

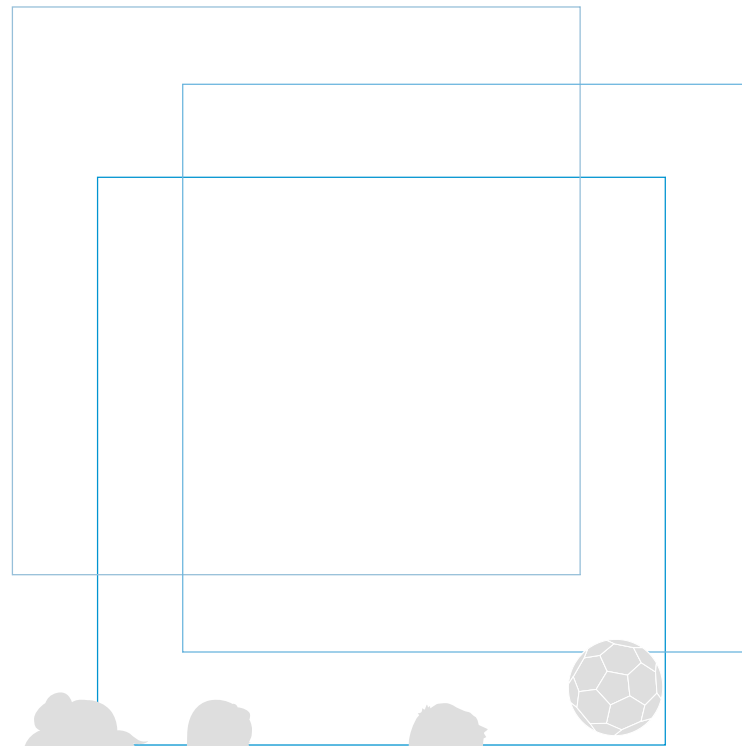


भारत



International
Labour
Organization

Converging Against Child Labour: Support for India's Model



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International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)



Project on Converging Against Child Labour: Support for India's Model

The issue of child labour

The 2001 Census estimates there are 12.6 million children (between the age of 5 to 14 years) engaged in an economic activity, either as marginal or main workers. The causes of child labour include poverty, lack of access to quality education, gender discrimination, large family size among others. Children in India work in a number of occupations, many of them harmful to their physical, psychological and moral well-being.

Introduction

In the last two decades, the Government of India (GOI) has put into place an enabling environment for the elimination of child labour. This includes policy and legislative measures as well as projects and programmes launched in conjunction with state governments, various community-based organizations, including NGOs and international bodies such as the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 is the major legal framework on which a number of the initiatives rest. The Act prohibits employment of children below 14 years in hazardous occupations and processes and regulates their working conditions in other employments. In 2006, children working as domestic servants and in roadside eateries and restaurants were brought under the purview of the Act.

The National Child Labour Policy was put into force in 1987. Thereafter, the Ministry of Labour and Employment began implementing the National Child Labour Projects (NCLPs) that focus on the rehabilitation of child labourers in areas with high concentration of hazardous industries or occupations. Under the NCLP, special schools are set up to provide non-formal and vocational education/ training to the rescued children. Thus far 250 NCLPs have been launched across the country to rehabilitate children working in hazardous industries. The GOI and State governments have flagship programmes for Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE), poverty alleviation, social welfare and health that reach out to marginalised and vulnerable groups. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009, aims to ensure education for all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years.

ILO's Support to Child Labour Initiatives in India

In 1992, India was the first country to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on child labour with the ILO and participate in the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). IPEC is a technical cooperation programme and operates within the framework of ILO Conventions No. 138 on Minimum Age and No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Its objective is the effective abolition and prevention of all forms of child labour, with a priority on its worst forms. Over the years, the ILO has supported numerous initiatives in India. One such on-going initiative is Converging against Child Labour: Support for India's Model (hereafter referred as the Child Labour Convergence Project). It is a Government of India and ILO technical cooperation project. It is funded by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). Various ongoing schemes and programmes like the National Child Labour Project (NCLP), Skills Development Initiative (SDIS), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and poverty alleviation schemes, among others will support the initiative.

The Convergence model

The project aims to develop a sustainable and replicable convergence model, based on lessons from previous child labour projects implemented by the Government and the ILO, including the INDUS Child Labour Project, which operated in 21 districts across five states in the country, the Andhra Pradesh State Based Project (APSBP) for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Karnataka State Based Project as well as other experience.

The model calls for –

- A holistic approach with different government ministries/ departments, social partners and civil society organizations coordinating and converging their efforts and resources at the district, state and national levels to eliminate child labour.
- Building on existing structures, schemes and programmes rather than establishing new ones. This would require action to complement features of major national programmes like the NCLP, SDIS, SSA, NREGS, poverty alleviation and health programmes and ensure that their benefits impact child labourers and their families.
- A family-centred approach, where educational rehabilitation of the child is accompanied by the economic upliftment of the family.

Target areas

The project will work in two districts each in five selected states –

- Katihar and Sitamarhi in Bihar.
- Surat and Vadodara in Gujarat.
- Ranchi and Sahibganj in Jharkhand.
- Jabalpur and Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh.
- Cuttack and Kalahandi in Orissa.

The districts have a high incidence of child labour due to poverty, social disparity and low education levels, or because of rural-urban migration and trafficking. Three of the five proposed states for the Child Labour Convergence Project (Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Orissa) are also UNDAF¹ focus states where economic and social development investments are underway, thus offering opportunities for further convergence with UN initiatives on poverty alleviation and education.

Project beneficiaries

The project will reach out to a total of 48,000 children between the ages of 5 to 14 years as direct and indirect beneficiaries in the ten districts.

- 19,000 children would be withdrawn and prevented from hazardous work and provided a range of educational and training opportunities and their rehabilitation monitored and tracked.
- 29,000 children would indirectly benefit from institutional capacity development, awareness raising and similar activities.

In addition

- 2,000 working adolescents (between 14 to 17 years) will be provided opportunities for skill development and links to employment;
- 5,000 families will receive skills training related to income-generation activities.

Partners

The partners in the programme are key Government ministries and departments at the National, State and local levels, employers' and workers' organizations, non governmental organizations and civil society bodies.

¹United Nations Development Assistance Framework is a collective strategic programme for the UN agencies in India responding to national development priorities and the Millennium Development Goals.

The key Government ministries and departments include:

- Ministry of Labour and Employment
- Ministry of Human Resource Development
- Ministry of Rural Development
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation
- Ministry of Women and Child Development
- Ministry of Panchyati Raj
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs

Employers

- The Council of Indian Employers (CIE) comprising the All India Organizations of Employers (AIOE), the Employers Federation of India (EFI), and the Standing Conference of Public Sector Enterprises (SCOPE).
- Sectoral business associations at the state and district level and the private sector.

Workers

The five major central trade union organizations - All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) and Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) and their affiliates at the state / district level.

Strategies and components

The Project aims to:

- ▶ Establish long-term strategies for coordination and institutional strengthening, awareness raising, enforcement, education and training, enhancing family livelihoods, community empowerment and child labour monitoring and tracking;
- ▶ Strengthen linkages between national, state and district levels and within each of these levels;
- ▶ Strengthen capacities of government departments, social partners and community-based organizations to work for the elimination of child labour;
- ▶ Test important interventions for identifying and protecting children at risk of being trafficked or forced to migrate for labour;

At the District level

Efforts will be made to get all children in school in collaboration with SSA. Children at risk of being pushed into labour, i.e. 5 to 8 year old, will be admitted into regular schools and provided support to prevent drop outs. Children in the age group of 9 to 14 years, who are withdrawn from hazardous work, will be placed in schools/transitional schools so that they can be mainstreamed into regular schools designated as Lead schools. Adolescents between 14 and 17 years who have completed education in NCLPs will be given vocational training in locally employable skills.

Education Resource Centres will be set up to cater to the children after school/training hours. The centres will have trained staff, play and reading material.

The parents of the child workers will be linked to poverty alleviation/income enhancement / social protection schemes of the government and also given credit and savings facilities. In an effort to achieve all this, mechanisms to identify and withdraw child workers from hazardous work and ensure that they continue in school will be defined and strengthened.

The project will make all efforts to get girls who are out of school, involved in the care of their siblings, or working as farm hands and domestic labourers to enroll into schools. The older girls will be provided with vocational training courses. Similarly, the project is committed to evolving strategies for migrant and trafficked children.

A child labour monitoring and information system will be piloted and linked to district and state level institutions for enforcement. It will also be linked with the school-based beneficiary tracking system.

Simultaneously, alternative production processes will be identified and piloted that do not involve children.

At the State level

- ▶ The project will create and strengthen mechanisms to ensure effective coordination between various government departments and agencies. The capacities of government stakeholders, workers' and employers' organizations will be developed for supporting interventions against child labour, including inspection and enforcement in the informal sector.
- ▶ The project will help establish State Resource Cells to support state steering committees and assist state governments in developing and implementing State Action Plans for time-bound elimination of child labour.

At the National level

The Child Labour Convergence Project will promote knowledge dissemination and networking on child labour issues. It will develop media capacities and support.

Strategies will be identified for integration of child labour concerns in UNDAF and in the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) initiatives undertaken by national partners. Positive outcomes generated at the district and state levels will be disseminated beyond the five target states.

Social Partners

Capacity of employers' and workers' organizations will be developed and they will be involved in implementing the various strategies. They will have the opportunity to form networks and alliances to support action against child labour. The employers' organizations and the private sector will be involved actively in skills training and job placement for the adolescents and family members of the target group children.

Non-governmental Organizations

Non-government organizations (NGOs) will be encouraged to participate in raising awareness on the issue, provide social services like transitional education, help form self-help groups and provide income generation training to child labour families, and be a part of mobilization and monitoring teams.

Project structure

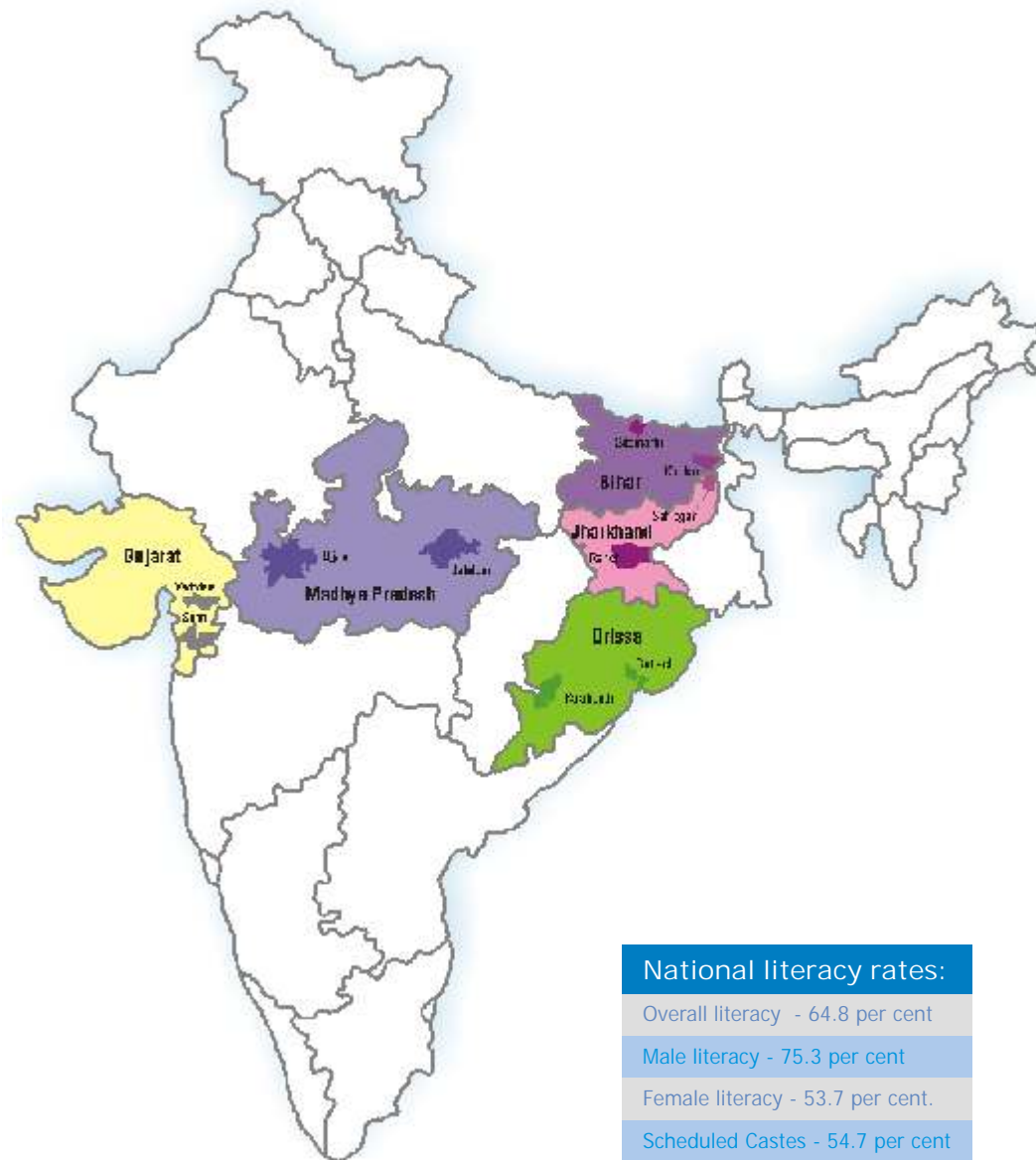
The objectives of the Child Labour Convergence Project, with its office at the ILO Office, New Delhi will be supported at the national, state and district levels, specifically by:

- ▶ The National Steering Committee (NSC) which will provide policy advice and guidance for project implementation. Chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE), the NSC is comprised of representatives from government, employers' and workers' organizations and NGOs.
- ▶ The Inter-Ministerial Project Review Committee at the national level will periodically review and monitor the project's progress and ensure effective coordination among relevant government departments. It will be headed by Joint Secretary (Child Labour), MOLE.
- ▶ At the state level, the coordination will be done by the State Project Steering Committees (SPSCs) with assistance from the State level resource cells.
- ▶ In the district, the project will work in close coordination with the District Magistrate/Collector, who is also the Chairman of District level Child Labour Project Society.

At the end of the project

- ▶ An effective convergence-based model for eliminating and preventing child labour, including trafficking/migration of children for work would have been tested, refined and ready for adoption in other districts and nationwide replication.
- ▶ Permanent coordination systems at the state and national level would be in place.
- ▶ The enabling environment for the elimination of child labour in the country would have been strengthened. The social partners would be equipped to play a lead role in keeping the attention focused on the issue.

The project states and districts



Bihar

Bihar is India's third most populated state and almost 90 per cent of its people live in rural areas. The male literacy rate is almost double (59.7 per cent) the female literacy rate (33.1 per cent). Bihar has the third largest population of Scheduled Castes (SC) among all states and their literacy rate is at 28.5 per cent. Katihar has a literacy rate of 35.1, much lower than the state average. A large number of drop-out children belong to the SC groups like Dom, Mehtar and Mushars. Sitamarhi has 38.5 per cent literacy. The female literacy stands at 26.1 per cent. Children are engaged in traditional jobs like tailoring, garage mechanics and as casual labour in agriculture.

Gujarat

Its overall literacy is 69.14 per cent, which is higher than the national average. The total female literacy rate at 57.8 per cent is also a few per cent points higher than the national average, but the state has pockets where female literacy is extremely low. Migration is an acute problem. Children of saltpan workers, sugarcane workers and other labourers migrate with their parents for about six to eight months every year. They live on the worksite and drop out from mainstream schools. Surat is economically and industrially developed, famous for its diamond and textile industries. It has a literacy rate of 74.65 per cent, with female literacy being at 66.36 per cent. The district has a large population of migrants from other states, who come to work in sugar factories and education is a problem for their children. Vadodara has a number of large established industries. Though its overall literacy rate is 70.76 per cent and the female literacy rate is 60.7 per cent, the female literacy rate among the Scheduled Tribes (ST) is 25.42 per cent.

Jharkhand

The literacy rate of Jharkhand is 53.6 per cent, placing it as the second lowest after Bihar in literacy rankings in the country. While the male literacy rate stands at 67.3 per cent, the female literacy rate is 38.9 per cent. There is a major gap in the rural-urban literacy rates. Female literacy in rural areas is 29.9 per cent. Almost 57 per cent of ST children have not been to school. Ranchi has experienced an influx of migrants from other parts of the country. It has a scheduled tribe population of 41 per cent and a Scheduled Caste population of 5.41 percent. Ranchi has an average literacy rate of 64.57 per cent, which is higher than the state and national average. At 51.72 per cent, female literacy is also high in comparison to state and national levels. In Sahibganj STs and SCs makeup 29.14 per cent and 6.41 per cent of the district's population

respectively. There is no large-scale industry, though there are a number of small-scale industries, mostly based on mining and quarrying. Almost 90 per cent of its population resides in rural areas. It has a total literacy rate of less than 37.6 per cent and a female literacy rate among its tribal population of 15.5 per cent.

Madhya Pradesh

The state has a literacy rate of 63.7 per cent with female literacy levels among SC's at 43.28 per cent and STs at 28.44 per cent. A large percentage of out-of-school children belong to these groups and are engaged in hazardous labour – bidi making, brick kilns, stone mining, rag picking, incense making, hospitality, domestic labour, and automobile repair. Jabalpur has a substantial SC/ST population. While the literacy rate is at 75.69 per cent, the female literacy stands at 65.88 per cent. In some pockets, less than 20 per cent of the women are literate. The main reasons cited for out-of-school children are engagement with domestic work, farming, as well as a lack of motivation on the part of their parents to send them to school. Ujjain is a major agricultural and textile trade centre with a total literacy rate of 70.86 per cent and a female literacy rate of 57.87 per cent. A significant number of out-of-school children belong to the SC and Other Backward Caste categories. The main reasons for drop out and never-enrolled children include seasonal migration, sibling care, cattle grazing and poor quality of education.

Orissa

Large-scale river flooding and annual cyclones that hit its coastal districts make livelihood and access to education difficult. People migrate to neighbouring states and even to Gujarat in search of work. The total literacy rate is 63.08 per cent with male literacy at 75.35 per cent and female literacy at 50.51 per cent. There is large disparity in urban and rural literacy rates. Children work in hazardous occupations and processes that include bidi rolling, domestic labour, the hospitality sector, cashew processing, brick making and construction work. In Cuttack 70 per cent of the people depend on agriculture as the primary means of livelihood. The literacy rate is at 76.66 per cent, with female literacy being 66.9 per cent. However, SC and ST communities have much lower literacy rates. In Kalahandi, agriculture is the chief source of livelihood. A large number of people migrate throughout the year because of extreme poverty and crop failure due to the erratic climate conditions. STs, constitute 28.65 per cent of the population. The literacy rate is 45.94 per cent, with female literacy at 29.28 per cent, while SC and ST literacy rates are lower.



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