

These recommendations have been sent to Joint Secretary Lok Sabha Secretariat for consideration in the coming bill.

### **Workshop on Child Rights and Child Labour**

**AIWC held a Workshop on Child Rights and Child Labour on the 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2013 at its premises -6, Bhagwan Das Road, New Delhi. The following recommendations emerged from the deliberations during the day.**

#### **Recommendations**

- **Child labour is below 14 years of age, however a child is considered adult only at age 18. We do not talk about the children in age group of 14 years to 18 years**, who are also children. This has to be taken into consideration while designing /implementing any scheme.
- **Budget allocation is very low.** There is no provision for their **shelter after rescue.** Only .05% is allocated for child protection.
- **Child welfare committees should be made powerful with properly educated officials.** At present 10+2 person can become the chairman of this committee. The amount paid to them is too little.
- **There is need to have a proper body to look after the problem as a whole.** At present, the procedure is very complicated and tedious. One department looks after only rescue and the other only rehabilitation. Who is to be held responsible for rehabilitation?
- **There is no stringent law to punish employers who employ children in hazardous occupations.** It is considered as non cognizable offence.
- **CII should make it mandatory to declare that no child labour is involved in the production of goods.**
- **CSR should focus on rehabilitation of rescued children** and for this corporate fund should be created.
- **Involvement of persons from social organizations should be there while framing curriculum of text books by NCERT.**
- **Need for relevant, reliable and current data:** There is need to upgrade the data by conducting research as well as collect secondary data to come up with relevant and reliable data so that a clear picture of the problem of child labor is available. Forms of child labour as well as regional nature of the same should be clear from the data. Ngos should also be involved in planning the research as their approach would more likely be based on the field experiences and relevant to the real life problems rather than research organizations who would lack the current and field experience.
- **The issue of definition:** it is important to come up to a clear definition of child labor. The range of child labor starts from begging, selling at red lights, dancing-singing in the train etc to very hazardous labor like making match box or fireworks.
- **Address the poverty-**Child labor is a consequence of poverty in the family and other related factors. Without addressing the root cause, we

cannot eliminate child labour. Thus question of poverty in our society has to be addressed in an urgent manner.

- **Create Awareness**-Apart from the poverty aspect where the family needs the income, there is a social acceptance for child labor in Indian society. On this issue there is need to create awareness among the community about the rights of the child especially where the prevalence of sending the children to work is high on the one hand and among the community where the employment of child is rampant.
- **Need for activism and Advocacy**- In our society, there is social acceptance of child labor, early marriage and other related issues, as well as lack of involvement of general population on such issues. Thus, there is need for greater amount of activism on parts of NGOs and even private citizens to bring to notice above issues and action points which can be taken up. Letters to PMO or President of India and other relevant bodies from organizations can help in highlighting the problem, like budgetary allocation for child issues, content in text books etc.
- **NGOs can take help of RWAs** in conducting educational, health and hygiene programs for domestic labour in residential areas.
- **Make government schemes more attractive:** The government intervention and the above facilities should be attractive enough for the parents to not to send their children for wage earning.
- **Planned eradication:** The magnitude of child labor being huge, social acceptance being very high, the goal of eradication of Child Labor should be to conduct it in a phased manner.
- **Intervention programs should be based on research:** The program and schemes for eradication should be based on data based on reliable research in terms of secondary data as well as psychological reasons behind non acceptance of the local facilities for nutrition, health and schooling and lack of motivation for going to school, doing well in future. There should clear-cut findings on these issues.
- **Design a basic framework** where the rights of the child -what is defined in the Constitution, basic right to food, health, schooling etc. has to be granted to the child within the framework of an income for the child also. If the child has to work, how long s/he can work, how much s/he can earn. What kind of facilities the employer needs to provide-these issues should be clear.
- **Create mechanisms for monitoring at the source as well as at the employers end:** The educational opportunities and hospital facilities as well as the nutritional food which the government is supposed to provide for the poor children, needs to be monitored continuously. There is need to create citizen groups and NGOs as mechanisms for monitoring.
- **Rescue and rehabilitation should be linked:** The experience has shown that there is no point rescuing children from the labor market and let them loose without any better and permanent arrangement for a positive future for the child. Even when they are sent to the parents, the parents might send them to another job in a clandestine manner. Such children have also been found to end up in sex-trade or organ trade.
- **Need for foster homes:** As there is a shortage of shelter homes for rescued children, the government can solicit help of citizens in providing

temporary shelter homes for the children rescued. In the lines of Bed and Breakfast scheme started by the government during commonwealth games, some home can be identified and registered for such purpose for providing free shelter.