

# Situational Analysis and Recommendations By Children from Karnataka



Submitted to the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights  
July 2010

As recommendation to the National Policy  
Submitted through the IACR

Facilitated by  
Action Aid & The Concerned for Working Children  
Karnataka

## Introduction

We, children, from Dalit and Tribals communities, from urban and rural poor communities, children with disabilities and children living in the context of HIV/ AIDs have put together these recommendations for the national policy for children.

**We believe that “No decisions about us can be taken without us.”**

We want, first of all, to be recognised as citizens of today. This is the first step towards solving our problems. If our identity as children is denied, then nothing will be done to solve the real problems that force us to work, drop out of school, be trafficked or get married off, be malnourished, get abused and be killed. The main problem is that most often we are misunderstood or ignored.

We want development that is focused on children and the common people. Therefore, we demand for changes in the entire system so that our problems can be addressed, right down to its roots.

We see that today all development is based on the views of few rich and powerful people of the country. Corruption is the most rampant everywhere. We are not even allowed to ask for what is rightfully ours. We and our parents are not organised to fight for our rights. The education available to us does not make us strong enough to fight for our rights.

Some of us have come together, in our consultations, so that we can have a stronger voice to demand for our rights and to talk about issues that concern us. This can have a greater impact on society as a whole. We want to participate actively in solving our problems so that we no longer need to face these problems. We want to build a new world where children are not exploited and there is justice for all.

When we learnt that Government of India (GOI) is planning to draft a new national policy for children, we felt that it is an important time for us to talk about our situations and to say what we think needs to be done. If we need to realise our rights we have to first of all pressurise our Government to respect and follow the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We would like to make it clear that that our recommendations not only cover the problems and issues of those who were part of the consultation. They are also based on the areas and sectors that each of us belong to. We do not claim to speak for all the children of India or even Karnataka. We sincerely hope that children in other situations and circumstances and in different parts of India are also consulted before the Government drafts this important policy. Only then can all children point out to their realities and give their suggestions about what they think needs to be done. We feel the Government of India should listen to children facing different problems – and this can be done with the help of organisations that work with children and with the help of local governments.

We really hope that you will accept these recommendations. We request you to discuss the issues we have raised with our Government. Do let us know about the recommendations you will make too. We want to keep track of how our recommendations are followed in the Country in the future.

**We, the citizens of today, are placing these recommendations before you, because,**

- We are born in India, we belong to India
- We speak Indian languages
- We are 45% of the total Indian Population
- We too have the rights, just as those who are above 18 yrs of age do, even though we do not have a right to vote in the country
- The impact of today's decisions, policies and programmes have a direct impact on us today itself, hence we have the right to discuss and communicate our needs today itself.
- We are contributing to the development of India
- All policies and programmes are made for the Indian population, of which we are 45 percent of the citizens. We have the freedom to speak about our requirements.
- We know best our own situations and so we can explain them best. .
- Our births are registered and our names are mentioned in the ration cards. As these systems are well in place and officially recognised as the identity proof, Government will have to recognise us too as citizens

**As we are the citizens of today, we demand that**

- Considering our percentage in the population, 50% of the budget should be set aside for us. 4.9% of the total budget is not adequate for needs of the 45% of the total population, hence please bring down the expenditures on buildings and defenses.
- Our protection should also get equal importance if not more than the defence of the Country.
- Create a department for Children, so that we can go to 'one department' for all our requirements instead of roaming around to different departments to solve our problems. It is time consuming and difficult for us and our parents.
- Consult us, in specific groups (eg: children in the streets, children from tribal communities, children who are working etc) while writing up laws and conducting programmes for any of us. Government should take our opinion first before asking for the opinion of all others who are not directly affected by our problems.
- Concerning sanctioning of anganwadies, schools or any such facilities, decision should be taken at the local level not from the central ministry in Delhi. Decisions at

the local level will make it easy for us to be consulted and our needs will be given importance over other considerations.

- Central government should transfer the powers to local governments both in villages and cities to take decisions for their people and they should be provided with sufficient money to carry out what is required by the people.
- Government should provide us with platforms to participate in the decision making process from local to national level. We have been asking for this for about 20 years now.
- Similar to the Grama Sabhas and Ward Sabhas that adults have, we should also have Children's Grama Sabhas (As it is there in Karnataka) and Children's Panchayats in all States. In cities, we should have platforms like Children's Nagara Sabhas or ward Sabhas or Children's Pura Sabhas
- In the field of education and sports, all children, including those who are disabled, should be studying and playing together in a healthy spirit – without competition.

When all this comes true, that is the India we wish to see.

## **Specific Issues**

We come from different back grounds and age groups, our needs are also varied, so we analysed our situations based on the environment we have and made specific recommendations.

## **I. Child Labour**

### **Situational analysis**

- We are forced to work because of the poor economic status of the family
- We don't have support from our parents
- We have to take the familial responsibility at a very young age
- We are concerned about abuse from the employer
- We wont be paid properly for the work we do
- There is no value for our view points – no one listens to it
- Children's rights are violated when we are employed as bonded laborers
- We children, who work as domestic helps or in the unorganised sector, have no security. We need protection from abuse and violence

### **Recommendations**

- Government plans should be made in such a way that it can address issues related to child labour within ten years. The 'decade long plan' should be implemented with a singular purpose of building a country where children do not have to work for a living.
- In the run up to meet this goal, we want the state to ensure that the rights of children who currently do not have access to a progressive learning environment are realized.

Government needs to consult us and create such opportunities systematically all across the country.

- Allocate funds for social security and welfare programmes for children and their families
- Including all children each member should get 16 KGs of rice instead of 4 KGs as of today.
- Examinations should be conducted based on our ability not on basis of our age
- Those of us who could not continue with education and had to drop out should be provided with facilities such as open schools, open universities and distance education to pursue our higher education
- Education should include common subjects and vocational education. We want all schools to provide training in vocational skills half a day
- Our families should be provided with financial support so that we are allowed to study
- It is not only working children, but all children who need them should be provided with, books, uniforms, food etc.
- Our families should have the support they need so that we don't have to work
- Our grand parents and parents who are depending on our incomes to sustain the family should be provided with social security like health care facility, food security and employment.
- Government should discuss with children who do not have parents or care takers about the facilities they require and should provide them hostels according to their requirements
- State should understand each working child's background.

## **II. Education**

### **Situational analysis**

- We are discriminated and exploited by teachers based on our intelligence, caste, religion and physical abilities.
- We children who have visual disabilities are not provided with appropriate facilities such as Braille, sign language, tactile materials, access to basic infrastructure etc. This really comes in the way of our studies
- There are no computers in our schools
- We lack encouragement from parents to study and excel in life
- Our teachers are not committed enough to responsibly educate us
- Financial problems in our families stop us from continuing our education
- Schools and anganwadies are located far away from our homes
- Untouchability is still practiced in our schools by teachers as well as our fellow students
- Children with disabilities do not have appropriate facilities in the schools as well as outside, which is stopping us from continuing the education
- As we are studying in the government schools, we are looked down upon in the community because we are not provided with shoes, ties etc like it is done in private schools
- All children are not getting educated, even though it is there in the law that promises that

- Today there are various syllabuses like IGSE, ICSE, CBSE, and State syllabus. Based on the curriculum we study, we are discriminated when it comes to higher education and employment
- There is no common schooling
- There is no play ground in our schools, hence we don't have an opportunity to play or for the physical exercise
- There is no security person therefore we are not protected
- Absenteeism and irregularities among teachers are common
- We are not taught well in school. Teachers give us some work to complete on our own, and then sleep during the class hours. When we fail to answer their questions they beat us. The head teacher will not give attention to these details.
- As there is no teaching going on, we make noise and get beaten up for that
- During the class hours, teachers go out and talk into their mobile phones.
- There is only one teacher and one room for three classes. That creates chaos and we are unable to concentrate.
- There is lack of class rooms and toilets in the school
- In the absence of transport facility and school vans, we are finding it difficult to come to school in time, especially from far away places.
- There are so many gaps in the 'rights of children to free and compulsory education act'.
- Quality education is lacking in our school
- Privatisation of schools are making education expensive
- We lack nutritious food in the schools
- There is no library facility in the schools
- Teachers cheat us in the scholarship amount we are supposed to receive

### **Recommendations**

- Stop privatisation of education
- Education must be free for all children up to the age of 18
- All children are equal and all of us should have a common syllabus
- Nationalisation of private schools will help us access common education just as nationalization of banks has helped us during the time of recession.
- The education we receive should enable us to find a good job and should come in handy whenever and however we require it. For this we need skill enhancement programmes, vocations such as cultivation, weaving, handicraft, computers, carpentry and so on.
- According to our convenience, school and anganwadi timings should be adjusted, so that we can access it better. We recommend 'all time schools'.
- The syllabus should be based on the environment we live and there must be opportunity for local innovation.
- All schools should be located within 10 minutes of walking distance. In case the schools are far away, free transport should be made available.
- Children with disabilities need special teachers to help us to study. It is a must for the Government to include 'teaching children with disabilities' as a subject in the curriculum of teacher training courses.
- The tribal children and those who speak regional dialects should receive education in our mother tongue

- In the curriculum, the tribal language, culture and way of living should be included. This will in turn help to create awareness about these cultural aspects amongst all the children
- There should be special educators to teach children who have speech, hearing, mental and visual disability.
- There should be Braille books, audio aids, low vision aids, tactile maps and such other equipments to enhance our studies
- Children who belong to the marginalised communities and disabled should be provided free education till they complete their higher education
- An Anganwadi should be provided for every 25 children in the 0-6 age group, it should be located within 5 minutes walking distance and we should also get nutritious food.
- Each school and village should have libraries
- All poor children should receive scholarship and in addition to it, children who belong marginalised communities such as SC/ST, minorities and girl children should be given special attention
- Anti sexual harassment committees in all schools and colleges should be started to address the issues of violence and abuse against girls.
- Attraction to opposite sex is natural in this age group, so focus should be given to educate us on interpersonal relationships and sexuality.
- Awareness should be created in the schools and colleges about children getting addicted to any abusive habits

### **III.Child Marriage**

#### **Situational analysis**

- Children are forced to discontinue education after marriage
- We face physical and mental exploitation as we have to take more responsibility that we are ready for.
- We children have no opportunity to present our view points.
- There is no freedom for us. We are deprived of play time and an opportunity to meet our friends.
- As we get pregnant before adulthood, we suffer from health related issues and even death.
- We experience physical and mental torture at our husbands place.
- We don't get nutritious food
- We do not have ability to manage a family
- Our family has to face dowry demands and we have to face violence if that is not fulfilled.
- Our desires are forsaken in the name of marriage.
- Child marriage increases the maternal mortality rate.
- We are confined to the families depriving of all social interactions.
- We are blocked from enjoying a cheerful childhood.

#### **Recommendations**

- There should be compulsory marriage registration

- Compulsory birth registration should be carried out and birth certificates should be the basis for the marriage and its registration.
- There is a negative perception about the value of girl children. The way children are brought up, makes it seem like girls have no value and they need to be married away early because they are a responsibility.
- It is very important to have gender education in schools.
- Child Marriage Restraint Act should be implemented strictly.
- Awareness should be created for all children about the problems in a child marriage. Our school education also should tell us about the policies and acts available for children in a child friendly manner, so that we can make optimum use if it when we require it, such as in the case of a child marriage. It should help us to protect ourselves from all the atrocities we face.

## **IV. Protection**

### **Situational analysis**

- We lack protection for girl children from abuse and exploitation
- We lack protection for girl children with disability.
- We are facing trafficking of young children for illegal purposes
- Small children are kidnapped when our parents go for work; we are lured by chocolates and toys.
- Younger children are finding it difficult to cross roads
- Unemployed youth are creating problems for girls in the college and school premises disturbing them with comments.

### **Recommendations**

- Children who are orphans should get appropriate care, education and protection
- Children living on the streets should be provided with appropriate care, protection and trainings to find occupations.
- In such a case of a child marriage, child should be protected from the parents and relatives from abusing her/him and should be provided, protection, care and trainings to provide a livelihood.
- In most parts of the country, there are a lot of restrictions placed on girls. So some girls find it very difficult to attend the activities of our own organisations. Even when some of our parents are supportive to our involvement in our organisation, other communities are likely to discourage them with words like “if your daughters go out and participate it will be difficult for you to get them married in the future”. Awareness should be created in the society so that we can participate in the programmes without being judged negatively.
- Those who are trafficking children purpose should be punished severely.
- Hostels should be constructed in a such a way that young children can be taken care of, when our parents are away.
- Smaller and useless footpath should be constructed with more width which will help easy walk.
- Traffic rules pertaining road crossing should be told to children.

- Traffic police should help us to cross the roads. Foot paths and such facilities should be created to help the children.
- Police should be deployed at the premises to ensure that these youths are not creating any problems for our studies.

## **V. Poverty**

### **Situational analysis**

- As the price of rice and other related items have increased, we have to spend more money to have food. That creates more financial difficulties in our homes.
- As the food prices are increased, parents are forced to send their children for additional income to support the family.
- Value of money has decreased and the effect of poverty has increased.
- We are not sent to school
- We do not have houses
- We are discriminated by those who are privileged.
- Number of child laborers is increasing
- We can not access health facilities
- We do not have access to nutritious food
- Children's needs are not fulfilled, as our parents are unable to look after us well.

### **Recommendations**

- The products by the local farmers and artisans should get appropriate market price.
- Food and pulses should be provided to all the poor families in the cities on fair price
- Kerosene and such cooking fuels should be provided to all the poor families for the lowest price possible
- Alternate energy sources such as Gobar Gas plant, solar and wind energy should be explained to people. Wherever these energies are available, government should take the initiative to provide it in the least price possible and people should be encouraged to use it.
- All children and their families in this nation should receive good drinking water at homes or at an accessible distance. We do not want to pay for it.

## **VI. Health**

### **Situational analysis**

- Poor children are not treated well by the hospital staff.
- In schools we are not getting nutritious food in our mid-day meals.
- In schools, we do not have first aid boxes or health kits to attend to emergency needs.
- Lack of free health camps make us spend more on hospitals, at times we also need to give bribes to the hospital staff to get proper treatment
- Pollution is causing various health issues
- Lack nutritious food for the pregnant and lactating mothers and children in the 0-6 age group is a reason for increase in the infant mortality and malnourishment.

### **Recommendations**

- At least once in every month, health of each child should be monitored and documented. This should happen in our villages or near our residences, so that our parents are not finding any difficulty to access it, therefore they do not skip the monthly monitoring.
- If one of us is diagnosed with disease, we should get immediate medical aid and assistance.
- All age specific vaccinations should be made available to us, on specific intervals like the polio eradication programme.
- Health centres or hospitals should be available within 10 minutes of walking distance.

## VII. HIV/AIDS

### Situational analysis

- Stigma and discrimination is met out to the children even if we are only HIV affected
- Due to poverty we are unable to buy medicines
- Society blames us too for getting this disease.
- Adults and our care takers say we that we will die soon and therefore we are not entitled to have any family properties.
- Public hearings are not very useful to us

### Recommendations

- More tablet centres should be created and nutritious food be provided free of cost for us
- Through cultural activities, all children should be given awareness about this virus and disease, so that they won't discriminate us.
- More awareness programmes should be created by the government departments

## Annexure 1

Names of the few representatives who put forward their inputs

SI No	Name of the child	Age	Gender	Organisation
1	Raju	14	M	Bhima Sangha
2	Mahesh	13	M	Bhima Sangha
3	Ravi	13	M	Bhima Sangha
4.	Ambarish	13	M	Chethana Makkala Sangagala okkoota
5.	Ambarish	14	F	Chethana Makkala sangatanagala Okkuta
6.	Vani	12	F	Chethana Makkala sangatanagala Okkuta

7.	Poornima	14	F	Chethana Makkala sangatanagala Okkuta
8.	Yashodha	15	F	Chethana Makkala sangatanagala Okkuta
9.	Meera	14	F	Kanasu Children group
1	Kavitha	16	F	Hakkina angala
11.	Jyothi	17	F	Hakkina angala
12.	Prabhavathi	16	F	Hakkina angala
13.	Santosh	17	M	Hakkina angala
14.	Praveen	17	M	Hakkina angala
15.	Jyothi	15	F	Vivekananda makkala sangathane
16	Babu	17	M	Vivekananda makkala sangathane
17.	Raju	12	M	Vivekananda makkala sangathane
18.	Naratyanamma	15	F	Vivekananda Makkala Sanghatane
19.	Shivalingu	13	M	Vivekananda Makkala Sanghatane
20	Pradeep	15	M	Koraga Abhivruddhi Sanghatane
21	Kishor	18	M	Vivekananda Makkala Sanghatane
22.	Shobha	15	F	Koraga Abhivruddhi sanghatane
23.	Suma	15	F	Koraga Abhivruddhi Sangatane
24.	Suvarna	18	F	Koraga Abhivruddhi Sangatane
25.	Gauthami	16	F	Chiguru children's group
25.	Manikhantan	13	M	Chiguru Children's group
27.	Sunkamma	18	F	SWARAJ Children's group
28.	Jalajakshi	17.	F	SWARAJ Children's group
29.	Huligamma	18	F	SWARAJ Children's Group
30	Kavya	15	F	SWARAJ Children's Group
31.	Karibassamma	18	F	SWARAJ Children's Group
32	Durgamma	16.	F	SWARAJ Children's Group
33.	Vasanta	17.	F	SWARAJ Children's group

**Members of Makkala Panchayat and School Children's organizations, Kudapur, Udupi**

<b>Sl.No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grama Panchayath</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1.	Barathi	Haladi	President of Makkala Panchayath
2.	K. Achrna	Karkunje	Surya Shanga
3.	Pavitra	Molahalli	M.P. President
4.	Abisheka	Ampur	M.P. Secretary
5.	Axhaya H.	Basrur	Vis. President of M.P.
6.	Mamatha	Beloor	M.P. President
7.	Prithi	Beloor	Janani Shanga
8.	Soujanya	Beloor	Janani Shanga
9.	Sujatha	Herur	Prakruthi Shanga
10.	Manjula	Herur	M.P. member
11.	Gurudatta	Hombadi Mandadi	Navilu Shanga
12.	Sachin	Koteshwar	M.P. president
13.	Shasidar	Hombadi Mandadi	Shamana Makkala Shanga
14.	Akshya	Aloor	Boomika Shanga President
15.	Pramoda	Hengavalli	M.P. Secretary
16.	Vegnesh	Aloor	Shanga Member
17.	Chandra Nayk	Hengavalli	M.P. President
18.	Gowtama	Ampur	Shiva Shanga
19.	Shivaraj	Hallihole	Shanga Member
20.	Deepak	Nada	M.P. member
21.	Abisheka	Nada	Shanga Member
22.	Chitra	Kedur	Shanga Member
23.	Ashalatha	Kedur	Shanga Member
24.	Radika	Hangular	Shanga Member
25.	Deepeka	Hangular	Shanga Member
26.	Kalpana	Hangular	Shanga Member
27.	Suchitra	Kedur	Shanga Member
28.	Udaya Kumar	Tallur	M.P. member
29.	Ajantha	Tallur	Shanga Member
30.	Deepeka	Paduvari	Shanga Member
31.	Geetha	Paduvari	President of Shanga
32.	Jamuna	Yedthre	Shanga Member
33.	Nagamma	Yedthre	Shanga Member
34.	Mahalaxmi	Bijoor	Shanga Member
35.	Neethin	Bijoor	Shanga Member
36.	Pallavi	Bijoor	Shanga Member
37.	Divya	Hattiyangadi	President of Shanga
38.	Nagesh Shetty	Hattiyangadi	Member of Shanga
39.	Ragavendra	Hattiyangadi	Member of Shanga
40.	Geetha	Marvanthe	President of M.P.
41.	Suthitra	Trashhi	Member of Shanga
42.	Ambrutha	Trashhi	Member of Shanga
43.	Sandya	Trashhi	Member of Shanga
44.	Nagaratna	Trashhi	Bala Jagattu Shanga
45.	Sahana	Hattiyandagi	Vis. Pre. of M.P.
46.	Sukanya	Gujjadi	President of M.P.

47.	Abisheka	Trashhi	Member of Shanga
48.	Ashwath	Marvanthe	Member of M.P.
49.	Akash	Marvanthe	Member of M.P.
50.	Vanaja	Haladi	Samagra Gramina Abiburthi Chiguru Shanga
51.	Sumathi	Haladi	Chiguru Shanga
52.	Anisha	Anagalli	Member of M.P.
53.	Abisheka	Anagalli	Shanga of Balamandala member
54.	Geethendra	Karkunje	Shanga of Surya member
55.	Pallavi	Karkunje	Shanga of Surya member
56.	Ganesh	Koni	President of M.P.
57.	Jeevan	Basrur	Member of Makkala Shanga
58.	Anisha	Basrur	Member of Makkala Shanga
59.	Suhash	Basrur	Member of Makkala Shanga
60.	Meega	Basrur	Member of Makkala Shanga
61.	Savitha	Koni	Member of Makkala Shanga
62.	Sushma	Kirimunjeshwar	President of M.P.
63.	Mamatha	Koni	Member of M.P.
64.	Ajeetha	Heror	Member of M.P.
65.	Harisha	Heror	Training of N.B.
66.	Suresh	Kumbashi	Training of N.B.
67.	Ragavendra	Kedoor	Member of M.P.
68.	Ganesh	Kedoor	President of M.P.
69.	Venkatesh	Ampur	President of M.P.
70.	Anisha	Basrur	Member of Shanga
71.	Preethi	Udupi Santhekatte	Samagra Gramina Ashrma
72.	Suvarna	Nada	Samagra Gramina Ashrma
73.	Susantha	Karkunje	Member of Shanga

## **Annexure 2**

### **Process Facilitated By**

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