than 100 organisations working with some of the most vulnerable children across rural and urban parts of the country. The spectrum of children who are vulnerable is broad, and it includes those from single-parent households, daily wage labourers, migrant families; children who live on the street, orphans, runaways and the abandoned.

Besides there were flagship initiatives of the Government of India to fall back on like the **PM CARES for Children**<sup>44</sup>, a high-priority, centrally-led effort to address the critical needs of children's care and protection, orphaned during the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative enabled children's wellbeing through health insurance, empowering them through education and equipping them for self-sufficient existence with financial support on reaching 23 years of age. The PM CARES for children scheme inter alia provided support to these children through convergent approach, gap funding for ensuring education, health, monthly stipend from the age of 18 years, and lump sum amount of Rs. 10 lakh on attaining 23 years of age.

## 2.4 Challenges

---

One acknowledges the intent, efforts, strides taken by the State for vulnerable children, families, Nonetheless, It is important to remain focused towards the challenges that call for innovative solutions from this fraternity.

- ➔ A key opportunity lies in strengthening data and statistics on children in CCIs, non-institutional care, and vulnerable families. Robust data will enable more effective planning and targeted interventions to support those in need.
- ➔ The HAQ Centre for Child Rights over the years carried out analysis of the union Budget to throw light on the financial support status quo for children. This year, the share of children in the total Union Budget has touched the bottom in the last 13 years. Referring to the sectoral share, child protection, like every year, remained under-resourced with the least share in the Union Budget. Overall child development, child education and child protection received reduced share as compared to the previous year<sup>45</sup>.

---

<sup>43</sup> <https://azimpremjifoundation.org/what-we-do/other-areas/children/>

<sup>44</sup> <https://pmcaresforchildren.in/>

<sup>45</sup> An Analysis of Budget for Children 2024-25 <https://www.haqcrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/bfc-2024-25.pdf>



- ➔ Although successful cases of foster care were documented across the country, the practice did not gain enough traction, despite being part of the Juvenile Justice law since 2000. Several factors contributed to this<sup>46</sup>:
  - A major one being the lack of public awareness, resulting in few people showing interest in registering as foster parents.
  - Concerns expressed by foster parents about the availability of post-placement support, including need-based counselling for the child and assistance with documentation required at key junctures such as school admissions.
  - Worries about the biological parents reclaiming the child, leading to the termination of foster care.
  - Other state-specific criteria, such as the requirement that the parent should own a house (Delhi) or have a minimum household income of INR 45,000 and reside in urban areas (Maharashtra).
  
- ➔ The study carried out by Catalyst for Social Action (CSA) in April 2020<sup>47</sup> focused on 29 children in Madhya Pradesh who were reintegrated to their families between 2018 and 2019, concluded that while de-institutionalization aimed to serve the best interests of children by promoting family-based care, the effectiveness of this approach depends on the robustness of the reintegration process and the adequacy of post-reintegration support. Without comprehensive follow-up and support, the intended benefits of de-institutionalization might not be fully realized, potentially compromising the well-being of the children involved.
  
- ➔ There is a need to understand family strengthening holistically and recognise that ‘one size fits all’ could not be the solution for children and families. This required mapping of families with vulnerability, developing case-specific plans for each child and required an operational framework. Focus on parental engagement was an important component to prevent unnecessary separation of children as well as their successful reintegration into the family. Efforts were needed to be channelised towards scaling up family and community-based services that respond to the root cause of vulnerability and build family and community resilience. It was important to provide comprehensive services at the community level for making family-based care accessible to all children, including children with Special Needs.

<sup>46</sup> <https://idronline.org/article/social-justice/how-can-indias-new-foster-care-guidelines-serve-children-better/>

<sup>47</sup> <https://csa.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Does-DI-serve-best-interests.pdf>



- ➔ Thrust required on strengthening and building awareness of local community-based bodies and organisations for developing village level plans to ensure early tracking and monitoring of vulnerable children. Involvement of local governance entities like PRIs, ULBs and their convergence with departments of education, health, police and legal services was becoming vital for strengthening community gatekeeping and promoting alternative care placements at the local level. This was essential to achieve a safe and nurturing family environment for every child and prevent their institutionalisation.
- ➔ Need for development of aftercare support in proportion to the number of children leaving alternative care so as to ensure its accessibility to all care leavers. In order for the aftercare support to be useful it was necessary to provide customised support as per the individual needs and strengths of children leaving care, using the detailed Individual Aftercare Plan (IAPs) as suggested by Mission Vatsalya. Youth should be fully involved in preparing the IAPs.
- ➔ Greater need for effective models of non-institutional alternative care for children including Children with Special Needs.
- ➔ Greater need for guidance and hand holding of the child protection stakeholders with operationalisation of the Mission Vatsalya guideline

## 2.5 Culmination

---

Attaining the goal of care reforms in the country through a family-strengthening and non-institutional approach to alternative care required strategic planning and concentrated efforts of multiple stakeholders at the national level.

The pivot towards prevention and family-based alternative care is the need of the hour and as indicated by the work done presented earlier in this chapter, the India child protection ecosystem already is propelling in this direction. Moving forward, focused resource allocation and concentrated efforts across policy and practice are needed to expedite the vision of family for every child.

Achieving this shift required the joint efforts of the State, practitioners, academicians and researchers in enabling communities, families, youth and children to become



active agents in realising the rights of every child to a family and helping children and youth develop their full potential<sup>48</sup>.

The very 1st National Family Summit, anchored by Miracle Foundation India, celebrates these successes, showcasing how India is pioneering solutions that inspire the world. Through a series of Leadership Dialogues held over the past year, Miracle Foundation India brought together diverse stakeholders to share insights, challenges, and best practices in FS and F-BAC. This summit will consolidate these experiences, offering a platform for states to showcase their accomplishments, highlight impactful models, celebration of the transformative impact of Miracle Foundation India's work and chart a shared path forward. The youth with lived experiences will add their voices, sharing personal stories that underscore the value of a supportive family, emphasizing the need for continued progress in family-centered child welfare policies.



<sup>48</sup><https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/kaur-et-al-2023-tracing-the-evolution-of-alternative-care-for-children-in-india-in-the-last-decade-and-the-way-forward.pdf>





### 3. Overview of Leadership Dialogue

#### 3.1 Conceptualization of the series of Leadership Dialogues

---

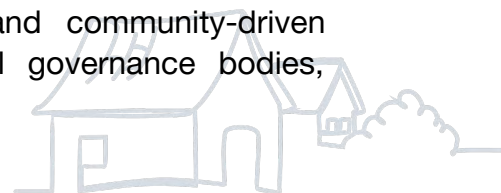
In the post covid era, a strong narrative emerged on non institutional care, prevention and gatekeeping in order to ensure that children stay safe in families, family-based alternative care. The Mission Vatsalya guidelines prioritized family-based care over institutionalization, advocating for alternative care options such as foster care, kinship care, sponsorship, and adoption. By integrating preventive strategies with robust gatekeeping and empowering families, Mission Vatsalya sought to create a protective environment that enables children to thrive in family-based care settings.

As stated earlier in the compendium referring to the MWCD data, the number of children in non-institutional care, increased fourfold between 2021-22 and 2023-24, which called for an urgent need for all stakeholders, including Governments, CSOs, to ensure that children were safe and thriving in family environments. This was achievable by strengthening families to sustainably care for children, facilitating smooth transition from CCIs to family setups.

In this direction the trajectory of the five leadership dialogues was conceptualised in the realm of prevention, gatekeeping and family strengthening.

The inaugural leadership dialogue ***‘Prevention and Gatekeeping at the level of the Child Welfare Committee*** was held in October 2023. The dialogue focused on gaining insights into exemplary gatekeeping practices at the CWC level; exploring diverse prevention and gatekeeping models, emphasizing community support roles and narratives; recognizing and acknowledging child protection workforce, master trainers, and officials executing innovative practices in prevention and gatekeeping. The panel of speakers included: Mr Thiru. S. Thanasekarapandian, former Joint Director, Dept of Children Welfare & Special Services, Ms. Chhaya Gurav Raut, Chairperson, CWC Nagpur, Mr.Manoranjan Dash, Practitioner & CSO member, Mr.Albert Justin, Youth Ambassador

The second Leadership Dialogue, held in February 2024 and the third Leadership Dialogue held in May 2024 were planned in the form of ***Part 1 & Part 2 in the series on “The Role of Local Governance Bodies in Prevention and Gatekeeping”***. The **second leadership dialogue ie part 1** focused on defining Child-Friendly Villages and localizing SDGs, focusing on grassroots implementation and community-driven approaches for child welfare; discussing the role of local governance bodies,



particularly under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, in preventing child separation, while analyzing policy frameworks for enhancements; Exploring synergies between the MWCD and Ministry of Panchayati Raj, aligning with Mission Vatsalya objectives, and showcasing successful practices in prevention and gatekeeping models. The panel of speakers included: Mr. Pankaj Pandey, National Program Officer with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Transform Rural India, Ms.Smita Sen,.Founder and Executive Director of Rupantaran Foundation, N. Riyaz Ahamed Basha, District Child Protection Officer in Tirupur, Dept of Child Welfare & Special Services.

The third leadership dialogue i.e. **part 2** focused on participants gaining deeper insights into the diverse gatekeeping practices at the local governance level; sharing of success stories, ideas, from leaders/ panel members on how the local governance bodies can be strengthened by bringing focus to prevention and gatekeeping especially around FS and F-BAC; recognising and acknowledging the child protection workforce, community volunteers as well as providing them a platform. The panel of speakers included Mr. Banku Bihari Sarkar, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF Bihar, Dr. Suchitra Ghogare-Katkar:Chairperson Child Welfare Committee Satara., Ms. Nirmala Devi, secretary of Sarvo Prayas Sansthan, Madhubani, Bihar, Ms. Sumitra Devi, Secretary VLCPC, elected PRI member, Madhubani, Bihar

The fourth leadership dialogue: **'Demystifying Family Strengthening'** 'held in July 2024 focused on building a common understanding of the concept, particularly focusing on the transition from CCl's to families. The dialogue aimed at understanding the concept of family strengthening and its critical role in the care reform process, with a focus on transitioning children from CCl's to families; showcasing of promising practices on family strengthening from different organizations and institutions; Identifying challenges as well as the areas of opportunities in the family strengthening process; recognizing the efforts of the social workforce dedicated to child protection and family strengthening. The panel of speakers included Mr. Sonykutty George, Child Protection Specialist, Hyderabad field Office of UNICEF , Ms. Yamuna Menon, State Head, Miracle Foundation India, Mr. Sathish Kumar, DCPO, Namakkal, Sis. Lourdu Mary, CWC Chairperson, Belgaum, Mr. Girish Mehta, Director & Co-Founder, CLiC.

The fifth Leadership Dialogue **'Family Strengthening Interventions and importance of linkages with the social protection schemes'**, for children transitioning from CCl's to families or those at risk of separation, held in September 2024 focused on establishing essential services and strengthening emergency outreach, noninstitutional care within the family and community, and institutional care counselling and support services at the national, regional, state and district levels; ensuring appropriate inter-sector response at all levels, coordinating and networking with all allied systems





to promote convergent efforts for seamless service delivery to children; strengthening child protection at family and community level, equip families and communities to identify risks and vulnerabilities affecting children, create and promote preventive measures to protect children from situations of vulnerability, risk and abuse. The panel of speakers included Dr. Amitabh Awasthi, Joint Director, WCD, Madhya Pradesh, Mr. Biplab Ghosh, DCPO, West Tripura, Ms. Leena Prasad, Udayan Care, Ms. Pallavi & Ms. Rasika, HAQDARSHAK.







## 4. Insights from the Panel Speakers at the Leadership Dialogues

The chapter strings the insights generated in panel discussions across the five leadership dialogues held between October 2023 and September 2024.

### Leadership Dialogue 1: October 2023

#### Prevention and Gatekeeping at the level of Child Welfare Committee

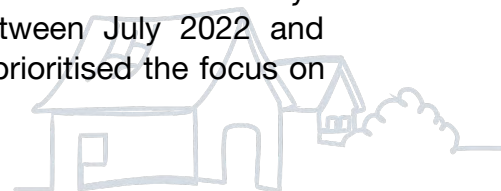
The leadership dialogue highlighted the critical role of gatekeeping in child care and protection, emphasizing systematic, child-centric interventions and collaborative efforts to prevent unnecessary family separations.

According to Mr Manoranjan Dash, Practitioner & CSO member, gatekeeping was a cornerstone of child protection, focused on addressing crises that put children at risk of separation, ensuring family unity while prioritizing their best interests. Although not explicitly defined in legislation, it encompassed coordinated efforts across national, sub-national, and community levels'. He described it as *“a process that safeguards children by empowering families, creating a system of care that supports, rather than isolates.”*

'A 14-year-old girl from the Pardhi community whose marriage was arranged by her parents, a practice steeped in cultural traditions and harmful norms. The intervention unfolded after a government circular prompted local authorities, including ICDS workers, to report the case to the police. The police escalated the matter to the CWC, which stepped in, and in spite of the resistance from the family and community, the CWC highlighted the legal and social consequences of child marriage, ultimately persuading the family to cancel the wedding. In order to ensure the girl's safety and education, she was integrated with her parents to prevent any stigma within their community. A regular monitoring was mandated by the Gram Sevaks, ICDS workers, and the Police, with support from the local school to track her attendance. Additionally, a local NGO sponsored the girl's education to enhance her future opportunities'.

*“The focus was not on punishment but on creating a safety net that empowered the child and her family, The case reflected CWCs earnest efforts at gatekeeping, preventing child marriage and safeguarding children's rights through proactive,*

*community-driven interventions and collaborative frameworks”* shared Ms. Chhaya Gurav Raut, Chairperson, CWC Nagpur. She noted that between July 2022 and September 2023, the Nagpur CWC handled 6,682 cases, and prioritised the focus on



child welfare, restoration, sponsorship and adoption. Their preventive measures encompassed sensitization programs, stakeholder training, and advocacy initiatives led by the DCPU. Collaborations with organizations like the Miracle Foundation India played a key role in equipping staff with Family Strengthening (FS) and Family-Based Alternative Care (FBAC) skills.

Mr Manoranjan called out that effective gatekeeping relied on systematic practices like identifying crises, assessing needs, recommending interventions, and implementing measures to address risks. Real-world examples highlighted the significance of these principles. One such case from Kanyakumari involved a single mother who placed her child in an unregistered CCI due to financial hardship. With intervention from a Changing the Way We Care case manager and community leaders, the child got reunited with the mother, demonstrating the strength of collaborative efforts at addressing the complex challenges. Over 600 children were prevented from unnecessary separation through similar initiatives.

Mr. Thanasekarapandian, former Joint Director, Dept of Child Welfare & Special Services, Government of Tamil Nadu highlighted the efforts of the State Government to create a protective and nurturing environment for children. Child protection was a collective responsibility, requiring the synergy of civil society and stakeholders.

Mr. Albert Justin, the youth ambassador, having experienced eight years in a care system, shed light on the vital role of CWC in strengthening preventive and gatekeeping mechanisms for care-experienced youth. His reflections emphasized the need for collaboration, inclusion, and innovation in addressing the unique challenges faced by children in care and their transition to independent living. The discussion highlighted the importance of leveraging lived experiences to create systems that are both effective and empathetic. Contrasting the structured nature of CCIs with the emotionally enriched dynamics of family life, Mr. Albert reflected on the differences between the two systems. Care systems provide regulated access to fresh food, study spaces, and psycho-social support. However, the detachment from family events and deep emotional bonds remained a challenge. Care systems provided a family-like environment, but families fostered deep emotional bonds and interpersonal relationships, he stated.

The challenges cited in this dialogue included

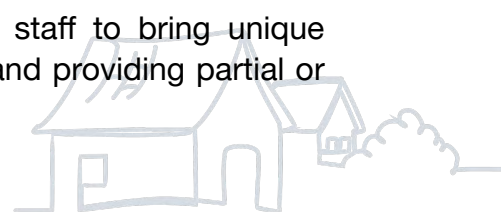
- Cultural resistance and harmful practices that perpetuate risks for children.
- Inadequate resources for monitoring and follow-up interventions.
- Indifference and lack of awareness among officials about child protection guidelines.



- Fragmented efforts due to inconsistent funding and weak inter-agency communication.
- Challenges such as workforce gaps, fragmented communication, and limited cooperation from CCIs were highlighted as barriers to gatekeeping.
- The challenges faced by youth transitioning out of care systems were vividly described, including disconnect from family, difficulties in time management, and the absence of a robust support system.

In order to address these challenges, the recommendation by the panelists included

- Strengthening grassroots systems and fostering a unified approach among government agencies, NGOs, and community members, early implementation of prevention programs.
- Strengthening decision-making - aligning case management with child-centric, data-driven approaches.
- Comprehensive capacity-building initiatives - enhancing stakeholder skills through contextualized training and collaboration. The Residential Induction Training Program in Tamil Nadu, aimed at ensuring that CWC members were well-equipped to address the diverse challenges faced by children. *“Building capacity is the first step to building confidence in the system,”* Mr. Thanasekarapandian remarked, *stressing the importance of training in fostering institutional trust.*
- Efforts to promote Non-Institutional to take precedence, with the state prioritizing family-based care through sponsorship, foster care programs and carefully designed family strengthening programs.
- Localized strategies - designing district-specific protection plans tailored to community needs.
- Enhanced communication - developing referral mechanisms and fostering stakeholder convergence.
- CSOs) were recognized as pivotal in equipping - d CWCs through targeted training programs, promoting collaboration, and ensuring effective decision-making.
- The importance of programs like Udayan Care’s aftercare outreach model, which focuses on housing, education, vocational training, and other critical domains.
- Identifying families at risk and providing counseling for parents were highlighted as essential techniques for prevention. Engaging youth in conversations about causes of separation and the value of family bonds was proposed as a way to address underlying issues.
- involving care-experienced individuals as part of CWC staff to bring unique perspectives. Subsidizing homes for independent living and providing partial or





full support for education until stable employment were recommended to address the systemic gaps. *“An improved follow-up mechanism was essential to ensure that youth are supported through every stage of their journey,”* he remarked.

Mr. Manoranjan emphasized, “Gatekeeping is not just a process but a commitment to ensuring children’s safety, well-being, and reunification with their families wherever possible.”



## Speakers from the First Leadership Dialogue



**Mr. S.Thanasekarapandian**  
**Joint Director of Social Defence,**  
**Regional Office of Social Defence, Chennai.**

S.Thanasekarapandian, M.Sc., M.Ed., M.Phil., is the Joint Director of Social Defence, Chennai, overseeing child protection services across 17 southern districts. Since joining government service in 1994 through the TNPSC Group I exam, he has served as Superintendent of Children's Homes, District Child Protection Officer in Kancheepuram and Madurai, and Deputy Director of Social Defence. His work includes coordinating and monitoring government-run childcare institutions, de-addiction centers, and anti-trafficking homes. Promoted to Joint Director in 2017, he continues to lead efforts in social defence administration and child welfare.



**Mr. Manoranjan Das**  
**Development Practitioner**  
**Catholic Relief Services**

Manoranjan, a development practitioner with two decades of field experience, is dedicated to fostering equity and inclusion through child protection, disaster response, disability inclusion, and community resilience. He spent 10 years with CRS-India and now supports child protection under the \*Changing the Way We Care\* initiative, strengthening government and faith-based preventive actions for Non-Institutional Care. His contributions include developing District Child Protection Plans and integrating child welfare into Panchayati Raj governance under Mission Vatsalya. A trainer and member of the India Alternative Care Network, he is passionate about policy implementation, community empowerment, and exploring India's ancient landscapes.





**Ms. Chhaya Gurav**  
**Chairperson, Child Welfare Committee,**  
**Maharashtra**

A child rights and social welfare professional, currently serving as Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee, Nagpur. With over 15 years of experience, she has led child protection, women's empowerment, and adolescent health initiatives. Previously, she worked as Program Manager at Indian Centre for Integrated Development and District Training Manager at Magic Bus India Foundation, specializing in capacity building, life skills education, and policy advocacy. A skilled trainer and counselor, she has conducted extensive training on child rights, gender issues, and legal protections, working closely with government agencies and NGOs to strengthen community welfare systems. Her expertise in policy implementation, child protection laws (JJ Act, POCSO), and women's legal rights has made her a valuable contributor to government programs. Passionate about social justice, she continues to work towards strengthening community resilience and fostering a safer, more inclusive society for children and women.



**Mr. Albert Justin**  
**Assistant Program Manager,**  
**Miracle Foundation India**

A dedicated educator and child rights advocate, is a care leaver of Cornerstone Children's Home and a Youth Ambassador for Miracle Foundation India. With a B.Sc. and B.Ed., he has taught Mathematics at Cauvery International School while championing the rights of children in alternative care. He has presented at global platforms like the International Care Leavers Convention and BICON 2023, conducted youth-led webinars, and led a survey on progress in CCIs. Now a DPM at Miracle Foundation India, he continues to drive systemic change for vulnerable children.



## Leadership Dialogue 2: February 2024

### The Role of Local Governance Bodies in Prevention and Gatekeeping

Mr Pankaj Pandey, National Program Officer, Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) began on the note that child protection is most effective when approached holistically, beginning with the family unit. The foundation of child protection lies in identifying at-risk children and families, followed by designing intervention plans tailored to their unique needs, PRIs are at the forefront of this mission."

Mr Pandey reiterated the significant role of PRIs in ensuring community driven action addressing child protection and welfare, safeguarding the rights and needs of vulnerable children. As grassroots governance bodies, PRIs played an instrumental role in bridging the gap between communities and the resources essential for child protection. PRIs strengthen families by fostering resilience and ensuring access to livelihood opportunities and government support mechanisms.

The Expert Group constituted by the MoPR recommended a thematic approach, and identified 9 sustainable development goals (SDG) related themes for focussed interventions through Panchayats. Theme 3- Child Friendly Village focused on building a conducive environment for the children in villages, to ensure their rights as citizens of this nation.

Mr Pandey further shared that PRIs ensured 25% of their untied funds directed toward 46 targeted activities, out of which 9 activities specifically aimed at fostering child-friendly villages. People's Plan Campaign (PPC) mandated organizing the Bal Sabha as part of the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) preparation process to include issues of children in the village. He remarked, "*Flexibility in untied funds empowered Panchayats to address local child protection needs dynamically.*"

Efforts to empower PRIs were multifaceted, encompassing training programs, budgetary provisions, and the establishment of child protection committees at the ward level. These measures equipped local governance bodies to implement over 10,000 child welfare schemes effectively. However as Mr. Pandey pointed out, "***The success of these schemes depended not only on the availability of funds but on their efficient utilization to achieve transparency and impact.***"



Mr. Pandey concluded with an appeal for collective action, stating, "***Turning the vision of Mission Vatsalya into reality required seamless coordination, strategic planning, and a commitment to the welfare of every child.***"

Ms. Smita Sen, Founder and Executive Director of Rupantaran Foundation, emphasized placing children at the heart of developmental initiatives while ensuring active community participation for sustainable child protection. She also touched upon the nuanced distinctions and interconnectedness between community development and community-led child protection programs.

Community development encompasses holistic growth, benefiting all members of society, whereas child-centered community development prioritizes children's needs for care and protection. Ms. Sen noted that community development was broader, but child-centered programs demanded a sharp focus on the rights and needs of children. The PRIs were identified as key facilitators in these processes, bridging the gap between community aspirations and tangible outcomes. Moreover, the Village Child Protection Committees (VCPCs) played a critical role in highlighting child protection through their Village Action Plans, ensuring it remains a central focus of community efforts.

Child participation, ensuring that children's voices were heard, required establishing inclusive structures. Initiatives such as those by Rupantaran Foundation showcased the success of forming child protection committees at the village level, backed by life skills training. Ms. Smita highlighted, "*Empowering children to voice their concerns created a foundation for sustainable change.*"

Collaborative efforts between PRIs and community groups demonstrated success in leveraging participatory methods, such as vulnerability mapping and social mapping exercises. These tools identified at-risk families, enabling action plans tailored to children's needs. The plans were reviewed and approved at the Panchayat level, ensuring resource allocation aligned with community priorities. Awareness campaigns and protection-focused initiatives further enhanced the impact of these programs, integrating community ownership into the process, explained Ms Sen.

The insights shared by Mr N. Riyaz Ahamed Basha, District Child Protection Officer, dist Tirupur, Dept of Child Welfare & Special Services, Tamil Nadu emphasized the importance of convergence under Mission Vatsalya and the critical role of collaborative governance in addressing child protection issues effectively. Highlighting the need for unified action across various departments.





Throwing light on their work in dist Tirupur, Mr Ahmed shared that when cases were reported through child helpline 1098, the response involved a seamless integration of stakeholders based on the nature of the case. If the issue pertained to education, the Education department was engaged; if it involves child marriage, the District Social Welfare Office (DSWO) was contacted. This approach ensured that interventions were swift, targeted, and effective, ensuring preventive, rescue, and rehabilitative support for vulnerable children, making child protection a shared societal responsibility.

He further shared that PRIs were acknowledged as critical entities in identifying and addressing vulnerabilities within families and creating a protective environment. Their grassroots presence enabled them to collaborate with SHGs, NGOs and Anganwadi Workers to recognize families in need and link them to welfare schemes. VLCPCs escalated issues beyond local capacity to higher authorities. For instance, a child requiring surgery was referred to the DCPU when the VLCPC lacked resources, ensuring timely intervention.

Despite the promising models, significant challenges impeded implementation. Children's lack of visibility in political agendas often marginalized their welfare within PRI priorities. In addition, entrenched social norms posed resistance to child-friendly initiatives.

In order to ward off the challenges, the recommendations by the panelists included

- Coordination among various stakeholders was vital for the success of Mission Vatsalya. The need for a tiered approach where unresolved issues at the Gram Panchayat level could be escalated to higher levels. Collaboration among PRIs, CSOs, and community groups is essential for sustainable child protection outcomes.
- Active involvement from youth, the involvement of youth brought technological expertise and fresh perspectives, ensuring better access to government schemes and resources.
- Awareness and capacity-building initiatives for PRIs on the importance of child safety and equip them with the tools to prioritize it.
- The significance of the inclusive structures of VLCPCs as collaborative interfaces between the DCPU and PRIs. VLCPCs and Gram Sabhas facilitated discussions on child protection issues, creating a continuum of care and response mechanisms. Escalation mechanisms between VLCPCs and DCPUs enabled timely resolutions of critical cases.



## Speakers from the Second Leadership Dialogue



**Mr. Pankaj Pandey**  
National Program Officer, Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) - Government of India

A dynamic development professional with twenty years of diverse experience in working with Central Government, State Government and Philanthropic NGOs across core areas such as Governance, Financial Inclusion and Literacy, Mr. Pandey has been actively involved in strategic support, planning and implementation of the flagship schemes at the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India.

**Ms. Smita Sen**  
Founder and Executive Director, Rupantaran Foundation

Ms. Sen has been working with many national and international organisations as an individual consultant while engaging young people in social change processes, advocating gender-just society through Rupantaran. With more than 20 years in the development sector, she loves to express herself creatively and promotes art as a healing medium and tool to raise voices for the marginalised. We, at Miracle Foundation India, are absolutely delighted to have had an opportunity to host Ms. Sen at the Second Edition of the Leadership Dialogues.



**Mr. N. Riyaz Ahamed Basha**  
District Child Protection Officer,  
Social Defence Department, Tamil Nadu Government



With a diverse career background, Mr. Basha's expertise spans research, coordination, and grassroots-level project implementation. Recognized for his unwavering commitment to social welfare and child protection, he is known as a compassionate and effective advocate dedicated to making a positive impact in his community.



### Leadership Dialogue 3: May 2024

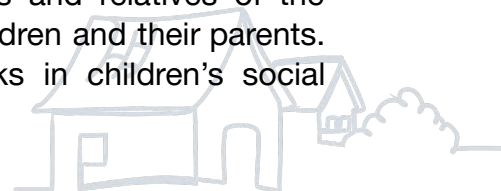
#### The Role of Local Governance Bodies in Prevention and Gatekeeping

Mr. Banku Bihari Sarkar, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF Bihar discussed the initiatives taken by the Government of Bihar towards enhancing inter- sectoral collaboration as per the Mission Vatsalya guidelines by collaborating with the Police, Social Welfare, Education dept, Labour Resources dept, PRIs for effective gatekeeping. The Government undertook strengthening the capacities of the local governance bodies, PRIs members in strengthening child protection mechanisms through training, awareness campaigns, and policy interventions.

Mr Sarkar explained that all concerned departments were contributing in creating a comprehensive safety net for children who were vulnerable to family separation and extremely vulnerable families unable to take care of their children. The State Government of Bihar has formed four Task Forces from state level to Block level. The Task Forces included Child Labour, Child Protection, Trafficking and Child Marriages task force. The State level Task Forces was chaired by the Chief Secretary along with Secretaries of all the line departments. The District level Task Forces were chaired by the District Magistrates along with all relevant line departments as its members. The Block level Task Forces were chaired by the Block Development Officer (BDO) along with relevant line departments as its members. This multi-departmental initiative involved regular inter-departmental meetings, shared databases, and coordinated action plans to tackle issues such as child trafficking, child labor, and child marriage.

Mr. Sarkar pointed out that the State Government formed Child Welfare & Protection Committees (CWPC) at various levels to further strengthen the child protection workforce. The capacity building of the various CWPCs was going on, on a regular basis. He also mentioned that the Bihar government was in the process of preparing a structured training calendar for training the PRI members and allocating adequate resources specifically earmarked for building child-friendly infrastructures.

Dr. Suchitra Ghogare-Katkar:Chairperson CWC Satara, shared her insights into the multifaceted approach taken by the CWC in Satara, thorough investigation processes, adherence to legal frameworks and investing in family strengthening to create a safe and nurturing environment for children to ensure prevention and gatekeeping. The CWC worked closely with Childline, DCPUs, Police and NGOs to address issues of child marriage, child labor, mobile addiction, drug and alcohol abuse, and cases of runaway children. In all these cases, the CWC attempted to take a collaborative approach with all relevant stakeholders including the parents and relatives of the affected children and conducted separate inquiries with the children and their parents. After assessing, the committee addressed the potential risks in children's social



environment to prevent any untoward incidents thereby ensuring their overall safety and well-being.

Dr Suchitra highlighted the crucial role of counseling with the child and the family in creating a nurturing environment for children. This helped to strengthen family relationships, improve communication, and empower caregivers with effective tools to enhance their children's emotional and psychological well-being. Moreover, in all cases, follow-ups were critical to ensure sustained well-being of children. This critical work of the CWC becomes easier with functional VCPC, who were capacitated to handle child protection issues.

Ms. Nirmala Devi, secretary of Sarvo Prayas Sansthan, Madhubani, Bihar, highlighted the importance of empowering VLCPCs through structured departmental meetings and collaboration with stakeholders and government entities. Regular meetings focused on child protection issues, fostering coordination among departments to support VCPC initiatives. Collaboration with stakeholders like NGOs, schools, and law enforcement bodies enhances resources and expertise, while government support ensures policy alignment and resource allocation.

She shared that in Madhubani, through the involvement of PRI members in Child Protection Committees from the start not only helped in building a keen interest in child protection issues but also helped in them being capacitated timely. Next, the CPCs and PRI members played a crucial role in strengthening families by monitoring children and ensuring their safety. They actively identified and followed up on cases of children missing school by engaging with parents, the teachers, and also involving the CWC. The PRI members also facilitated access to essential services and entitlements, such as the Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards and Aadhaar cards.

The PRI members in Madhubani ensured that school children were not employed or involved in preparing the mid-day meals, which could potentially lead to exploitation or hinder their education. Ms Nirmala shared that the PRI members also actively monitored roads and alleys where girls would potentially face any kind of harassment or assault as well as take necessary actions to address such issues thereby creating a safer environment.

Ms. Sumitra Devi, Secretary VLCPC, elected PRI member, Madhubani, Bihar laid significant emphasis on the need of having community-driven solutions to safeguard children. She spoke about how gatekeeping at the level of community was a complex, challenging process of negotiating and coordinating with various government bodies and stakeholders. She emphasised the need for a dedicated Village Child Protection



Committee (VCPC) and recommended a coordinated approach among all critical stakeholders.

The challenges flagged by the panelists included:

- lack of dedicated child protection functionaries below the district level and at the block level.
- Challenges faced in strengthening CWPCs with lack of awareness on child protection in the villages and communities. There was a significant gap in the training mechanisms for child protection workers across various departments with absence of structured trainings
- Difficulties to work with deep rooted social norms of child labour, child marriages readily accepted by the community. It would take sustained long-term interventions to change the mindset of the PRI and other frontline functionaries.
- It was challenging to work on protecting children and ensuring proper coordination between critical stakeholders while ensuring basic rights such as nutrition,
- Difficulties faced by children and families in accessing the social security schemes.

The recommendations were around the strategies for enhancing protection of vulnerable children through the local governance bodies which included:

- The importance of a collaborative approach, involving all stakeholders such as NGOs and the school department, to create a safe and supportive environment for children essentially in terms of follow-up.
- Conducting vulnerability assessments to map out children (on verge of family separation) and vulnerable families. Inturn linking them with the social protection schemes so that the chances of the children getting separated from the family could be minimized
- Monitoring schools to create a safe environment, engaging with the Village level Welfare and Protection Committees (VLCWPC) to monitor and maintain a database of vulnerable children and families, as well as collaboration with NGOs to leverage their expertise and resources in capacity building and implementation etc.





- Functional, active VCPCs, If the VCPCs were not active, the follow-ups fell through and children's needs and required support could not be made available to them.
- Collaboration with parents, caregivers, educators, and the community leaders, facilitated by the VCPC in building a nurturing ecosystem where children thrive.
- In the case of prevention of child marriage, holding on to the children's Aadhaar cards as well as raising awareness on the ill-effects of child marriage on the girl child, legal repercussions and social consequences proved to be an effective strategy for VCPC.



## Speakers from the Third Leadership Dialogue



**Mr. Banku Bihari Sarkar**  
**Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF,**  
**Bihar**

Banku has over 25 years of dynamic experience in the development sector, currently serving as the Child Protection Specialist at UNICEF Bihar Field Office. He leads programs focusing on child rights, prevention of child labor, education access, and support services for vulnerable children. Banku has a background in social work and a strong commitment to advocating for children's rights and well-being. He has played a pivotal role in implementing child protection legislation and initiatives in Bihar, collaborating closely with government bodies, NGOs, and stakeholders to strengthen child protection systems and policies. His expertise includes Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and cyber safety in partnership with education and law enforcement agencies.

**Ms. Nirmala**  
**Secretary, Sarvo Prayas Sansthan, Madhubani,**  
**Bihar**

Nirmala has over three decades of experience passionately advocating for the rights and well-being of children. She currently serves as the secretary of Sarvo Prayas Sansthan, an organization she founded in 2004 dedicated to children's care and protection. Under her leadership, Sarvo Prayas Sansthan has implemented a variety of innovative programs designed to address the multifaceted needs of children in distress. Nirmala is a strong advocate for systemic change and was awarded the Women Exemplar Program 2020 by CII Foundation for her exemplary work in the field of child care and protection.





**Adv. Dr. Suchitra Ghogare-Katkar**  
**Chairperson, Child Welfare Committee, Satara,**  
**Government of Maharashtra**

Suchitra is the Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee in Satara. She also serves as a Member of the District Legal Services Authority and the Victim Compensation Scheme Committee at the District Court in Satara. A multifaceted individual, Suchitra is a spirited lawyer, former Juvenile Justice Board member, and lecturer. She is a published author and a regular contributor to newspapers. Suchitra has closely collaborated with NGOs in Maharashtra, focusing on child rights awareness, the POCSO Act, and disability issues.

**Ms. Sumitra Devi**  
**Ward Member and Secretary,**  
**Village-level Child Protection Committee,**  
**Madhubani, Bihar**

Sumitra is from Madhubani, Bihar. She is the Ward Member and Secretary of the Village-Level Child Protection Committee in Madhubani too and has dealt with critical cases related to children such as of child marriage, child trafficking and out-of-school children etc.





## Leadership Dialogue 4: July 2024 Demystifying Family Strengthening

Mr. Sony Kutty George, Child Protection Specialist, Hyderabad field Office of UNICEF, while unpacking the approach of family strengthening, pointed out that the 2009 UN Guidelines on Alternative Care for Children called for preventing unnecessary family separation and promoting reintegration. The approach, he explained, ensured children receive the emotional, social, and developmental support that only families could provide, reducing reliance on institutional care, which often failed to replicate the nurturing environment children require.

Misconceptions about family-based care present a significant challenge. Many believe that families, especially those facing economic hardships, were incapable of meeting children's needs, leading to institutionalization as the default solution. Mr. George highlighted a staggering statistic: *“Eighty percent of institutionalization is due to financial challenges, not caregiving incapacity.”* which undermines the potential of family-based care, often overlooking the fact that families could thrive with the right support mechanisms.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought the urgency of family strengthening approach into sharp focus. The Supreme Court's directive to reintegrate institutionalized children with their families during the pandemic demonstrated both the opportunities and challenges of family strengthening. Over half of the children in the southern state of India went back to families during this period. Mr. George observed, *“Despite the lack of adequate financial and social support, only 5–10% of these children returned to institutions. Post covid”.* Which demonstrated the inherent capacity of families to care for their children when provided with even minimal support, illustrating the resilience of families and the potential of reintegration policies.

States like Karnataka and Telangana have shown how family strengthening could be effectively integrated into child protection frameworks. *Karnataka's Vishesh Palan Yojana* was a prime example, having supported over 20,000 families through systematic vulnerability mapping and targeted interventions, resource allocation. These efforts yielded remarkable results, in Karnataka the proportion of children in CCIs dropped by 10-30%. Mr. George pointed out that states focusing on reintegration, rather than relying solely on institutions, were witnessing stronger family and community ties, reducing societal costs associated with long-term institutional care. Families that once collapsed on the edge of economic insecurity experienced stability through financial aid, counseling, and skill-building programs. Such interventions not only addressed immediate needs but also empowered families to create a nurturing environment for their children. Mr. George's concluding remark was, *“Strengthening*



*families is not an option; it is an obligation,”* encapsulates the moral and practical imperative of this approach.

Ms. Yamuna, State Head, Miracle Foundation India dwelled on the pivotal role of family strengthening in ensuring the well-being of children, especially when transitioning from CCIs to family environments. Ms. Yamuna pointed out that the challenge stems from the disconnect between institutional care and family-based care alternatives. Many CCIs and DCPU personnel perceived family strengthening as a separate domain, leading to insufficient follow-ups and fragmented reintegration efforts. Families, often grappling with financial or emotional vulnerabilities, require tailored interventions to support this transition, making a child-centered, strength-based approach indispensable.

Ms. Yamuna spoke about the Thrive Scale™ methodology now available as a mobile and web based ThriveWell application developed by Miracle Foundation. Thrive Scale™ tool was a family based assessment tool which enabled the child protection workforce, case workers towards data-based decisions, conducting risk assessment, intervention planning, and progress tracking for reintegration of children from CCIs into family & preventing their separation from their families, ensure a holistic and effective approach to family strengthening. This tool aids in determining whether intervention is needed and assists in planning immediate and long-term actions across the five key domains (Family & Social Relationship, Health & Mental Health, Education, Household Economy, Living Conditions). It also helps to identify Red Flags which were urgent concerns that signalled immediate threats to a child or household, requiring swift intervention. Identifying these risks early enables timely responses, ensuring child safety and preventing harm.

Ms. Yamuna hinted at the challenging ramifications of prolonged institutionalization, where children often struggle to adapt to family settings. The Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, prescribes 1.5 to 2 years of follow-ups, but this duration was often found to be insufficient. Reintegration must extend beyond a prescribed timeline to address deeper emotional and social adjustments. Miracle Foundation India in its work addressed the challenges through holistic family strengthening interventions and capacity-building efforts, ensuring families and children received guidance and resources for a smooth transition. Ms Menon’s concluding remark was, *“family strengthening is not just a practice but a commitment to long-term child welfare”* resonated deeply, reflecting the moral and practical imperatives of this work.

Mr. Sathish Kumar, DCPO, Namakkal, Tamil Nadu, emphasized that kinship care, coupled with robust linkages to government schemes and inter-departmental support,



was pivotal in this journey. His perspective highlights the critical role of coordination and innovative practices in fostering a stable and supportive environment for children.

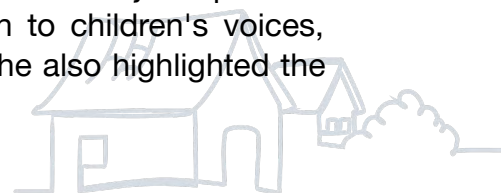
According to Mr. Kumar, one of the key challenges in family strengthening lay in addressing the developmental delays and emotional needs of children who experienced institutional care. Families were unaware of the long-term impacts of institutionalization on a child's growth and well-being. Kinship counseling has emerged as one of the solutions, helping families recognize the benefits of family care and empowering them to provide nurturing environments. He shared an example of nine children who were reintegrated into family settings through sponsorship programs, each receiving ₹4,000 per month to support their transition.

Mr. Sathish highlighted the success of networking with line departments, CSR initiatives, and foster care programs in creating sustainable outcomes. Coordination meetings with key stakeholders such as CWC, Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), and Probation Officers played a critical role in identifying children in need of care and protection. Mr. Kumar shared the example of a job fair organized in collaboration with concerned district depts. This resulted in 15 widows securing employment, bringing financial stability within respective families. His example of sponsorship programs and employment initiatives demonstrated how targeted interventions could address the unique needs of families and children. The broader framework of family strengthening relies on integrating innovative practices into systemic child protection efforts. His words resonated with the profound truth that *“family strengthening is not just a program; it is a commitment to building stronger communities and brighter futures for children.”*

*Sis. Lourdu Mary, CWC Chairperson, Belgaum (Belagavi)*, reflecting on her extensive experience with transition programs, highlighted both the challenges and the collaborative strategies essential for fostering successful reintegration. Her insights shed light on the critical importance of building trust, mobilizing resources, and strengthening families to ensure children could thrive within a nurturing environment.

Family resistance remained a significant hurdle in reintegration, many families, as Sis. Lourdu explained, they were hesitant to accept children back, often under the perception that institutional care offered better support. Addressing this reluctance required a multifaceted approach. She spoke of the necessity for stakeholders like CWC, DCPU and even local MLAs to engage directly with families.

Sis. Lourdu shared an example of a child eager to return to their family despite the mother's resistance, highlighting the need to pay attention to children's voices, prioritize the child's emotional and developmental well-being. She also highlighted the



provisions of Mission Vatsalya, which has provided sponsorship for 761 children, foster care for 9, and aftercare for 21 children in Karnataka, illustrating the tangible outcomes of robust family support systems. Grassroots workshops foster a sense of shared responsibility among stakeholders. These workshops prepare families to address the emotional and practical challenges of reintegration effectively.

*“The ecosystem must be strengthened to provide support for the child to grow in the family environment,”* she affirmed. Her reflections on Mission Vatsalya highlight its potential as a framework for family strengthening. However, she stressed the need for its expansion and deeper implementation across districts in Karnataka.

*Mr. Girish Mehta, Director & Co-Founder, CLIC,* his life’s journey has shaped his life’s approach in supporting the issue of family strengthening. Mr Mehta lived through the challenges and gaps in the family support system and witnessed firsthand how important role the government policies could play to create better opportunities for children, especially those in vulnerable situations.

In 2007, following his father’s demise, Girish’s mother became the sole breadwinner for him and his younger brother while navigating through tremendous challenges. On learning about the Palanhar Yojana through an awareness program, she enrolled. While the scheme gave the family some relief, the inconsistent payments often made their survival a daily struggle. Girish, having gone through this tough period of financial hardship, had to even drop out from school to make ends meet. When a social worker saw him working in a dhaba, he was placed in a CCI. He recollected, *“while I received education and care at the institution, the absence of my mother's love and the absence of an emotional connection such as in a family set-up created a deep void in his life.”*

For Girish, some of the key challenges that one needs to work on were as follows-

- While schemes like the Palanhar Yojna aimed to support vulnerable families, irregularities in implementation created additional challenges. Girish advocated for stronger systems to ensure consistent support for families to prevent children from entering care institutions unnecessarily.
- While CCIs provided all possible support, still they could not replace the love, care, and sense of belonging that a family offered. Therefore, families must be empowered to keep their children at home whenever possible.
- As someone who experienced the emotional gaps in family relationships, Girish emphasized on the importance of addressing the psychological and emotional needs of both children and their families during interventions.
- Family strengthening efforts must enable deeper and more meaningful engagement between children and their families. Girish mentioned how some of



his friends were still connected to their SOS family which helped them to have a sense of belonging.

- ➔ Girish mentioned how many children in his network shared a similar longing for family connections and while they knew their parents existed, they still lack the emotional bond or physical presence of a family.

#### Overall Recommendations from the panelists:

1. Data-driven approaches could bridge gaps and ensure families received sustained support tailored to their needs.
2. Awareness campaigns and community-level interventions were vital for warding off misconceptions and promoting family strengthening as a more sustainable and compassionate alternative.
3. Families supported through capacity-building programs tend to experience improved stability, reducing the likelihood of children re-entering institutional care.
4. Personal visits to homes, grassroots workshops, and counseling sessions were often necessary to convince families of the value of reintegration.
5. The significance of building a robust ecosystem for caregivers, peer support networks, for instance, offered a sense of community and understanding, helping families feel less isolated in their journeys.
6. Presenting families with information about available government schemes enabled them to access resources that sustain them in the long term.



## Speakers from the Fourth Leadership Dialogue



**Mr. Sonykutty George**  
**Child Protection Specialist, Hyderabad Field Office,**  
**UNICEF**

Sonykutty George, a Child Protection Specialist, has been with UNICEF's Hyderabad Field Office for fifteen years. His career with UNICEF spans over two decades, including five years at the Delhi office, where he played a crucial role in the drafting of the Juvenile Justice Central Model Rules and the Integrated Child Protection Scheme for the Government of India. With a strong commitment to promoting Family-Based Alternative Care, he has been at the forefront of child rights initiatives across the country, actively collaborating with various networks and alliances. His extensive experience includes working closely with the Supreme Court Committee on Juvenile Justice and Juvenile Justice Committees in numerous states. He holds a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from Rajagiri College of Social Sciences and is a law graduate from AMP Law College, Rajkot. His expertise and contributions have made him a key figure in the field of child protection and rights in India.

**Sr. Lourdes Mary**  
**Chairperson, Child Welfare Committee, Belgaum,**  
**Karnataka**

Sr. Lourdes has been the Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee in Belgaum, Karnataka, since 2017. In her previous capacity, she served as a Juvenile Justice Board member in Kalaburgi district for three years. She also worked as a project coordinator in the Vijayanagar district of Andhra Pradesh for seven years with an NGO named Jattu, which focuses on grassroots-level work for children. She is a firm believer in collaborating with all stakeholders, including the government and NGOs, to ensure that the rights of every child in need of care and protection are upheld.





**Mr. Girish Mehta**  
**Director & Co-Founder, Care Leavers Inner Circle Forum**

Girish Mehta is a care-experienced youth who started his career with Child Helpline. During this period, he came into contact with other care leavers who were facing similar challenges. Moved by their experiences and struggles, Girish initiated the development of a Care Leaver Network called “Care Leavers Inner Circle (CLiC)” with the aim to provide support and creating a platform that is led by care leavers, for care leavers. In June 2024, CLiC was recognized as SDG Entrepreneurs of India by the Atal Innovation Mission in their “Innovation for You” Coffee Table Book.

**Mr. Sathish Kumar**  
**District Child Protection Officer, Namakkal, Tamil Nadu**

Sathish Kumar has been working as a District Child Protection Officer in Namakkal district in Tamil Nadu since the past 4 years. He has been involved in social work since 18 years and has worked on different themes such as microcredits, the empowerment of HIV-positive individuals, health care specific to TB as well as village adoption programs. Using his varied experience, he wants to develop educational materials for children and implement innovative programs focused on local issues. Sathish has a master’s degree in social work.



**Ms. Yamuna**  
**State Head, Tamil Nadu & Kerala, Miracle Foundation India**

Yamuna Menon is a Post Graduate in Sociology from Pondicherry Central University. She brings with her an experience of about 15 years in closely working with rural communities, predominantly in Kerala. Yamuna has engaged in social mobilisation, training; design and implementation of women empowerment programmes in the past. Before joining Miracle Foundation India, she has worked with National Institute of Speech & Hearing, Kudumbashree, National Mission for Empowerment of Women & M S Swaminathan Research Foundation.



## Leadership Dialogue 5: September 2024 Family Strengthening Interventions and importance of linkages with the social protection schemes

Dr. Amitabh Awasthi, Joint Director, Dept of WCD, Madhya Pradesh focused on the state strategy in empowering families by addressing vulnerabilities and strengthening access to social welfare schemes, aligning with the principles of Mission Vatsalya. This initiative gains significance as it aims to reduce institutionalization, positioning it as a measure of last resort for children in need of care and protection (CNCP) and children in conflict with the law (CICL). Highlighting the urgency of this approach, Dr. Awasthi remarked, *"Ensuring no child is left behind requires collaborative efforts, consistent monitoring, and unwavering dedication to creating inclusive support systems."*

The core challenge lies in identifying and addressing family vulnerabilities, often rooted in poverty, lack of education, or the pressures of dual working parents. These factors expose children to risks such as substance abuse, begging, or conflict with the law. The COVID-19 pandemic further amplified existing inequalities, creating an urgent need for robust social security measures. Madhya Pradesh has responded by intensifying efforts to map and support vulnerable families, systematically connecting them to relevant schemes. As Dr. Awasthi explained, *"Family vulnerabilities must be mapped carefully to provide targeted support that prevents children from falling into harmful categories."* In collaboration with Udayan Care, the state government conducted a Vulnerability Mapping exercise across three blocks in Ujjain, aimed at linking vulnerable children and families with essential social protection schemes.<sup>49</sup>

Various welfare schemes such as *Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, and Ladli Laxmi Yojana, Ladli Behna Yojna, Baal Ahirwal Yojna, Mukhyamantri Covid-19 Baal Sewa Yojna, Jankalyan (Sambal) Yojana* play a pivotal role in addressing diverse needs, including maternal health, financial independence, and healthcare access. However, a significant barrier is the lack of awareness among families about these schemes. Many, particularly in remote areas, remain unaware of benefits like immunization programs, largely due to competing daily priorities. *"Raising awareness among disadvantaged populations is critical to ensuring they can access social security benefits effectively,"* Dr. Awasthi emphasized, highlighting the role of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), community workers, and helplines in bridging this gap.

Highlighting innovative tools, Dr. Awasthi referenced the *vulnerability mapping tool* developed by the Department, which provides critical insights for identifying vulnerable

---

<sup>49</sup> <https://iacn.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/ffb6a8e1ab2ce038d6bc959a98c18706.pdf>





families and targeted interventions to prevent risks to children and families. The collaborative efforts of stakeholders at all levels aim to build a sustainable framework that empowers families and safeguards children.

As Dr. Awasthi aptly stated, *“Through consistent monitoring and a holistic focus, we can create an inclusive environment where every child has the opportunity to thrive.”*

Mr. Biplab Ghosh, DCPO, West Tripura highlighted the proactive measures being undertaken in Tripura to support families of children transitioning from the CCIs. Economic and social challenges often compel parents to relinquish responsibility for their children, leading to institutionalization, which may not align with the best interests of the child. Recognizing this, the state has adopted a multi-pronged strategy to strengthen families and reduce vulnerabilities. Mr. Ghosh dwelled on a holistic approach undertaken by the state department in Tripura at creating an inclusive and sustainable framework that empowers families, prevents institutionalization, and promotes the welfare of children.

A cornerstone of this approach is the *Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)* scheme, which leverages the expertise of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) in identifying at-risk families. Comprehensive surveys, conducted in collaboration with AWWs, map the vulnerabilities of families and inform the design of targeted interventions. These surveys form the foundation for connecting families with appropriate resources and government schemes, ensuring a tailored and needs-based response. Mr. Ghosh emphasized that *“empowering families begins with understanding their unique challenges and ensuring they have access to the right support systems.”*

In addition to creating linkages, community sensitization efforts are underway to raise awareness about Mission Vatsalya and the Juvenile Justice Act. These initiatives aim to inform families about available support systems and encourage their active utilization. Home visits conducted by AWWs further enhance outreach, ensuring that the benefits of social protection schemes reach the families most in need.

The state government has introduced over 40 welfare schemes addressing diverse needs. These include disability pensions, widow pensions, unmarried women pensions, and old-age pensions, with 10% of the population benefiting from state pensions. Approximately 4 lakh beneficiaries receive ₹2,000 per month under these initiatives. Furthermore, under the *Food Security Scheme*, families are provided 5 kilograms of rice, alleviating food insecurity and enhancing their economic stability. The state also runs sponsorship programs to directly aid vulnerable children, providing a safety net that mitigates the risks of institutionalization.



Ms. Leena Prasad, Director- Advocacy, Research & Training from Udayan Care, outlined the key components of family strengthening interventions, particularly for children transitioning from CCIs or those at risk of separation. These components include holistic support for families, sustainability, an integrated approach, access to social protection schemes, and the prevention of unnecessary family separation. Vulnerability mapping plays a critical role in identifying families in need, enabling the provision of tailored and comprehensive support through existing social security provisions.

Ms. Prasad emphasized the importance of inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination, recognizing that no single organization can address all needs.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Udayan Care's Family Strengthening Project in Delhi addressed a critical challenge as children were rapidly restored back into their families from the CCIs without any proper transition planning and follow up. Many parents, overwhelmed by the socio-economic impact of the crisis, expressed intentions to send their children back to institutional care once the pandemic subsided.

Recognizing this, Udayan Care launched the Fit Families Together Project, adopting a comprehensive "Circle of Care and Protection"<sup>50</sup> framework to foster family resilience, ensure rehabilitation and reintegration of children in their families, and thereby prevent re-institutionalization.

In Madhya Pradesh, Udayan Care played a pivotal role in conducting vulnerability mapping. The DCPU plays a key role in finalizing the roles of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Supervisors, and Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs). Micro-planning and training sessions were conducted to prepare AWWs for data collection using standardized tools. The initiative has achieved significant outcomes, including the successful linkage of 2,491 children, youth, and families to various social protection programs. It has also enhanced stakeholders' confidence in the system, demonstrating its value in addressing vulnerabilities and reintegrating affected individuals into mainstream support networks.

Ms. Prasad shared that the tools developed for this initiative have been approved by the Madhya Pradesh Women and Child Development Department (MPWCD) and integrated into the state's 5-Year Action Plan, ensuring continuity and alignment with state priorities.

---

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.udayancare.org/child-and-youth-care/family-strengthening-program>



Ms. Pallavi Dhiman, Manager Growth and Ms. Rasika Kaware, Sr. Manager focused on Haqdarshak's vision for leveraging technology to bridge the gap between vulnerable families and social protection schemes, ensuring that those in need can access the support they deserve. *"Accessing welfare is not just about knowing schemes; it's about removing the layers of complexity that hinder people from benefitting,"* shared Ms. Pallavi, emphasizing the need for innovative solutions.

Marginalized groups frequently encounter challenges such as lack of awareness, bureaucratic red tape, and difficulties in navigating eligibility criteria. For many, these barriers are compounded by issues like mistrust of external actors, social stigma, and infrastructural gaps in remote areas. As Ms. Rasika noted, *"We work not just to connect families to schemes but to address the structural inequalities that prevent them from thriving."* Haqdarshak's Yojana Platform stands out as a digital repository that simplifies these challenges. This tool empowers field workers, especially women from rural areas, to conduct surveys, collect critical family data, and generate a curated list of eligible schemes along with the beneficiaries, ensuring inclusivity and efficiency.

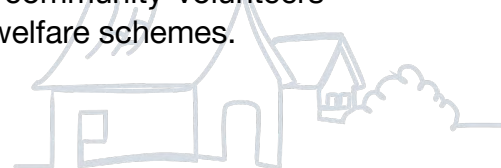
Anecdotes from the field reveal the tangible impact of this approach. In one instance, a woman who had been unaware of healthcare schemes was able to access essential services through Ayushman Bharat, drastically reducing her medical expenses. Economic stability is bolstered through subsidies and financial aid, healthcare becomes accessible, education support minimizes dropout rates, and women are empowered to play pivotal roles in their families and communities.

To address persistent challenges, strategies like enhancing digital literacy, streamlining bureaucratic processes, and conducting community sensitization programs is employed. *"Empowerment begins with knowledge,"* Ms. Pallavi emphasized, pointing to the organization's efforts to challenge patriarchal norms and encourage women's active participation in welfare programs. Through capacity-building initiatives and targeted livelihood programs, the organization ensures that families are equipped to access resources and opportunities effectively.

Haqdarshak's work is a testament to the power of combining technology with grassroots efforts to tackle structural inequalities.

### **Overall Recommendations from the panelists:**

1. Strengthening child protection committees at the district, panchayat, and community levels is crucial to enhancing access and impact.
2. Building the capacity of AWWs, local committees, and community volunteers broadens the scope to improve last-mile connectivity for welfare schemes.



3. Simplifying processes across schemes, as exemplified by the streamlined documentation for the Ladli Scheme, has been recognized as a best practice.
4. Utilizing social media platforms to raise awareness, empowering Gram Panchayats as central hubs for information dissemination, and establishing dedicated helplines for real-time support are among the key strategies discussed.
5. The introduction of digital application tools like Haqdarshak, coupled with hands-on assistance from trained community workers, ensures that beneficiaries, particularly those in vulnerable situations, can navigate application processes with ease.
6. Adopting holistic family strengthening models supports sustainable reintegration and builds resilience.



## Speakers from the Fifth Leadership Dialogue



**Dr. Amitabh Awasthi**  
**Joint Director, Directorate of Women and Child Development, Madhya Pradesh**

Dr. Amitabh Awasthi, since August 2021 has been serving as Joint Director at the Directorate of Women and Child Development in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Through his leadership and expertise in areas such as health, finance, and child welfare, he has made significant contributions to the state's development. He is an M.A., Ph.D. and a dedicated administrative officer who entered public service in 1995 after being selected through the Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commission in 1993.

**Ms. Leena Prasad**  
**Director, Advocacy, Research & Training, Udayan Care**

With over 24 years of experience in the social development sector, Ms. Prasad has been instrumental in driving family strengthening initiatives at Udayan Care. She is a strong advocate for linking children at risk with alternative care and social support systems.



**Ms. Rasika Kaware**  
**Manager, Growth, Haqdarshak**

Ms. Kaware, with over six years of experience in social security and policy-making, has been instrumental in leveraging technology to streamline access to social protection schemes for vulnerable populations. Her expertise lies in enhancing social security delivery through tech-driven solutions.





**Mr. Biplab Ghosh**  
**District Child Protection Officer & District Inspector**  
**of Social Education, West Tripura District**

Mr. Ghosh has over 17 years of dedicated service in child protection and welfare initiatives in Tripura. His administrative leadership has been key in enhancing welfare programs for children, particularly in linking families with critical social protection services.

**Ms. Pallavi Dhiman**  
**Associate Manager, Growth, Haqdarshak**

Ms. Dhiman brings her extensive experience in skill development, entrepreneurship, and local livelihoods, particularly in remote and marginalized communities. Her work focuses on connecting these communities with government schemes to build economic resilience.



## 5. Summative Reflection

The insights generated at the leadership dialogues thematically covered the following purview:

### Strengthening Systems and Collaboration

- Build robust grassroots systems and foster a unified approach among government agencies, NGOs, CSOs, and community groups.
- Enable tiered problem escalation and stakeholder coordination for effective service delivery, including active youth involvement.

### Child-Centric and Data-Driven Approaches

- Prioritize child-focused, data-driven decision-making in case management to improve outcomes.
- Use digital tools and data systems to bridge service gaps and provide tailored, sustained support for families.

### Family-Based and Inclusive Care Models

- Transition from institutional care to non-institutional, family-based approaches through sponsorships, foster care, and family strengthening initiatives.
- Involve care-experienced individuals to provide unique insights and strengthen support systems.

### Comprehensive Support and Ecosystems for Reintegration

- Provide aftercare programs focusing on housing, education, vocational training, and emotional support for care leavers.
- Build peer support networks and inclusive ecosystems to promote resilience, sustainability, and long-term stability for families and youth.

### Localized and Preventive Strategies

- Design district-specific protection plans and conduct vulnerability mapping to identify and support at-risk children and families.
- Prevent separation and address systemic risks through grassroots counseling, reintegration efforts, and community-driven initiatives.



### Active Role of Village and Local Committees

- Empower Child Welfare & Protection Committees to act as collaborative hubs, facilitating child protection discussions and maintaining databases of vulnerable children and families.
- Strengthen monitoring mechanisms in schools and communities to ensure children's safety and prevent child marriage.

### Capacity Building and Awareness

- Equip stakeholders—such as CWCs, PRIs, caregivers, and volunteers—through contextualized training and workshops.
- Promote community awareness campaigns to dispel misconceptions and strengthen understanding of child protection and family-based care.

Treading on this pathway demands robust collaboration among stakeholders—government agencies, civil society, and communities to channel resources directly into families and communities. Alongside this, we must continue to strengthen quality family-based alternative care options that align with India's rich traditions of caregiving and community support. Equally important is fostering a shift in societal mindsets and social norms, building strong public, political will to invest in children for India's brighter future. This means recognizing and enabling parents as agents of positive change for their children. Finally, it is essential to amplify the voices and leadership of children and young people with lived experiences of care, ensuring they are valued as equal partners in driving this transformation forward.

**As we wind up the volume 1 of this compendium, on behalf of Miracle Foundation India team, we are grateful for all that we have learnt from each of you out there in the sector.**

it is important for the readers to know that **'Supporting Nurturing, Enabling Happy Families (SNEH) a Compendium of Perspectives & Practices on Family-Based Alternatives from the Governments, Practitioners & Stakeholders'**, will henceforth be a regular feature of the National Family Summit every year. Where every year we would like to recollect and acknowledge the significant contributions to child care reforms in the country.



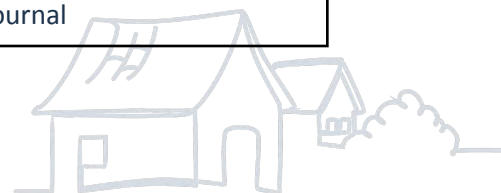


## Reference Sources for the Compendium

S.No.	NAME OF THE ORGANISATION	LINK
<u>1</u>	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<a href="https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/JJ%20Amendment%20Act%20-2021_.PDF">https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/JJ%20Amendment%20Act%20-2021_.PDF</a>
<u>2</u>	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<a href="https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/JJ%20Model%20Amendment%20Rules%202022%20(english)_27.pdf">https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/JJ%20Model%20Amendment%20Rules%202022%20(english)_27.pdf</a>
<u>3</u>	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<a href="https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/adoption%20Regulations%202022%20english_27.pdf">https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/adoption%20Regulations%202022%20english_27.pdf</a>
<u>4</u>	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<a href="https://missionvatsalya.wcd.gov.in/public/pdf/children-related-law/vatsalyaguideline.pdf">https://missionvatsalya.wcd.gov.in/public/pdf/children-related-law/vatsalyaguideline.pdf</a>
<u>5</u>	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<a href="https://cara.wcd.gov.in/pdf/MODEL%20FOSTERCARE%20GUIDELINES,%202024.pdf">https://cara.wcd.gov.in/pdf/MODEL%20FOSTERCARE%20GUIDELINES,%202024.pdf</a>
<u>6</u>	PIB	<a href="https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseframePage.aspx?PRID=2083275">https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseframePage.aspx?PRID=2083275</a>
<u>7</u>	National Commission for Protection of Child rights	<a href="https://ncpcr.gov.in/uploads/172422913166c5a60bbfda7_final-guidelines-on-section-39-of-pocso-act-2012-dated-18032024-1-33.pdf">https://ncpcr.gov.in/uploads/172422913166c5a60bbfda7_final-guidelines-on-section-39-of-pocso-act-2012-dated-18032024-1-33.pdf</a>
<u>8</u>	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<a href="https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/IEC%20Website.pdf">https://cara.wcd.gov.in/PDF/IEC%20Website.pdf</a>
<u>9</u>	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<a href="https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report">https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report</a>
<u>10</u>	The Hindu	<a href="https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/five-year-strategic-plan-to-reduce-by-50-the-number-of-children-living-in-institutions/article67835417.ece">https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/five-year-strategic-plan-to-reduce-by-50-the-number-of-children-living-in-institutions/article67835417.ece</a>



S.No.	NAME OF THE ORGANISATION	LINK
<u>11</u>	<b>Madhya Pradesh State Action Plan for Child Protection</b>	<a href="https://mphc.gov.in/PDF/web_pdf/JJC/PDF/publication/Madhya%20Pradesh%20State%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Child%20Protection%202023-2027.pdf">https://mphc.gov.in/PDF/web_pdf/JJC/PDF/publication/Madhya%20Pradesh%20State%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Child%20Protection%202023-2027.pdf</a>
<u>12</u>	<b>DASRA</b>	<a href="https://www.dasra.org/individual-resources/112">https://www.dasra.org/individual-resources/112</a>
<u>13</u>	<b>Echo India</b>	ECHO Centre of Juvenile Justice: <a href="https://echoindia.org/">https://echoindia.org/</a>
<u>14</u>	<b>Ministry of Women and Child Development</b>	MWCD Annual Report 2023-24: <a href="https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report">https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report</a>
<u>15</u>	<b>Ministry of Women and Child Development</b>	MWCD Annual Report 2022-23: <a href="https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report">https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report</a>
<u>16</u>	<b>Ministry of Women and Child Development</b>	MWCD Annual Report 2023-24: <a href="https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report">https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report</a>
<u>17</u>	<b>Tata Institute of Social Sciences</b>	<a href="https://www.tiss.edu/view/6/mumbai-campus/school-of-social-work/centre-for-equity-and-justice-for-children-and-fam/about-8/">https://www.tiss.edu/view/6/mumbai-campus/school-of-social-work/centre-for-equity-and-justice-for-children-and-fam/about-8/</a>
<u>18</u>	<b>State Child Protection Society Madhya Pradesh</b>	<a href="https://mpwcdmis.gov.in/Downloads/Consolidated%20Vulnerability%20Mapping%20Tools_Revised%202024-03-2021.pdf">https://mpwcdmis.gov.in/Downloads/Consolidated%20Vulnerability%20Mapping%20Tools_Revised%202024-03-2021.pdf</a>
<u>19</u>	<b>Better Care Network</b>	<a href="https://bettercarenetwork.org/transiting-models-of-care-assessment-tool-overview">https://bettercarenetwork.org/transiting-models-of-care-assessment-tool-overview</a>
<u>20</u>	<b>Better Care Network</b>	<a href="https://bettercarenetwork.org/phases-of-transitioning">https://bettercarenetwork.org/phases-of-transitioning</a>
<u>21</u>	<b>Udayan Care</b>	<a href="https://www.udayancare.org/research-and-publication/journal">https://www.udayancare.org/research-and-publication/journal</a>



S.No.	NAME OF THE ORGANISATION	LINK
<u>22</u>	Space 2 grow	<a href="https://www.space2grow.in/_files/ugd/d2759d_1d02f7bd0f964d94bee83459677254ad.pdf">https://www.space2grow.in/_files/ugd/d2759d_1d02f7bd0f964d94bee83459677254ad.pdf</a>
<u>23</u>	Space 2 grow	<a href="https://www.space2grow.in/in-media">https://www.space2grow.in/in-media</a>
<u>24</u>	UNICEF India	<a href="https://www.unicef.org/india/reports/country-programme-document-2023-2027">https://www.unicef.org/india/reports/country-programme-document-2023-2027</a>
<u>25</u>	India Alternative Care Network	<a href="https://iacn.in/resource/tracing-the-evolution-of-alternative-care-for-children-in-india-in-the-last-decade-and-the-way-forward/">https://iacn.in/resource/tracing-the-evolution-of-alternative-care-for-children-in-india-in-the-last-decade-and-the-way-forward/</a>
<u>26</u>	Udayan Care	<a href="https://www.udayancare.org/advocacy-programme/learning-fellowship-together-lift">https://www.udayancare.org/advocacy-programme/learning-fellowship-together-lift</a>
<u>27</u>	India Alternative Care Network	<a href="https://iacn.in/">https://iacn.in/</a>
<u>28</u>	India Alternative Care Network	<a href="https://iacn.in/resource/fags-document-every-childs-right-to-family-life-an-introduction-to-family-strengthening-and-alternative-care-in-india/">https://iacn.in/resource/fags-document-every-childs-right-to-family-life-an-introduction-to-family-strengthening-and-alternative-care-in-india/</a>
<u>29</u>	India Alternative Care Network	<a href="https://iacn.in/publication/compendium-on-family-strengthening-and-alternative-care-programmes-practised-across-india/">https://iacn.in/publication/compendium-on-family-strengthening-and-alternative-care-programmes-practised-across-india/</a>
<u>30</u>	India Alternative Care Network	<a href="https://iacn.in/resource/kinship-care-in-india-a-case-study-documentation/">https://iacn.in/resource/kinship-care-in-india-a-case-study-documentation/</a>
<u>31</u>	Hope and Home for Children	<a href="https://www.hopeandhomes.org/">https://www.hopeandhomes.org/</a>
<u>32</u>	Transform NEEV Collective	<a href="https://transformneevcollective.org/">https://transformneevcollective.org/</a>
<u>33</u>	Family for every child	<a href="https://familyforeverychild.org/resources/changemakers-for-children/">https://familyforeverychild.org/resources/changemakers-for-children/</a>



S.No.	NAME OF THE ORGANISATION	LINK
<u>34</u>	Protsahan India Foundation	<a href="https://protsahan.co.in/hriday-dialogues-2024/">https://protsahan.co.in/hriday-dialogues-2024/</a>
<u>35</u>	ARPAN	<a href="https://www.arpn.org.in/child-safety-week/">https://www.arpn.org.in/child-safety-week/</a>
<u>36</u>	Prerana	<a href="https://www.preranaantitrafficking.org/">https://www.preranaantitrafficking.org/</a>
<u>37</u>	Ministry of Women and Child Development	MWCD Annual Report 2023-24: <a href="https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report">https://wcd.gov.in/documents/annual-report</a>
<u>38</u>	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights	<a href="https://ncpcr.gov.in/ghar/main">https://ncpcr.gov.in/ghar/main</a>
<u>39</u>	Child Welfare and Action Foundation	<a href="https://waic.in/">https://waic.in/</a>
<u>40</u>	Haqdarshak	<a href="https://haqdarshak.com/">https://haqdarshak.com/</a>
<u>41</u>	GEET- GIS Enabled Entitlement Tracking System	<a href="https://geet.observatory.org.in/">https://geet.observatory.org.in/</a>
<u>42</u>	Save the Children	<a href="https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/keeping-children-out-harmful-institutions-why-we-should-be-investing-family-based-care/#:~:text=Reports-,Keeping%20children%20out%20of%20harmful%20institutions%20%E2%80%93%20Why%20we%20should,investing%20in%20family%2Dbased%20care&amp;text=One%20of%20the%20biggest%20myths,feed%2C%20clothe%20and%20educate%20them.">https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/keeping-children-out-harmful-institutions-why-we-should-be-investing-family-based-care/#:~:text=Reports-,Keeping%20children%20out%20of%20harmful%20institutions%20%E2%80%93%20Why%20we%20should,investing%20in%20family%2Dbased%20care&amp;text=One%20of%20the%20biggest%20myths,feed%2C%20clothe%20and%20educate%20them.</a>
<u>43</u>	British Asian Trust	<a href="https://www.britishasiantrust.org/our-work/child-protection/">https://www.britishasiantrust.org/our-work/child-protection/</a>
<u>44</u>	Azim Premji Foundation	<a href="https://azimpremjifoundation.org/what-we-do/other-areas/children/">https://azimpremjifoundation.org/what-we-do/other-areas/children/</a>
<u>45</u>	Ministry of Women and Child Development	<a href="https://pmcaresforchildren.in/">https://pmcaresforchildren.in/</a>



S.No.	NAME OF THE ORGANISATION	LINK
<u>46</u>	HAQ: Centre for Child Rights	<a href="https://www.haqcrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/bfc-2024-25.pdf">https://www.haqcrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/bfc-2024-25.pdf</a>
<u>47</u>	India Development Review	<a href="https://idronline.org/article/social-justice/how-can-indias-new-foster-care-guidelines-serve-children-better/">https://idronline.org/article/social-justice/how-can-indias-new-foster-care-guidelines-serve-children-better/</a>
<u>48</u>	Catalysts for Social Action	<a href="https://csa.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Does-DI-serve-best-interests.pdf">https://csa.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Does-DI-serve-best-interests.pdf</a>
<u>49</u>	India Alternative Care Network	<a href="https://iacn.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/ffb6a8e1ab2ce038d6bc959a98c18706.pdf">https://iacn.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/ffb6a8e1ab2ce038d6bc959a98c18706.pdf</a>
<u>50</u>	Udayan Care	<a href="https://www.udayancare.org/child-and-youth-care/family-strengthening-program">https://www.udayancare.org/child-and-youth-care/family-strengthening-program</a>
<b>Name of Organizations Referred in the Compendium</b>		
	Catholic Relief Services	<a href="https://www.crs.org/">https://www.crs.org/</a>
	Child in Need Institute	<a href="https://cini-india.org/">https://cini-india.org/</a>
	Railway Children India	<a href="https://railwaychildren.org.in/">https://railwaychildren.org.in/</a>
	Youth Council for Development Alternatives	<a href="https://ycdaindia.org/">https://ycdaindia.org/</a>
	Butterflies	<a href="https://butterfliesngo.org/">https://butterfliesngo.org/</a>
	Make a Difference	<a href="https://makeadiff.in/">https://makeadiff.in/</a>
	National Institute of Public Cooperation & Child Development	<a href="https://www.nipccd.nic.in/#gsc.tab=0">https://www.nipccd.nic.in/#gsc.tab=0</a>



## QR code for Reference Resources from the Leadership Dialogue



Leadership Dialogues



First Leadership Dialogue



Second Leadership Dialogue



Third Leadership Dialogue

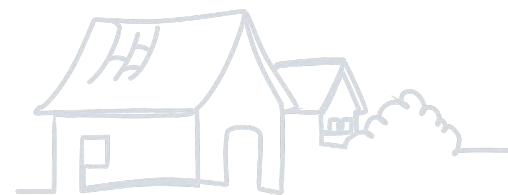


Fourth Leadership Dialogue



Fifth Leadership Dialogue







## GET IN TOUCH



G-29, Upper Ground Floor,  
Lajpat Nagar-III, New Delhi - 110024



011-49506375



[miraclefoundationindia.in](http://miraclefoundationindia.in)



[contact@miraclefoundation.org](mailto:contact@miraclefoundation.org)



[TheMiracleFoundationIndia](https://www.facebook.com/TheMiracleFoundationIndia)



[Miraclefoundationindia](https://www.instagram.com/Miraclefoundationindia)



[Miracle Foundation India](https://www.linkedin.com/company/MiracleFoundationIndia)



[@MFIndia](https://twitter.com/MFIndia)



[@MiracleFdnIndia](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMiracleFdnIndia)

