

Minutes of the Core Group Meeting – 23rd February 2007
At NCRC

Agenda

The agenda of the meeting was to discuss about the feasibility of conducting a study to understand the status of the children in Nagapattinam District, which is to be undertaken by the Core Group. The meeting was organized as a sharing of experience with representatives from organizations such as UNICEF, SNEHA and ICCW. Based on the sharing the Core Group will take the responsibility in conducting the study on the status of the children in the district.

Introduction

Mr. Jerald from NCRC welcomed the participants and explained in detail, the objective of the meeting. In his introductory session he mentioned that conducting a scientific study on the status of children in the district would help the NGOs to sharpen their objectives and deepen their commitment. More over a study like this will become a base for the existence of Child Secretariat, which is going to be launched in the month of April 2007.

The group was asked whether in the first place a study is required in the children sector.

Some of the responses are noted below –

Ms. Revathi from Vanavil mentioned that this kind of study will help the NGOs to reflect on their own objectives and their activities during the last two years, post the tsunami.

Mr. Ganesh from CREAT mentioned that the Child Secretariat is going to respond to various needs / issues of all the children in the district, this kind of study is very much needed because this study would also include the other children who are not affected by tsunami.

SNEHA has undertaken a study only in 51 coastal villages and have identified many issues in these areas. So there is a need to conduct a study which will include both the coastal and non-coastal areas. This would be one of the objectives of the proposed study.

Similarly UNICEF has also undertaken a study with the status of Orphans and children living with single parents, however it was also mentioned that these study reports can be used as secondary data for further study.

The representative from UNICEF stated that UNICEF in collaboration with the government has been able to provide facilities such as the Incubators etc in order to address the needs of neonatal and they also asked the group to spread awareness regarding such facilities so that communities can avail these facilities, moreover they also spoke about the audiovisual amenities available at the Public Health Centres in the district. The field investigators who were involved in the study undertaken by TMSSS also presented a gist of the problems that they had identified during a study conducted by them under the ‘Suraksha’ program.

After the brain storming the team decided to undertake a study on the following parameters

- ✚ Health
- ✚ Child Protection
- ✚ Education

The team identified the issues prevalent in each of these areas which would then be short listed as per the relevance and need.

Health

1. Antenatal/ neonatal health
2. Malnutrition
3. Anemia
4. Vitamin A deficiencies
5. Accessibility and availability of services (health)
6. Quality of service
7. Mental Health
8. Local/traditional health practices
9. Health seeking behavior
10. Children with HIV/AIDS
11. Child friendly sanitary conditions (home/school)
12. Early marriage
13. Personal hygiene practices
14. Physically/mentally challenged children
15. Vitamin deficiencies
16. Prevalence of diseases.

Child protection

1. Begging – Velankanni, Nagore & Bus stand
2. Abandon children
3. Child labour
4. Children out of school (drop-outs)
5. Child trafficking
6. Child abuse
7. Neglected children
8. Orphans and children living with single parents
9. Children in residential care
10. Children in bonded labour / child pledging
11. Monitoring mechanisms
12. Children with HIV/AIDS
13. Early childhood marriages
14. Children in Disaster
15. Dalit Children / Discrimination

Education

1. Exploitation in school
2. Infra structure facilities
3. Quality of education
4. Student : teacher ratio
5. School Dropouts

6. Child friendly toilets, classes (environment)
7. Corporal punishment/ Abuse
8. Children with special needs (Special Education)
9. Neglected children
10. Transport (access and supply)
11. Tuition/ coaching class/ school/ NGOs
12. Exclusion in education based on caste, gender, marginalized groups, etc
13. Access and availability of GO/ Schemes
14. Problems related in pursuing higher education
15. Denial of education
16. community participation – PTA

Sr. Mercy from Good Shepherd suggested that the study should also cover the issues related to ‘Children in Disaster’, she quoted instances such as fire accidents etc where-in NGOs responded to the needs of the women and basic needs such as food etc, but neglected children who may have lost all their books etc and would not be in a position to return to school.

After a brainstorming and listing of the issues as mentioned above, the team moved on to discuss the basic modalities of the study

I. Universe

It was decided that 3 village each from each of the 11 blocks in Nagapattinam be included in the study and a random sampling method be adopted in the study apart from these certain other criteria were also listed

- ✚ Rural/Urban
- ✚ Caste and religion
- ✚ Livelihood
- ✚ Accessibility of facilities

II. Methodology

Qualitative Aspects
<p>1. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) One each with the following groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Children 6 – 12 years mixed group ✚ Adolescent girls 13 – 18 ✚ Adolescent boys 13 – 18 ✚ Mothers ✚ Community (Panchayat leaders, women SHG members, men etc)
2. Innovative method of collecting information from children
3. Key interviews
4. Case studies

Finally Blocks were allocated to respective NGOs who have agreed to conduct the study at the village level. Each NGO agreed to provide two volunteers each for this study. Name of the NGO responsible in conducting the study at the field level in the respective Blocks are listed below.

SI No	Block	NGO
1	Vedharanyam	CREATE
2	Keeliyur	AAVAI
3	Thalainiyairu	TMSSS
4	Keelvelur	REAL
5	Nagapattinam	Psycho – trust
6	Thirumurugal	LCI
7	Sembanarkovil	VESA
8	Mayiladuthurai	Marathum
9	Kuthalam	RAISE
10	Sirkazhi	SNEHA
11	Kollidam	SAVE

Pilot study – TMSSS, Psycho – Trust, REAL have agreed to provide one person each and Good Shepherd to provide 2 staffs in conducting the pilot study.

The representative from Vanavil mentioned that they would offer support in collecting information exclusively on begging. They also stated that many FGDs based on various issues have already been conducted in many locations and what different information will this study be able to collect.

It was agreed that a common questionnaire in – order to collect information relating to the village be developed.

A time line for the initiation of the study was decided

Date	Activity
1.03.07	Pilot study to be initiated
9. 03.07	Orientation to the volunteers.
12.03.07 to 24.03.07	Study to be initiated and completed in all the blocks

The meeting concluded with the group deciding to send their team members for the pilot study.

Participants List

SI No	Participant	Organization	Contact #
1	Mr.Gigil Mathew	Psycho – Trust	9943488830
2	Ms.M. Vasantha	TMSSS	9842507729
3	Ms.B. Saroja	SNEHA- Nagai	9894814738
4	Ms.B.Kavitha	SNEHA – Nagai	9443423082
5	Mr.S.P.Ganesh	CREATE – Vedharanyam	9443186276

6	Mr.C. Shanthakumar	TMSSS	9443188336
7	Ms.Revathi . R	Vanavil	9381102510
8	Mr.S. Kannayiram	UNICEF	9444011098
9	Mr.Alfred. S. P	REAL	9442101190
10	Ms.S. Brisla	SCF	9444907971
11	Mr.Alfred	SCF	9444907970
12	Sr. Mercy Joseph	Good Shepherd	9840570122
13	Mr.T. Gopi	Avvai Village Welfare Society	9894499114
14	Mr.Kennedy	CMS	9344410890
15	Mr.Godsen	UNICEF	
16	Mr,Sudarson	UNICEF	
17	Mr.Ashok	LCI	