Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS)

Child protection deals with reducing the vulnerability of a child from any risk or danger to his/her life and childhood. India is home to almost 19% of the world’s children. It is estimated that around 170 million children in India are vulnerable to or experiencing difficult circumstances.

Extent of the problem

- Around 11 million children live on the streets in India (UNICEF). They are exposed to health hazards, harassment and exploitation.
- Over 12 million orphaned and abandoned children in India.
- Around 90 million child laborers (age group 5-14) in India (NSSO).
- Number of juvenile delinquents increased from 17,203 (1994) to over 30,000 (2004).

Objectives

ICPS is based on the principles of ‘protection of child rights’ and ‘best interests of the child’ and aims to institutionalize services for emergency outreach, family and community based care, counseling and support. ICPS sensitizes functionaries in the system towards child protection, and raise public awareness. It seeks to put in place both preventive and curative mechanisms for a child needing protection from exploitation, harassment, health hazards, etc. The model adopts government-civil society partnership to ensure child protection and create a safe and healthy environment for the children of India.

Framework for Implementation

- **Childline India Foundation** - a voluntary organization established by the Government of India. Under ICPS, Childline Foundation is the nodal agency for running operations in India.
- **National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD)** - has the responsibility of carrying out all child protection training and research activities in the country.
- **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** - shall function as an autonomous body under the Ministry and as an advisory body for in-country and inter-country adoptions.
- **State Child Protection Society (SCPS)** - is the fundamental unit for implementation of the scheme in every State/U.T. and is under the Secretary of Child Welfare/Development in the state.
- **State Adoption Resource Agency (SARA)** - is a unit under the State Child Protection Society (SCPS). It coordinates and monitors adoption in the state and provides support to CARA.
The Juvenile Justice Act requires state governments to establish a Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and a Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) in each district.

- **Child Welfare Committee** is chaired by a person well versed in child welfare issues and at least one member of the board must be a woman. The committee has the same powers as a metropolitan magistrate. A child facing a problem can be brought before the committee by a police officer, public servant, Childline personnel, social worker, public spirited citizen, or by the child himself/herself. The purpose of the committee is to determine the best interest of a child and find the child a safe home and environment either with his/her original parents, adoptive parents, foster care or an institution. Under the ICPS, funds are available for setting up and maintenance of a Child Welfare Committee.

- **Juvenile Justice Board** are presented with juveniles accused or detained for a crime. The aim is to hold a child culpable for their criminal activity, not through punishment, but counsel. The board consists of a Metropolitan magistrate and two social workers with at least one woman. The board is responsible for deciding the best course of action for the rehabilitation of the child. The child is typically brought before the board by a police officer or a person from the special juvenile police unit. Under the ICPS, funds are available for setting up and maintenance of a Juvenile Justice Board.

### Programmes and Activities

- **Emergency outreach service**: Childline is a toll-free 24/7 emergency phone outreach (by calling 1098) service for children in need of care and protection. As of March 2013, a total of **27 million calls** since inception have been serviced by Childline, which operates in **291 cities** across the country through its network of 540 partner organizations. Childline provides assistance towards medical causes, protection from abuse, emotional support, etc. After emergency needs have been addressed, Childline ensures the long-term rehabilitation of the child. 100% central assistance is available for Childline under ICPS.

- **Open shelters**: ICPS facilitates setting up of open shelters particularly in the urban areas. Open shelters provide a space for children where they can use their time productively, have access to healthcare and education, and be protected from abuse and neglect on the streets. Financial assistance is provided through the state governments to voluntary organizations for the setting up of open shelters. Where voluntary organizations are not present, the states will run them themselves.

- **Sponsorship and foster care**: An amount of Rs. 10 lakh per district shall be provided for sponsorship and foster care.
- Sponsorship will provide financial support to destitute families, whose income is not exceeding Rs 36,000 per annum for metro areas, Rs 30,000 for other cities and Rs 24,000 for rural areas. The quantum of sponsorship would be Rs. 2000 per month per child.
- Foster care is an arrangement whereby a child lives with an extended or unrelated family members. This caters to children who are not legally free for adoption and whose parents are unable to take care of them. The quantum of foster care would be Rs. 2000 per month per child.
- **Adoption** - Adoption must be authorized by the Child welfare committee (established as per the Juvenile Justice Act). All institutions must disclose details about the children in care and those free for adoption must be recorded with the State/Central Adoption Resource Authority. Inter-state coordination to match the prospective parents with available children must be done by State Adoption Resource Authority. No parent will be forced to give up their child for monetary or any other considerations. Monitoring, regulating and promoting ethical adoptions shall be done under the scheme.
- **Aftercare** - It provides financial support to children who leave institutional care after attaining 18 years to help them transition to independent life. Funds for managing aftercare program are provided to State Child Protection Society:
  - For States with less than 15 districts: Rs 15 lakhs
  - For States with 15-30 districts: Rs 30 lakhs
  - For States with more than 30 districts: Rs 45 lakhs
- **Innovative Interventions** - The scheme supports innovative and need based intervention programs. For example, special programs for children of sex workers, children of prisoners, children in need of rehabilitation post a disaster. The State Child Protection Society will have a general grant-in-aid fund of Rs 15,00,000 under which such projects can be supported.

**Funding Mechanism**

The scheme will be implemented on the following cost sharing ratios:-

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<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Cost Sharing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Centre:State</td>
<td>90:10 for all components for all North-East States and Jammu and Kashmir.</td>
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<td>75:25 for all components for other states</td>
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<td>35:65 for all the regulatory bodies provided under the Juvenile Justice Act- Juvenile Justice Boards, Child Welfare Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centre:NGO</td>
<td>90:10 for all scheme components</td>
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<td>100% funding by Centre to Childline services, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, Central Adoption Resource Agency</td>
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In case a state is unable to spend the complete funds allocated to it, the excess funds will be reallocated by the ministry to another state which requires additional funds. The flow of fund would be as depicted below.
Sponsorship Project in Odisha

In 2009, 39% of the population in Odisha was children. Number of children without parental care was 15-20,000 and children in recognized children homes were 9,000. A task force on non-institutional care was set up with members from leading organizations working on child protection issues such as Basundhara, Youth Council for Development Alternatives and EKTA. A tri-partite partnership to promote non-institutional forms of childcare was established involving the Department of Women and Child Development, task force and UNICEF. A ‘Right to Family’ campaign was launched to create awareness on non-institutional forms of childcare. A pilot program was launched in Khurdha district in which 40 cases were identified and private donors, following state sponsorship guidelines, provided sponsorship. 42 children and their parents were counseled, resulting in children’s reintegration with their families.

Protection and Rehabilitation of children from Railway Platforms, Bengaluru

According to the Society for Assistance of Children in Difficult Situation (SATHI), hundreds of children run away from homes every day. Approximately 20-children/day end up on Bengaluru railway platforms. SATHI staff does patrolling on the platforms around 16 hours per day. Furthermore, a SATHI contact centre is present on the railway station. Children are rescued and taken to the SATHI shelter. Their basic needs (food, clothes, hygiene) are taken care at the shelter. Counseling, non-formal education and measures to return the children to their families is undertaken at the shelter. Almost 80% of the children brought to the shelter home are reunited with their families. The remaining are referred to government homes. As per telephonic follow up, 95% of rescued children are retained at home.