



SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

This article describes the current child rights scenario in India and comprehensively lists the interventions of social workers with children. It talks about the target population, objectives, knowledge and interventions required for practice within the Child Rights domain. Five areas of practice have been particularly identified and described: Child Survival and Development, Child Protection, Child Participation, Adoption and Foster Care and School Social Work. Thus this article hopes to be a resource for anyone who hopes to work with children.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the primary domains of social work practice is Child Social Work. This article attempts to provide all the necessary information to professional social workers and other social welfare workers who aspire to work with and who are working with children. This article is based on the results of two major research projects which attempted to study 20 social work practice settings in India through case studies of about 100 organizations and interviews with over 200 social work practitioners (Joseph and Alexander, 2012, 2015).

The article begins by introducing Child Rights and the Child Rights Situation in India. Then the article goes on to describe the target population, objectives and knowledge base of the child social work domain. It then details social work practice with children as it happens in the five major sub-domains of the child setting, namely: Child Survival and Development, Child Protection, Child Participation, Adoption and Foster Care and School Social Work.

Child Rights and the Child Rights Situation in India

Child Rights and the Child Rights Commission

Social Work with Children can be understood more clearly under the Child Rights perspective. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights-civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. In 1989, world leaders decided that children needed a special convention just for them because people under 18

recognized that children have human rights too. According to Child Rights Convention, a Child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. All people under the age of 18 are entitled to the standards and rights, called Child Rights, which are guaranteed by the laws that govern a country and the international legal instruments the country has accepted by ratifying them.

The CRC sets out these rights in 54 articles and two Optional Protocols and is built on the principle that "All children are born with fundamental freedoms and all human beings have some inherent rights". The Charter confers the following basic rights on all children across the world:

- the right to survival - to life, health, nutrition, name and nationality
- the right to development - to education, care, leisure, recreation
- the right to protection - from exploitation, abuse, neglect
- the right to participation - to expression, information, thought and religion

The State of Children in India

Children constitute principle assets of any country. India is home to almost 19 percent of the world's children. More than one third of the country's population, around 440 million, is below 18 years. *State of World's Children Report 2012* (UN, 2012), the incidence of crimes against children in India (NCRB 2015), a Study on Child Abuse (MWCD 2007) and 2 NIPCCD Studies have been quoted to highlight the Child Rights Situation in India.

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According to one assumption 40 percent of these children are in need of care and protection, which indicates the extent of the problem. According to United Nations (UN) Statistics, India is considered to be among one of the most dangerous places for children. The State of the World's Children Report 2012 revealed that India is the most dangerous place for a baby girl because of the rate of female foeticide/infanticide. India is now ranked among the 50 nations with highest under-five child mortality rate. Twenty-eight per cent of infants in India have low birth weight and 48 per cent under the age of five are stunted. According to international child right group Save the Children, Two million children below the age of five die every year in India, giving it the dubious distinction of being the country with the highest number of such deaths.

In 2015, 94175 crimes were recorded against children in India under the following categories: Murder, attempt to commit murder, infanticide, rape, assault on girls with intent to outrage modesty, insult to modesty of girl child, kidnapping and abduction, foeticide, abetment of suicide, exposure & abandonment, prostitution related crimes, child marriage, child labour, organ trade etc (NCRB, 2015). A Study on Child Abuse 2007 conducted by Ministry of Women and Child development reveals the following facts about Child abuse in India. (Box 1). NIPCCD Website presents the following facts and figures about the State of Children in India (Box 2).

and services under the Juvenile Justice Act. The main thing was to assess adequacy of infrastructure vis-à-vis standards prescribed in the act and rules framed under the Act by respective states. Data was collected from 25 states and one UT out of 35 States. Out of a total of 1135 children homes created under the Juvenile Justice Act, 69.25% were covered. Besides that observation homes, after care homes and special homes were also covered under this study.

- The finding indicates that a substantial number of children's institutions were having classrooms, dormitories, kitchens, and recreational rooms etc as per the norms in rules of JJ Act.
- Shishu greh and other homes were more crowded in terms of lack of space in dormitories, classrooms, recreation rooms, number of toilets and bathrooms were found to be inadequate and not as per the norms.
- Most of the homes engaged medical doctors on part time/ contract basis and around 80 percent homes were having Para-medical staff.
- Age structure of inmates on different homes was observed to be young as 57 percent children were between age-group 6 to14 yrs and about one – third children were from the age group 14-18 years.
- Maximum number of 18 children was staying up to 3 years as compared to 3-5 years and more than 5 years.

Box 1 Child Abuse in India (MWCD, 2007)

Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Abuse and Girl Child Neglect
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two out of every three children were physically abused. 2. Out of 69% children physically abused in 13 sample states, 54.68% were boys. 3. Over 50% children in all the 13 sample states were being subjected to one or the other form of physical abuse. 4. Out of those children physically abused in family situations, 88.6% were physically abused by parents. 5. 65% of school going children reported facing corporal punishment i.e. two out of three children were victims of corporal punishment. 6. 62% of the corporal punishment was in government and municipal school. 7. The State of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar and Delhi have almost consistently reported higher rates of abuse in all forms as compared to other states. 8. Most children did not report the matter to anyone. 9. 50.2% children worked seven days a week. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 53.22% children reported having faced one or more forms of sexual abuse. 2. Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar and Delhi reported the highest percentage of sexual abuse among both boys and girls. 3. 21.90% child respondents reported facing severe forms of sexual abuse and 50.76% other forms of sexual abuse. 4. Out of the child respondents, 5.69% reported being sexually assaulted. 5. Children in Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi reported the highest incidence of sexual assault. 6. Children on street, children at work and children in institutional care reported the highest incidence of sexual assault. 7. 50% abuses are persons known to the child or in a position of trust and responsibility. 8. Most children did not report the matter to anyone. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Every second child reported facing emotional abuse. 2. Equal percentage of both girls and boys reported facing emotional abuse. 3. In 83% of the cases parents were the abusers. 4. 48.4% of girls wished they were boys.

NIPCCD Website presents the following facts and figures about the State of Children in India:

State of Children's Institutions in India

According to Aangan (2006), "Children's institutions have in the past been associated with mismanagement, neglect and a prison-like environment, as well as a striking lack of adult guidance or constructive activity. Children exposed to high levels of peer violence, showed signs of deep emotional distress. Naturally they would leave the institutions, ill-equipped to cope, unable to reintegrate in the outside world. With consistent efforts by state authorities along with the voluntary sector, the focus in recent times is very much on making the homes rehabilitative and effective"

NIPCCD (2010) conducted a study on Juvenile Justice Institution in India. The objectives of the assessment were to: assess the existing status of implementation of Juvenile Justice Act and to create national database of infrastructure

- Children were imparted vocational training in 14 different trades at different homes. The most common among them were electrical trade, teaching, printing and filter job.
- It was also pointed out that lack of equipments and lack of space were other constraints and thus 62 percent homes had shown their inability to offer vocational training.
- Children staying in different homes were suffering different types of illnesses. The most common diseases among children were tuberculoses and sexually transmitted diseases.
- The most common homes which were having television and radio facilities were shelter homes, after care homes and children homes.
- Cultural activities were found to be another entertainment effort made by different homes. About 53 percent homes were organizing cultural programmes

inside the homes and 34 percent were organizing the same outside the homes.

and policies that safeguard their rights. The right to equality, protection of life and personal liberty and the

Box 2 The State of Children in India (NIPCCD, 2010)

Working Children & Street Children	Juvenile Delinquents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India has the largest child labour population in the world in terms of absolute number. • The magnitude of child labour varies from above 11 million to over a 100 million. • As per 1991 Census, there are 11.28 million working children in the age group 5-14 years. • Estimates place the number of bonded child labourers at close to one million. • Bonded child labour is prevalent due to parent's indebtedness, poverty and unethical trade practices. • Domestic child labour is the least visible and goes unaccounted. • Children's earnings are consistently lower than those of adults, even where the two groups are engaged in the same task. • Girls outnumber boys in many areas of child labour. • There are about 92 million children who are neither enrolled in school nor accounted for in the labour force who come under the category of 'nowhere children'. • Needs of poor should be fulfilled to a large extent to eliminate child labour. • Around 5 million children are living and working on the streets • Street children are subjected to violence and abuse and are deprived of basic needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juvenile crime has increased from 0.5% in 1994 to 0.6% in 1996 • Bihar, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh had high incidence of juvenile crime and accounted for 57.7% of the total crime recorded in the country (1996) • Rate of juvenile delinquency increased from 0.1 (crimes per lakh of population) in 1994 to 1.1 in 1996 • Proportion of girls apprehended reached 26.3% in 1996 - the highest in the last 6 years
Children with Disabilities	Child Prostitution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In India, both prevention of Childhood disabilities and protection from the effects of childhood disabilities are mandated as the rights of every child • One in 10 persons is suffering from one type of disability or the other • Accurate statistics to reflect the number of children with disability in the country are not available • 75% of childhood disabilities can be prevented through primary health care, yet every year 1.5 to 2 million persons are added to the category of disabled due to neglect of primary prevention services • Utilisation and reach of services during pregnancy and infancy is poor leading to impairments • One of the largest preventable causes of mental disorder is Iodine deficiency • Birth asphyxia is responsible for brain damage in many babies resulting in disabilities such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, mental retardation, visual defects, hearing, speech and language problems • Out of 4.5 million disabled children who should be availing school facilities, 90% are not enrolled or have dropped out of the education system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Trafficking of children and women is considered to be more profitable than arms or drugs smuggling • It is estimated that there are 4,00,000 child prostitutes in the country • Commercial child prostitution is increasing at the rate of 8-10% per annum • 50% of all prostitutes in Maharashtra began as 'Devadasis' • Some castes in India have traditionally accepted prostitution as their profession such as the Rajnal Tribe, Dehrhar, Bedias and Kanjars community • Child victims of commercial sexual exploitation are deprived of basic necessities and suffer the dangers of unwanted pregnancies, maternal mortality, torture, physical injury, mental trauma and disorders, and sexually transmitted diseases • The reasons for children being forced into prostitution include paedophilia and obscure beliefs like "Sex with virgin as cure for STD".

A number of studies speak of the inadequate facilities and non-friendly atmosphere for children in Children's Homes. Children in a shelter home suffer the effects of overcrowding, hunger, lack of running water, deficient infrastructure, health issues and beatings and physical torture at the hands of their caregivers, reveals a recent study conducted by NGOs in Bangalore. A CHILDLINE handbook on Juvenile Justice and Child Protection system states that some of the negative aspects of long term institutionalization of the child includes: Emotional deprivation, Anonymity and lack of personal attention, Interpersonal relationship problems, difficulty in mainstreaming and adjusting in society, segregation and isolation in society, physical abuse and trauma, excessive routinization and regimentation, developmental delays, failure to trust, low self-esteem, maternal deprivation and separation anxiety (Adenwalla, 2006).

Constitutional and Legislative Provisions for Children in India

Even though the picture looks dark and sinister, India is striving hard to make its land safe, secure and salubrious for children. Given below are the initiatives taken by the Government towards Child Rights Protection:

- The Constitution of India recognizes the vulnerable position of children and their right to protection. Therefore, following the doctrine of protective discrimination, it guarantees in Article 15 special attention to children through necessary and special laws

right against exploitation enshrined in Articles 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 23 and 24 further reiterate India's commitment to the protection, safety, security and well-being of all its people, including children.

- The Chapter on Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution of India enjoins that the State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing:
 1. that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and the citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength
 2. those children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment
 3. that the State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education to all children until they complete the age of six years
- India's National Policy for Children 1974 provides a framework for policy and planning for children. Moving towards its commitments, the Government of India introduced the National Charter for Children 2003, which stipulates the duties for the State and community, followed by a National Plan of Action for Children in 2005, which ensures collective commitment and action towards the survival, development, protection and

participation of children by all sectors and levels of government and civil society.

- At the World Summit for Children in 1990 India adopted the World Declaration for Survival, Protection and Development of children.
- In 1992 India acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), committing to take measures to ensure the survival, protection, participation and development of its children.
- The Government of India ratified the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993
- India has also signed the SAARC Convention on Combating Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children, 2002, the SAARC Convention on Regional Arrangements for the Promotion of Child Welfare in South Asia, 2002 and is signatory to the SAARC Decade on the Rights of the Child 2001-2010, decided in Rawalpindi Resolution on Children in South Asia in 1996.
- Additionally, India ratified the Optional Protocols on the Use of Children in Armed Conflict and the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography in 2005.
- It also reaffirmed its commitment to children by adopting the Millennium Development Goals and a World Fit for Children.
- Several major policies and legislations have been announced and implemented in the country so far to ensure children's protection and improvement in their status including the Guardianship and Wards Act, 1890; The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, Factories Act, 1954; Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956; Probation of Offenders Act, 1958; Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959; Orphanages and Other Charitable Homes (Supervision and Control) Act, 1960; Bonded

Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976; Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1979; Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1986; Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986; Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1987; Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992; National Guidelines on Infant and Young Child Feeding; Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994; Persons with Disabilities (Equal Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 2000; Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000; National Policy on Education, 1986; National Policy on Child Labour, 1987; National Nutrition Policy, 1993; National Health Policy, 2002; National Charter for Children, 2004; and National Plan of Action for Children, 2005, which ensures collective commitment and action for the survival, development, protection and participation of children by all sectors and levels of government and civil society; Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009; □ The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000; The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2006; The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Rules 2007; The Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005 and Amendment 2006; National Commission for protection of Child Rights Rules, 2006; The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006; Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Bill, 2011; and the Amendment Proposed in Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act 1956

Independent India has taken large strides in addressing issues like child education, health and development.

Box 3 MWCD Schemes and Programmes

Child Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS): Launched on 2nd October 1975, today, ICDS Scheme represents one of the world's largest and most unique programmes for early childhood development. It aims to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years; to lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child; to reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout; to achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and to enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education. ICDS offers the following Services: Supplementary nutrition, Immunization, Health check-up, Referral services, Pre-school non-formal education and Nutrition & health education. • Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG) • Balika Samridhi Yojana (BSY) which was launched with the objective of changing negative family and community attitudes towards the girl child at birth and towards her mother, improving enrolment and retention of girl children in schools; raising the age at marriage of girls and assisting the girl to undertake income generating activities. • Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) seeks to empower adolescent girls, so as to enable them to take charge of their lives. It is viewed as a holistic initiative for the development of adolescent girls. The programme through its interventions aims at bringing about a difference in the lives of the adolescent girls. It seeks to provide them with an opportunity to realize their full potential. • Early Childhood Education for 3-6 Age Group Children Under the Programme of Universalisation of Elementary Education. • Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme For the Children of Working Mothers
Child Protection	<p>The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS): The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at building a protective environment for children in difficult circumstances, as well as other vulnerable children, through Government-Civil Society Partnership. ICPS brings together multiple existing child protection schemes of the Ministry under one comprehensive umbrella, and integrates additional interventions for protecting children and preventing harm. ICPS, therefore, would institutionalize essential services and strengthen structures, enhance capacities at all levels, create database and knowledge base for child protection services, strengthen child protection at family and community level, ensure appropriate inter-sectoral response at all levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme for welfare of Working Children in need of Care and Protection • CHILDLINE Services • UJJAWALA : A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation
Child Welfare	<p>National Awards For Child Welfare National Child Awards For Exceptional Achievements Rajiv Gandhi Manav Seva Award For Service To Children</p>

Despite such clear commitment to child protection, children continue to remain vulnerable with the number of those needing care and protection is ever increasing. Five decades of planned development has indeed failed to address the critical issue of 'Child Protection'.

Government of India Programmes for Children

Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) is the nodal agency of the Government which undertakes activities for Children in the country. MWCD works in 3 areas: Child Development, Child Protection and Child Welfare. Its Schemes under each area is given above (Box 3)

ICPS requires special mention as it is a scheme that brings together under one umbrella various services for Child Protection: National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF), The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, the Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA) and the various bodies under the Juvenile Justice Care and Protection Act 2000. NIPCCD is also the nodal agency of MWCD for providing training to ICDS Functionaries through creation of tools, training programmes and monitoring and evaluation research. The different Interventions under ICPS to facilitate Rehabilitation of Children are given below Box 4). The various bodies that form part of the ICPS Service Delivery System and Supportive Services are also given below (Box 5).

interventions with children. While some organizations specialized in work with children, in other organizations, children were one of the priority areas. Working with children entails work with a specific target population, goals and objectives and specialized knowledge base and interventions.

Target Population

The Target Population of this particular Setting are all Children, particularly Children in need of Care and Protection, Children in conflict with law, Children in contact with law and any other vulnerable Child. The definitions of these are given below Box 6). The parents/Guardians or family members of such children, staff in institutions, teachers and other functionaries in ICDS, ICPS or any other programme for Child Rights can also be clients of a Social Worker practicing in this setting. The parents/Guardians or family members of such children, staff in institutions, teachers and other functionaries in ICDS, ICPS or any other programme for Child Rights can also be clients of a Social Worker practicing in this setting.

Goals and Objectives

In 2002 the General Assembly adopted the document entitled "A world fit for children" which professes the following Goal and Objectives. Goal: To create a world fit for children, in which sustainable human development, taking into account the best interests of the child, is founded on principles of democracy, equality, non-discrimination, peace and social justice and the

Box 4 ICPS Interventions

1. CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF) is a voluntary organization, supported by the Ministry of Women and Child Development for running CHILDLINE services in the country. Financial support is being provided under this scheme to CIF to carry out the nodal responsibility of expansion and monitoring of CHILDLINE services in the country, with its headquarter in Mumbai and four regional centres at Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai. CHILDLINE provides emergency outreach service to children in need of care and protection through 24 hours emergency phone outreach service. It also links children in need of care and protection to long term services for rehabilitation. This programme has two models one for urban and one for rural areas. Funds for this service flow through CIF to the CHILDLINE partners running the service.

2. Non-Institutional Rehabilitation

Adoption is a process through which a child is permanently separated from biological parents because his/her parents' death or have been abandoned or been surrendered becomes a legitimate child of a new set of parents referred to as adoptive parent(s) with all rights, privileges and responsibilities that are attached to this relationship. All institutions should disclose details about children in their care and make sure those free for adoption are filed and recorded with State Adoption Resource Agency (SARA) and CARA, with all supporting documentation of authorization of such adoption from CWC.

Open Shelters for children in Urban and Semi Urban areas caters to. Beggars, street and working children, rag pickers, small vendors, street performers, orphaned, trafficked and runaway children, children of migrant population, and any other particularly vulnerable group of children. These shelters are not meant to provide permanent residential facilities for children but will complement the existing institutional care facilities.

3. Institutional Rehabilitation

Shelter Homes are Day and night shelter facilities for a temporary period for Children without parental care, Runaway children and Migrant children

Children's Homes are long term residential facility for Children in need of care and protection and who have spent some time in the Shelter Homes; reach the Children's Homes through the Child Welfare Committee.

Foster care is an arrangement whereby a child lives, usually on a temporary basis, with an extended or unrelated family member. Such an arrangement ensures that the biological parents do not lose any of their parental rights or responsibilities. The aim is to eventually reunite the child with his/her own family when the family circumstances improve and thus prevent institutionalization of children in difficult circumstances.

Cradle Baby Reception Centers Is a drive to prevent female infanticide, sex selective abortions. Cradle Baby Reception Centres have been set up under the ICPS to receive unwanted babies. Cradle Reception Centres include Specialised adoption agency in each district, Primary Health Care Centres, Hospitals and Nursing Homes, Short Stay Homes, Swadhar Reception Centres and Office of District Child Protection Society (DCPS).

Observation Homes are Day and night shelter facilities for a temporary period for Children in conflict with law, who enter the Juvenile Justice System through the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB).

Sponsorship is a supplementary financial support to families to meet the educational, medical, nutritional and other needs of children with a view to improving the quality of their lives

After Care Programmes help children (Institutionalised children in the age group of 18 to 21 years) to adapt to the society and encourages them to move away from an institution based life. It helps them to become self sufficient and gainfully engaged in productive activity.

Special Homes are Long term rehabilitation and protection facilities for Children in conflict with law.

Specialised services for children with special needs such as Children affected by HIV and AIDS, Substance abuse, Mentally challenged and physically challenged children whose parents are unable to take care of them due to death or any other inability.

The various bodies that form part of the ICPS Service Delivery System and Supportive Services are:

Child Social Work: Target Population, Goals and Knowledge

As part of two major research projects, the author visited a number of national level organizations to study social work

universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights, including the right to development.

Principles and Objectives

1. Put children first: In all actions related to children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

2. Eradicate poverty: invest in children. We reaffirm our vow to break the cycle of poverty within a single generation, united in the conviction that investments in children and the realization of their rights are among the most effective ways to eradicate poverty. Immediate action must be taken to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.
6. Protect children from harm and exploitation: Children must be protected against any acts of violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination, as well as all forms of terrorism and hostage-taking.
7. Protect children from war: Children must be protected from the horrors of armed conflict. Children under foreign occupation must also be protected, in accordance with the provisions of international humanitarian law.

Box 5 ICPS Service Delivery System

ICPS- Service Delivery Structure	ICPS- Support Services
<p>Central Project Support Unit (CPSU): This unit under the Ministry of Women and Child Development is headed by a Mission Director who is a Joint Secretary level Officer, assisted by a team of 12 professionals. The CPSU is primarily involved in a plan of action for initiating the implementation of ICPS in ensuring, training, sensitization and capacity building at all levels, hand hold states during initial implementation of the scheme, monitoring and evaluating the implementation among other functions. The unit is already functional.</p> <p>State Project Support Unit (SPSU) : This is headed by a programme manager assisted by a team of 7 professionals and its task is to develop the plan of action for implementation of ICPS in the State, facilitate setting up of required structure under ICPS, collect and compile information on status of child protection in the state, carry out training, sensitization and capacity building, monitor and evaluate implementation of ICPS in the State , amongst other functions. It will report directly to the CPSU. SPSU is already functional in many states.</p> <p>State Child Protection Society (SCPS): Contribute to effective implementation of child protection legislations, schemes and achievement of child protection goals laid out in the National Plan of Action for Children 2005 and Implementation, supervision and monitoring of ICPS and all other child Protection Programmes at State /UT level.</p> <p>State Adoption Resource Agency (SARA): SARA is being set up in every State/ UT, and headed by the concerned Secretary of the State. Government /UT Administration to promote in- country adoption and regulate inter country adoption. SARA coordinates, monitors and develops the work of adoption and renders secretarial and administrative assistance to the Advisory Committee on Adoption.</p> <p>Adoption Coordination Agency (ACA) and Specialised Adoption Agency (SAA): The ICPS focuses on improving the adoption scenario in the country and with this in mind, Adoption Coordination Agencies (ACA) and Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAA) have been set up . This will also facilitate non institutional care. However with time, SARA will take over the functions of ACA.</p> <p>The Central Adoption Resource Agency(CARA), an autonomous organization of the Ministry of Women and Child Development functions as the Central Authority in all matters concerning adoption and to implement various provisions of the International Conventions in the matter of rights, safeguards and procedures involving children who are orphaned, abandoned or surrendered. Keeping in view the implementation of adoption programmes, the role and responsibilities of CARA are being extended and ICPS will support to strengthen CARA so that it can play this role.</p>	<p>Child Welfare Committee: The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of children) Amendment Act, 2006 makes it mandatory to establish one Child Welfare Committee in each district as the final authority to dispose of cases for the care, protection, treatment, development and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection and to provide for their basic needs and protection of human rights. As per the JJ Act, the CWC should hold its meetings in the premises of a Children's Home. A CWC shall meet at least thrice a week and the minimum duration of a sitting should be of 4 hours. The Children's Home where the CWC is holding its proceeding shall provide support of counselor and peon on those days they are sitting. DCPS will also provide legal and counseling support where necessary.</p> <p>Juvenile Justice Board: The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of children) Amendment Act , 2006 makes it mandatory to have one Juvenile Justice Board in each district to deal with matters relating to juveniles in conflict with law. As per the JJ Act, the JJB should hold its meetings in the premises of An Observation Home. JJB shall meet on all working days of a week and the minimum duration of a sitting should be of 5 hours. The Observation Home where the JJB is holding its proceedings shall provide support of counselor and peon to the JJB on those days when they are sitting. DCPS will also provide legal and counseling support where necessary.</p> <p>State Juvenile Police Unit: The JJ Act 2000, provides for setting up Special Juvenile Police Units (SJPU) in every district and city .All the police officers designated as juvenile welfare officers are members of SJPU. ICPS shall provide for 2 social work ers in each SJPU for supporting the unit. Of the two, one shall be a woman.</p> <p>ICPS- Other Activities</p> <p>Training, Capacity Building And Research And Documentation: Nipccd, along with its regional centers has the nodal responsibility for training and capacity building at National and Regional levels. The responsibilities of NIPCCD includes: a) Development of training modules and course curricula; b) Conducting training of trainers; c) Conducting regional level training and sharing of best practices; d) Linkage with Universities and Educational Institutions. Research and Documentation work will be carried out by NIPCCD and its regional centres.</p> <p>CHILD TRACKING SYSTEM shall be developed by the Central Project Support Unit (CPSU). It shall be an effective system for child protection data management, reporting and monitoring of implementation of child protection schemes. Two nationwide websites for tracking missing children and their ultimate repatriation and rehabilitation shall be launched.</p> <p>Advocacy, Public Education, Communication, Monitoring And Evaluation</p>

3. Leave no child behind: Each girl and boy is born free and equal in dignity and rights; therefore, all forms of discrimination affecting children must end.
4. Care for every child: Children must get the best possible start in life. Their survival, protection, growth and development in good health and with proper nutrition are the essential foundation of human development. We will make concerted efforts to fight infectious diseases, tackle major causes of malnutrition and nurture children in a safe environment that enables them to be physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally secure, socially competent and able to learn.
5. Educate every child: All girls and boys must have access to and complete primary education that is free, compulsory and of good quality as a cornerstone of an inclusive basic education. Gender disparities in primary and secondary education must be eliminated.
8. Combat HIV/AIDS: Children and their families must be protected from the devastating impact of the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS).
9. Listen to children and ensure their participation: Children and adolescents are resourceful citizens capable of helping to build a better future for all. We must respect their right to express themselves and to participate in all matters affecting them, in accordance with their age and maturity.
10. Protect the Earth for children: We must safeguard our natural environment, with its diversity of life, its beauty and its resources, all of which enhance the quality of life, for present and future generations. We will give every assistance to protect children and minimize the impact of natural disasters and environmental degradation on them.

Knowledge Base

Social workers practicing with children need to be informed about the following areas:

identified by the author that the Child Social Work domain comprises of 5 sub-domains: Child Survival and Development, Child Protection, Child Participation, Adoption and Foster Care and School Social Work.

Box 6 Definitions of children in need of care and protection

<p>A child in need of care and protection means any child who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is found without a home or settled place or abode and without any ostensible means of subsistence.• Resides with a person (whether a guardian of the child or not) and such a person has threatened to kill or injure the child and there is a reasonable likelihood of the threat being carried out, or has killed, or abused or neglected some other child or children and there is a reasonable likelihood of the child in question being killed, abused or neglected by that person.• Is a mentally or physically challenged or ill child or a child suffering from some terminal disease or incurable disease, and / or having no one to support or look after him/ her.• Has a parent or guardian who is unfit or incapacitated to care for or supervise the child.• Does not have a parent/s and no one is willing to take care of him/ her or has been abandoned or is a missing child and or a run away child.• Is being or is likely to be grossly abused, tortured or exploited for the purpose of sexual abuse or illegal acts.• Is found vulnerable and is likely to be inducted in to drug abuse or trafficking.• Is being or is likely to be abused for unconscionable gains.• Is victim of any armed conflict, civil commotion or natural calamity.	<p>Children in conflict with law are those who have allegedly committed some offence and require the law to intervene.</p> <p>Children in contact with law are those who come in contact with law either as victims or as witness or due to any other circumstances. In short they may require to be in touch with the court and court proceedings due to circumstances and situations.</p> <p>Any vulnerable child includes but is not limited to children of potentially vulnerable families and families at risk, children of socially excluded groups like migrant families, families living in extreme poverty, socially disadvantaged families, families subjected to or affected by discrimination, minorities, children infected and /or affected by HIV/AIDS, orphans, child drug abusers, children of substance abusers, child beggars, trafficked or sexually exploited children, children of prisoners and street and working children.</p>
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- Definition of “Child”, Child in need of Care and Protection; Child in Conflict with law and issues about such definition
- The Child Rights Convention 1989; United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice, 1985 (Beijing Rules); United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, 1990; Hague Convention on Inter-Country Adoption 2003
- Constitutional provisions for Women and Children, Policies and Legislation for Children and related to Children, particularly Juvenile Justice Care and protection Act 2000, Juvenile Justice Care and protection Amendment Act 2006 and the Government Model Rules 2007. Practical implications of these policies, legislations etc.
- CARA Guidelines Guiding Adoption of Children 2011
- Plan of Action for Children, Plan of Action for the Girl Child
- CHILDLINE National Initiative for Child Protection (NICP)
- Government of India Programmes & Schemes for Women and Children- ICDS, ICPS etc.
- Monitoring Tools for Children’s Homes
- Child Training and Participation Techniques
- Issues related to children: Child Development, Child Abuse; Child Psychology, Child Guidance and Counselling; Child Health: Maternal and Child Health, nutrition, early childhood care and education, childhood disabilities, positive mental health in children
- UNICEF & Ministry of Women and Child Development
- WHO Child Growth Standards in ICDS, How to monitor and Evaluate Growth in children
- Child Tracking System; Child care and protection support services

Child Survival and Development

Child Survival and Development Interventions aim at ensuring the right to survival and the right to development of children. It includes the right to life, health, nutrition, name and nationality, education, care, leisure and recreation. Hence under this sub-domain the interventions include 1) protecting the health of adolescent girls who are potential mothers, pregnant women, mothers and children, especially those below the age of 5 years, and 2) promoting the education and care of children.

It was noted under the research study that most settings of Social Work, namely Community Development, Environment, Health etc have direct impact on Child Development because it seeks to eradicate poverty, promote health and preserve the environment for future generations. It was also seen that in most Social Work Settings there is a component for children; this indicates the priority assigned to children, i.e. placing children first. Hence, whatever activity a Social Worker involves in, an impact assessment should be made of such activity on Children and on structures/practices that discriminate against children.

In addition to child-specialized settings, child survival and development interventions can be seen more prominently in general Community Development and Health Settings (E.g. Mother and Child Interventions, Immunization and Growth Monitoring Programmes for Children, Creches, Clinics etc., Pre-School Education etc.). The Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) is the flagship programme of the Government in Child Survival and Development. Programmes aimed at boosting school enrolment, improving the coverage and quality of schools and educational support programmes also come under this category.

Child Participation

Child Participation is another area where a wide range of interventions is possible. The UNICEF Child Participation document, has described this domain:

“The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child... introduces an additional dimension to the status of children by

Child Social Work: Practice Domains

The objectives given above indicate the wide range of interventions possible under Child Rights. It has been

recognising that children are subjects of rights, rather than merely recipients of adult protection, and that those rights demand that children themselves are entitled to be heard. Recognition of children as subjects of rights is expressed, explicitly or implicitly, in a number of articles in the

Convention

Article 5 - parental provision of direction and guidance in accordance with respect for children's evolving capacity; Article 9 - non-separation of children from families without the right to make their views known; Article 12 - the right to be listened to and taken seriously; Article 13 - the right to freedom of expression; Article 14 - the right to freedom of conscience, thought and religion; Article 15 - the right to freedom of association; Article 16 - the right to privacy; Article 17 - the right to information; Article 29 - the right to education that promotes respect for human rights and democracy.

At the core is Article 12, which insists on the 'visibility' of children in their own right. Article 12 says that:

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

It is important to understand clearly what Article 12 does and does not say. It does not give children the right to autonomy. It does not give children the right to control over all decisions irrespective of their implications either for themselves or others. It does not give children the right to ride roughshod over the rights of their parents. However, it does introduce a radical and profound challenge to traditional attitudes, which assume that children should be seen and not heard."

An instance of Child Participation that has been cited from India is given below:

Butterflies Programme of Street and Working Children: Butterflies works with around 800 children living and working on the streets of New Delhi, empowering them with the skills and knowledge to protect themselves and develop as respected and productive citizens. Its approach has centred on the establishment of a team of street educators who build trusting relationships with the children and involve them in a range of activities such as non-formal education, saving schemes, recreational activities and health programmes at various contact points. Children participate in planning most of the activities through a Children's Council that meets every month, attended by representatives who bring issues raised by the children at each contact point. These meetings enable children to discuss and share information, analyse various social and political events and work towards collective action. They discuss, for example, drugs, police harassment, non-payment of wages, the need for better jobs, and the problem of gambling. The Council orients the programme and gives children the opportunity to learn the principles of democracy. A number of concrete initiatives have resulted, including a

Child Workers Union, a Credit Union and the Child Workers Voice. The Council has also empowered them to take legal action when their rights have been violated. The children not only plan most of their activities but also contribute materially towards them. The obligation to contribute adds to the sense of ownership of the programme and a commitment to ensuring its success."

Other examples of Interventions that promote Child Participation include:

- Children's Clubs and Child Parliaments,
- Children's Summits/Forums/Congress on Issues like Environment, Development, HIV/AIDs etc
- Conferences, Meetings, Workshops etc in which children are consulted on issues that concern them
- Participative Research and Participative Projects
- Support Groups of Children in Similar Circumstances
- Peer Counsellors/Workers/Supporters or Child for Child Programmes
- Children on Management Council of NGOs; School councils
- Establishment of boxes in which children are able to post their views
- Child Mediators

One another area that has not been given much prominence in India is Parental Education for proper Care and Upbringing of Children. A programme should be designed to target all prospective parents and to educate them about successful parenting for producing physically, emotionally, spiritually and socially competent children.

Child Protection

As we have seen earlier the ICPS Programme in India tries to bring all Child Protection Services under a common Intervention. ICPS is powered by the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2000, its 2006 Amendment and 2007 Rules. According to CHILDLINE Handbook on Child Protection and Juvenile Justice System, there are Institutionalized and Non-Institutionalized Services for Children in need of Care and Protection. The institutional services are defined by the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act) 2000 are Children's Homes, Shelters or Drop-in Centres and Fit Institutions, where as the non-institutionalized services include Adoption, Foster Care and Sponsorship. The other non-institutionalized services suggested by CHILDLINE are Counselling, School Social Work, and Community Centres etc. Hence we see that Adoption, Foster Care and Sponsorship and School Social Work are non-institutionalized services for Child Protection (Adenwalla, 2006).

Child Protection ensures that the rights of children, propounded under the CRC, are not violated. Organizations working for child protection undertake the following activities:

1. Awareness and conscientization programmes on Child Rights for general community and carers of children.
2. Creation of institutionalized and community based systems that monitor child abuse and other child rights violations and provide services to children and their carers.
3. Capacity building for child rights functionaries

4. Networking and linking different child rights organizations and resources
5. Advocacy and lobbying for child-related issues.
6. Research on children, child rights bodies, children's homes and the status of child rights protection; documentation of best practices and evidence based practice.

Adoption, Foster Care and Sponsorship

The major activities undertaken by adoption/foster care institutions are:

1. Sponsorship: The purpose of providing sponsorship is to enable children to grow in their own families and prevent deinstitutionalization. Sponsorship is primarily provided to children for nutrition, health, and educational purposes.
2. Adoption: Permanent rehabilitation of children into families happens through adoption. Services are offered to prospective parents, adoptee parents and
3. Foster Care: Children are temporarily rehabilitated into foster homes.
4. Institutional Child Care: Children are admitted into the Child Care institutions from different walks of life. Abandoned, lost and destitute children, children born out of wedlock, find their way to the shelter homes run by these institutions.
5. Community Services: The well being of children from poor families can be achieved only if the families/care givers of these children are assisted. Families, especially women are assisted in improving the health and living standards of the family. Children are also provided educational opportunities through setting up of schools and non-formal education centres in the form of tuition centres, pre-school education centres etc.
6. Family Counselling: Some organizations combine family counselling activities along with adoption related activities. When families are in crisis it affects children the most. Strengthening families will lead to child welfare. Behavioural issues that children face are also handled by Counselling.

The Social Workers' Role in the Adoption Setting is as follows:

1. In Adoption and Foster Care, Social Workers role involves Pre and Post Adoption Assessment and Counselling. Pre-Adoption assessment includes providing parent guidance and counselling, conducting Home Visits, preparing Home Study and Child Study Reports, facilitating the process (legal and administrative) of placement of children in foster care or Adoption, conducting follow-up visits and preparing follow-up reports.
2. The Social Worker also makes interventions and takes decisions on behalf of children in cases where the best interests of the child are not catered to.
3. The social worker networks, liaisons, advocates, collaborate and partners with a number of stakeholders to protect the rights of children who are in need of care and protection.
4. Many children in need of care and protection live in institutions like children's homes. The social worker is actively involved in managing these institutions by

ensuring the protection and promotion of child rights. The presence of a social Worker is must in these institutions.

5. The Social worker assists destitute families to bring up children by providing sponsorships and assistance which meet various needs of the child and family. Family Counselling is also provided. This is to prevent institutionalization of children and foster the healthy development of children within their biological families.
6. The Social Worker creates awareness about Child Protection issues and is involved in Training and Research related to this field.

School Social Work

The goal of Social Work interventions in the Education Setting is to promote supportive learning environments in which children can develop in a balanced manner. The aim is not only to ensure academic excellence but make students socially responsible and emotionally mature individuals. Keeping this objective in mind, Social Work in Educational institutes or in the field of education entails the following activities:

- *Counselling and Case Work Services:* The Social Worker assists individual students to resolve the challenges they face in their development process, particularly in their learning environment. These students approach the Counsellor at will or based on reference by parents, teachers or other authorities. The student may have personal, family or other issues within the institution, which may be preventing him/her from academic, emotional and social performance. The Social Worker uses all possible resources and means to assist the student to resolve these issues. In addition to students, the social worker provides services to parents and staff of the institute.
- *Personality Development:* The Social Worker organizes a variety of activities like awareness programmes, lecture sessions, trainings, street plays, theatres, group work, celebrations etc. so as to influence positive change in the personality of students. The students are infused with the right values and attitudes so as to transform them into worthy people.
- *Social Programmes:* Students are motivated and directed to help fellow beings in need through various social welfare programmes. They are trained to become socially sensitive, pro-active and responsible citizens who value service.
- *Learning Environment:* The social worker has to work with teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, management and the community so as to create a productive environment for students. The Social worker should infuse the spirit of socially sensitive learning and quest for excellence within the organization. He/she should make parents aware of good parenting practices and help them resolve the issues that affect their children. The Social worker also intervenes in community issues that affect the student.
- According to the CHILDLINE Handbook, some of the functions of School Social workers are: 1) School Counsellors or Social Workers are instrumental in preventing dropouts, reducing levels of wastage and

stagnation, providing guidance, family counselling and other support services. 2) The school social worker helps promote the school as a centre for learning inputs, nutritional and health inputs and introducing supportive services to education. 3) School social services are essentially to improve quality of education to make education more relevant to social realities, make educational opportunities available to children and ensure that they are utilized (Mehta, 2006).

CONCLUSION

Today's children are tomorrow's citizens. It is the duty of every government and citizen to protect the rights of children. Professional social workers and social welfare workers have a special responsibility towards children, who are perhaps the largest group of disadvantaged clienthood of social work. It is the duty of social workers to ensure that the needs of the child assume centrality in any development and welfare planning and interventions, i.e. they have to facilitate the establishment of child-centred systems and communities. The dream and mission of child social workers is to create a child friendly world, a world where children are safe, healthy and happy. This article hopes to be a guide to child social workers in India.

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