

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
Summary of Recommendations on Out of School Children

A Consultation cum Review Meeting on 'Devising Pathways for Re-engaging Out of School Children' (OoSC) was organised by NCPDR in collaboration with Ministry of HRD and NCERT held on 4th-5th April 2016 at the Constitution Club of India, New Delhi.

Members of CABE sub-Committee on the OoSC, Secretaries, Department of Education of various States/UTs, representatives from Ministries of Women and Child Development, MHRD, Labor and Employment, Tribal Affairs, Social Justice and Empowerment, Labour and Employment, Minority Affairs, State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), Chairpersons and one Member from State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCRs) attended the said consultation cum review meeting.

The summary of recommendations emerging from this meeting are categorised as under, categorised as, **Identification, Tracking and Re-engagement** of Out of School Children (OoSC).

1. Definition:

- i. Arriving at a standardized and consolidated definition of Out of School Children (OoSC) across the country is required since each State/UT have their own definition and method of identification.
- ii. If a child absents from his/her school for 30 consecutive working days, he/she should be treated as drop out child.
- iii. A child 6-14 years of age will be considered out of school if he / she has never been enrolled in an elementary school or if after enrolment has been absent from school without prior intimation for reasons of absence for a period of 30 days or more.
- iv. A child never enrolled in school (as defined in 2(n) of RTE Act, 2009) for formal education.
- v. A child once enrolled into formal system of education/school, if does not complete 8 years of compulsory elementary education, should be treated as out of school child.

2. Identification

- i. All such children who have never been mapped should be treated as OoSC and their mapping should be done.
- ii. Identification of various reasons responsible for children being out-of-school should be done.

3. Prevention

- i. **Concerted efforts** should be made for framing preventive strategies/interventions for drop-out and non-enrolment as well as curative strategies to re-engage out-of-school children.
- ii. Education being a social issue, **participation of the community is crucial** for prevention of Out of School Children is not possible. Education Volunteers should be engaged at District and Block levels who would ensure prevention and re-engagement of OoSC.

- iii. **Focus on preventive strategies of seasonal migrant child** should be emphasised. Seasonal Hostels for Migrant Children in convergence with the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Tribal Welfare, Ministry of Women and Child Development and Sarva Siksha Abhiyan should be established.

4. Tracking

1. Devising new strategies/mechanism for collecting reliable data on different categories of out-of-school children as per the above definition. A correct and effective method of data collection needs to be established to have the exact figure of out of school children.
2. **Technological innovations** such as **bar coding technique, digitalized attendance monitoring, voice detection attendance** and other available and affordable technology should be used for mapping real time attendance of children. **Attendance should also be monitored during 'Mid Day Meal (MDM)'**, which can give a realistic picture of the number of children attending in the school.
3. **Mapping of children in conflict with law (CICL) and children in need of care and protection (CNCP), 'Divyang' (Special Children)** who are out of school should also be done. There should be inter-departmental convergence between department of Women and Child Development, Social Justice and Education for this purpose.
4. **Best practice reported by Madhya Pradesh Government** wherein all the data pertaining to **Out of School Children** is **digitized**, for example, whether it is health status, education status etc. Uniforms, scholarships, text books are transacted online through Government portal, could be adopted. The **School Assessment Program of Madhya Pradesh** is comprehensive and can be replicated in other States.
5. **Convergence on issues of OoSC between Ministries of Women and Child Development, Human Resource Development, Tribal Welfare, Labour and Employment and Social Welfare, Minorities** is essential.
6. **Village Education Registers** maintained in each school for mapping of school going children should be **computerized**. MIS data system should be created at a centralized level.
7. **Support of Non-government organizations and volunteers** should be taken to conduct mega surveys during household surveys for admissions of OosC, in coordination with School Heads, AWWs, ASHAs, PRIs, CWCs, DCPUs and CCIs.
8. **Mapping of children going to Madarsas, Vedic Pathshala and any other faith based non formal institutions and unrecognised schools** should be done. Madarsas and Vedic Pathshala should be affiliated to their respective Board and should follow the state approved curriculum in addition to religious studies.


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Getting affiliated to Boards shall facilitate mapping of such children and they shall not be considered out of school.

9. **Strategy for migrant labour and seasonal migrant and community migrant children could be the same.** As part of strategy for tracking community/seasonal migrant data should be maintained in a **separate register** by the School Head and cross checked by the PRI. This data should be fed in MIS and updated in UDISE system. The class teacher should provide a **migration certificate** mentioning status of syllabus taught. Syllabus and books from school before seasonal migration should also be provided to such children who are tracked as seasonal/community migrant child. This migration certificate should contain **UDISE code of the school** and should be countersigned by the Head of the school. The register should be reviewed periodically by the SMCs during meetings.
10. If a child is absent from his/her school 3 working days, class teacher shall inquire from his/her classmates.
 - a. After this if the child absents for 7 working days (including these 3 working days) from his/her school ,with the consent the HM ,the class teacher will meet his/her parents and persuade them to send his/her child to the school.
 - b. If even after this if the student is absent for next 7 working days from his/her school, the HM will meet his parents and convince them to send their child to school.
 - c. In this way if the student is absent from his/her school for 21 working days then the student is treated as potential drop out. Now the SMC of the school will meet his/her parents and convince them to send their child to school.
 - d. However, if the child is absent for 30 consecutive working days then he or she is declared "DROP OUT" child/ OoSC. These drop out/ OoSC children should receive special attention to preview the child from becoming a permanent drop out.
 - e. After identifying a child as OoSC, head of school should report it on UDISE data and local PRI or urban local body representative and DEO immediately.
 - f. State should take steps to map children without guardians/parents, children at railway platform/ bus stand, street children etc.

5. Re-Engagement

i. Reviewed of RTE Act.

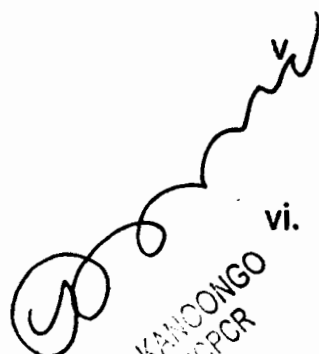
The RTE Act, 2009 under section – 11, mandates the state to provide early childhood care and education (ECCE), with a view to prepare children above the age of three years for elementary education. The appropriate government shall make arrangements to provide ECCE for all children until they complete the age of six years.


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- a. Out of the six components of ICDS, one is Education. Hence, the children in ECCE centres should receive benefits from Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) for the education component of ECCE such as uniform, books etc.
 - b. Convergence in Anganwadi Centres and Government Schools should be provisioned for seamlessness; for example, it's a common phenomenon that transitioning of a child from a play school to private school happens automatically due to convergence between the both.
 - c. Also, proper syllabus and curriculum should be prescribed for AWC. [NCPCR is in process of preparing recommendations regarding modality of the same.]
- ii. **A dedicated Education Helpline (Solution Platform) for children** across the country should be established. The said Helpline can help in identification, data collection and surveys through outbound calls in migration prone areas as well as communities. **[The proposal for setting up such Education Helpline has already been submitted by NCPCR to MHRD for consideration and approval].**
 - iii. **Education being a social issue, participation of the community is crucial** without which prevention of Out of School Children is not possible. Further, under the RTE Act, 2009, the important administrative and other roles are assigned to School Management Committee (SMC) at the School level. Placement of **District Resource Persons (DRPs)** to kick start the entire process of identify and re-engage OoSC **shall be piloted by NCPCR.** DRPs who could be referred as 'Siksha Prehris' would be positioned in each district of the country to assist in monitoring the implementation of the said RTE, Act, 2009 with a focus on identification, tracking and re-engagement of the Out of School Children. Initially, it will be taken on pilot basis in 4 states across the country. DRPs will also establish links with the SMCs for ensuring an effective monitoring mechanism. **[The proposal for the said purpose has already been submitted by NCPCR to MHRD for consideration and approval.]**
 - iv. Commission recommends **skill and interest based vocational training in schools.** The sphere of co-curricular activities should be broadened and more interesting and relevant interest based skills, could also prepare children for employment/vocation oriented skills after they finish their 8th class, should be introduced in schools. The vocational trades should be based on cluster based approach. DIET should identify such vocational trade in linkages with NSDC as per the occupational standards set by NSDC. NCERT and SCERT can play an important role for facilitating DIETs in the whole process.

v. **The study material for children in schools should be in their mother tongue language, to encourage OoSC towards mainstreaming.**

- vi. **School Management Committees (SMC)** should play a crucial role in identification and re-engagement of Out of School Children (OoSC). **Inclusion of grandparents as members of School Management Committees should be done to encourage**


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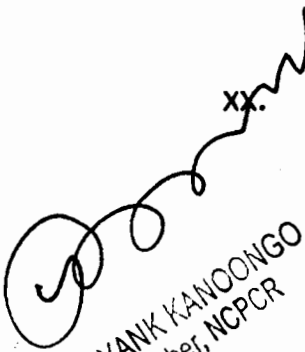
participation of children in schools. Convergence between SMC members and other such SMCs of various schools in a district through the means of Social Media should be done (Example through Whats App groups etc.)

- vii. **Appropriate Strategies and enablers for re-engagement of children in conflict with law (CICL) and children in need of care and protection (CNCP) should be chalked out. State/UT wise situational analysis of the issue of (OoSC) and identification of the specific areas/ clusters viz. hilly terrains, streets, railway platforms, bus stations etc. where maximum out of school children are expected to be present. Specific initiatives should be taken to mainstream such children by provisioning relevant infrastructure facilities viz. hostels and schools etc. Focus on strategies for children with disabilities (CWDs), by which these children can be equipped for doing activities of daily living.**
- viii. **Convergence on issues of OoSC between various concerned Ministries and State departments viz. Women and Child Development, Human Resources Development, Tribal Welfare, Labour and Employment, Minority Affairs and Social Welfare is essential. Committees should be set up from district level to State level for reviewing the status of Out of School Children. Inter-Ministerial and Inter Departmental convergence meetings should be held once in three months. State Commission for Protection of Child Rights should play major role in monitoring the implementation of State Plan of Action.**
- ix. **These Committees should play a major role in re-engaging orphan children, children without guardians/parents, children at railway platform/ bus stand, street children, children addicted by substance abuse etc. In convergence with school heads, AWW, ASHA, PRI, Local Urban Bodies, Central and State Social Welfare Boards, CWCs, DCPU, CCIs, Civil Society Volunteers. NCPCR will recommend proper guidelines for rehabilitation and re-engagement of such children after constitution of such committees.**
- x. **Establishing of 'Learning Centres' for Out of School and Drop Out Children with effective Bridge Course and Life Skills Education are essential. Thereafter ensure enrolment into formal schools in age-appropriate classes work with the local communities to form Children Groups (CGs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) and work with them to ensure that they take accountability of the development of the children in their community and that even the most marginalized children in their area are sent to school and retained. DIETS should implement this under the supervision of NCERT and SCERT.**
- xi. **Teacher Training Colleges under regulation of NCTE colleges should cater for Out of School Children; teacher trainees should make case studies on Out of School Children as part of their syllabus. Their project work should include re-engaging of at-least one child compulsorily to school. This drive can enable lakhs of children to**

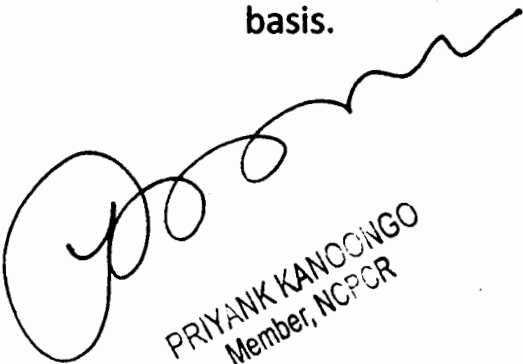

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get re-engaged and enrolled/re-enrolled into schools. The whole procedure should be monitored by DIET at the district level, SCERT at the State level and NCERT and NCTE at the national level. Universities may be requested to incorporate these suggestions in their examination pattern.

- xii. Experiences have shown that **under-performing schools** improve more rapidly when they receive stronger **personalized guidance, capacity building and on-location support** from educational authorities and civil society organizations. Again the introductions of Life Skills Programme in schools have shown gain in quality education and retention of children in schools.
- xiii. **State should notify in the Elective Rules of the Local Bodies and PRIs** that every candidate who wants to contest election should obtain a signed certificate from the school's principal that their ward/s are going to school.
- xiv. For getting a job under the **MNREGA Scheme**, it should be ensured that the **child of the beneficiary of this scheme is enrolled** in school and regular in attendance.
- xv. **Quarterly Workshop for Mothers of OoSC** should be held in order to enlist the direct support of the families should be done. SCERT should develop modules for such workshop and conduct these trainings on periodic intervals.
- xvi. **Porta Cabins** for schooling of OoSC should be established in Naxal prone areas.
- xvii. Each **migrant child should be provided a migration certificate** which should be produced by the child for getting admission in the new place of stay. Migration certificate should consist of DISE code of the school. While returning back to the home State/home district/permanent place of residence, such migrant child should carry this migration certificate from the state/place of migration. This data should be linked with UDISE. An MIS database should be maintained by the State Governments/ Education Departments/Boards. NCPCR and SCPCRs shall be responsible for monitoring and convergence between States.
- xviii. **UDISE can be a platform for convergence for re-engaging OoSC through data sharing.**
- xix. **A National Programme for prevention and Re-engagement on OoSC should be initiated by MHRD.** NCPCR can support in drafting of such a programme, should MHRD require such assistance.
- xx. **Education of girls/children rescued from trafficking should be done in a convergent manner** with assistance from concerned Ministries with MHRD and Education Departments of the States.


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- xxi. Ministry of WCD, Government of India has provisioned **Crèche Scheme for Working Mothers**. This facility is primarily utilised and available for working mothers in urban areas. **It is recommended that similar facilities should be provided for rural women who work in fields and other occupations and women in urban slums/economically weaker segments of urban areas.** Children of such working mothers often drop out to take care of younger siblings and household chores. Anganwadi centres could also work as crèches to prevent OoSC.
- xxii. **Timely Financial fund flow for effective Tracking and Monitoring purposes should be sanctioned.** Adequate provision for funding by Ministry/Department should be made available for the purpose of combating the issue of Out of School Children.
- xxiii. It has been recommended by all the representatives of State Education Departments, NCERT/SCERT and State Commission for Protection of Child Rights that **the RTE Act, 2009 should be reviewed.**
- xxiv. **The States should come forward with exact number of OoSC within their States.** By assessing the exact figure of OoSC, constructive efforts can be made to re-engage them and mainstream back into schools. The fund allocation from MHRD for prevention and reengagement of OoSC should be proportionate to the number of children who are OoSC.
- xxv. OoSC population is a resource of this country which is getting wasted due to lack of education. These children could be a major talent pool of the country but shall remain a liability if they stay out of the mainstream education. Such children should be converted into assets by mainstreaming them into school education on priority basis.



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