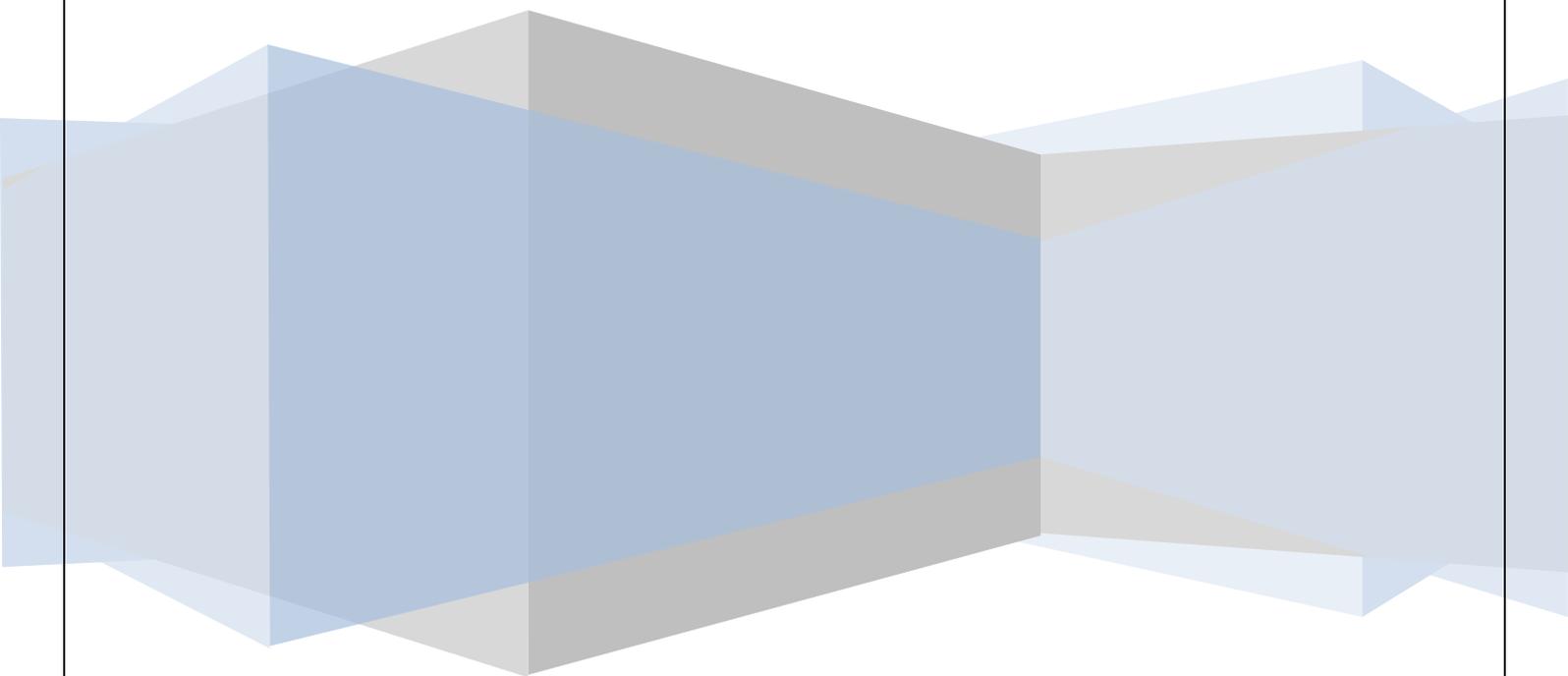


National Policy on Child Labour



The National Policy on Child Labour (NCLP), announced in 1987, emphasises the need for strict enforcement measures in the areas of high child labour concentration along with appropriate rehabilitative measures to curb this menace. In order to translate the policy into action, the Government of India initiated the National Child Labour Project Scheme in 1988.

Strategy

A gradual and sequential approach has been adopted to withdraw and rehabilitate child labour.

The strategy includes the following aspects:

- Strong enforcement of the existing Act has to be sustained.
- Working children are first identified through child labour survey and then withdrawn from work and put into the Special Bridge Schools. *Thirty such schools are situated in urban and rural areas in different blocks in Ranchi and Singhbhum.¹*
- In these special schools, besides formal education the enrolled children are provided with the following facilities:
 - stipend @ Rs 150 per month
 - supplementary nutrition through midday meal
 - non-formal education and vocational training
 - regular health check-ups
 - uniforms
- Simultaneous efforts are directed towards rehabilitation of parents as well as children through linkages with the poverty eradication and income generation programmes of the government.

¹ Ranchi District: Namkum, Kanke, Bundu, Ratu, Ormanjhi and Nagri. Sahebganj District: Udhwa and Rajmahal

- Awareness generation campaigns are directed against the evils of child labour and at the enforcement of child labour laws.

Scheme Implementation

The NCLP special schools are being run by the district administration under the aegis of Department of Labour.

A district-level project society is formed which implements the scheme.

Members of the society:

- District Collector heads the society
- NGOs and trade unions of the district
- State government officials (departments of education, health, rural development, labour, social welfare, women and child development, etc.)

Running of Special Schools for Child Labour

- Entrusted to NGOs
- The Project society shall run even if competent and experienced NGOs are not available in the district
- Decisions concerning running of the schools or selecting the NGOs, etc., are taken at the level of project society

Funds

The funds under the scheme are sanctioned by the ministry directly to the district collector, who, in turn, disburses them amongst the NGOs for running these special schools for working children.

The funds are also provided under the scheme for conducting regular child labour surveys, awareness generation programmes, training of instructors/teachers, etc.

The Convergence Initiatives

For districts of Ranchi and Sahebganj:

- ✚ NCLP/district-level task force members have been sensitised on the issue of child labour at Sahebganj and Ranchi.
- ✚ Jharkhand Building Construction and Other Workers' Welfare Board has been sanctioned Rs 1,000 per child for uniforms, bags, shoes, etc. It is distributed to all the enrolled children.
- ✚ Pre-vocational education: Children from NCLP schools are being linked to skill-building activities like computer training, vermi-composting, jute crafts and embroidery.
- ✚ Jharcraft plans to link families of enrolled child laborers with vocational training programmes. A list of about 1,700 such families from Ranchi and Sahebganj has been shared with Jharcraft.
- ✚ Volleyball and net have been provided to all NCLP schools of Sahebganj by Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan.
- ✚ Provision for Teaching Learning Materials and Bridge Course Materials has been made at NCLP centres in Ranchi by UNICEF.

Linkages of NCLP Schools with National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)

- Parents and teacher meetings are being held on a monthly basis at each NCLP school. These meetings are used as platforms to provide free health check-ups to the children and their families through convergence with NRHM.
- School health cards for free health check-ups for all NCLP children have been provided by NRHM, Department of Health & Family Welfare.

Linkages of NCLP Schools with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

- Coordination mechanisms and linkages have been established with SSA.
- NCLP Schools at Ranchi are run at SSA school premises.
- Provision of midday meal, notebooks and stationery has been made to children through SSA.
- Bridge course materials have been provided in collaboration with SSA to NCLP Schools.
- One SSA teacher has been placed in every NCLP school at Ranchi.

The Jila Shaksharta Samitis running the NCLP schools at Ranchi are also carrying out listing of those child labourers in the district who were not included in the survey done under the Convergence Model Project.

A list of 2,287 children has been generated and, accordingly, new NCLP special schools will be sanctioned soon.

The Way Ahead

- Holding regular meetings of NCLP society, parents-teachers and departments

- ✚ Providing teaching and learning material for life skills and pre-vocational education at NCLP special schools
- ✚ Coordination with NGOs, workers' organisations and community members in providing non-educational services
- ✚ Vocational and life skills training of NCLP instructors
- ✚ Mainstreaming of NCLP students (that is, those completing 14 years of age) into formal schools

The Supreme Court Judgement of December 1996

- Withdrawal of children working in hazardous industries and ensuring their education in appropriate institutions
- Employment of at least one adult member of the family of the child so withdrawn from work
- A contribution of Rs 20,000 per child ordered to be paid by the offending employer into a corpus of fund set up for the welfare of child labour and their families
(Failing which, the state government to contribute to this Welfare Fund Rs 5,000 per child)
- The interest earnings of this corpus to be used for providing financial assistance to the families of these children
- Regulation of working hours for the children engaged in non-hazardous occupations, so that
 - their working hours do not exceed 5-6 hours per day, and
 - at least two hours of education is ensured
- The entire expenditure on education of these children will be borne by their employers

(Source and details from:

Background paper for the Working Group on Child Labour

planningcommission.nic.in/aboutus/committee/.../wg11_rpchlab.doc)