

## **Scheme of National Child Labour Project Revised-2003**

### **1. Policy:**

The National Child Labour Policy was approved by the Cabinet on 14th August 1987 during the Seventh Five Year Plan Period. The policy was formulated with the basic objective of suitably rehabilitating the children withdrawn from employment thereby reducing the incidence of child labour in areas of known concentration of child labour. The policy consists of three main ingredients:-

- **Legal Action Plan** - With emphasis laid on strict and effective enforcement of legal provisions relating to child labour under various labour laws;
- **Focusing of general development programmes** - Utilization of various ongoing development programmes of other Ministries/Departments for the benefit of child labour wherever possible;
- **Project-based plan of action**- Launching of projects for the welfare of working' children in areas of high concentration of child labour.

The broad approach under the policy will continue to be adopted during the 10th Plan period also.

### **2. Objective:**

The number of Child Labours as per the 1991 census was over 1.1 crores. Keeping in mind constraints of resources and the prevailing level of social consciousness and 'awareness, the Government has fixed the time till the end of the loth Plan to eliminate child'-labour in the hazardous sector. Elimination of all forms of child labour itself is a progressive process beginning with elimination efforts in the hazardous areas.

### **3. Target Group:**

Under the scheme, the target group is all the children below 14 years of age and working in:

- Occupations and processes listed in the Schedule to the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986; and/or
- Occupations & processes, which adversely affect their health and psyche

- In the latter category, the hazardousness of the employment towards the children should be reasonably established.

#### **4. Strategy:**

As per the 1991 census, the total number of working children in the country was 11.28 million. However, the NSSO survey 1999-2000 has reflected the magnitude of child labour as 10.40 million. It is -proposed to adopt a sequential approach with focus on rehabilitation of children working in hazardous occupations in the first instance. Under the scheme, after a survey of child labour engaged in. hazardous occupations/ processes, the children are to be withdrawn from the above mentioned categories of occupations and processes, and then admitted to special schools (Rehabilitation-cum- Welfare Centers) in order to enable them to be mainstreamed into the formal schooling system. Vocational training is also proposed to be provided under the ' 10th Plan strategy.

#### **5. Programme Component:**

Under the National Child Labour Projects, it is proposed to focus on different developmental and welfare programmes for the benefit of child labour in the project area. Effective convergence and an integrated approach of the relevant social sector schemes need to be carried out to achieve the project goals. The activities to be taken up under the project in the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan are:

- Stepping up of enforcement of child labour laws
- Formal Non- formal education
- Provision of Vocational Training
- Income and employment generation activities
- Direct rehabilitation of child labour
- Raising of public awareness
- Survey and evaluation.

Some of the important components are elaborated in the subsequent paragraphs.

**(i) Special Schools (Child Labour Rehabilitation-cum-Welfare Centres):**

Rehabilitation of working children is an important activity, which is the direct responsibility of the project authorities. Under this activity, Child labour special schools (Rehabilitation-cum-Welfare Centres) are to be set up by encouraging voluntary efforts for imparting formal/non-formal education and pre-vocational/craft training. The children in the centres will also be provided with supplementary nutrition, stipend, health care services, etc. These Centres essentially will act as bridge institutions to enable children withdrawn from work to join mainstream education.

**(ii) Awareness Generation:**

Apart from direct rehabilitation of working children, it is also necessary to prevent fresh entry of children to work by arousing and awakening the critical consciousness of the public against the evils of child labour. In order to achieve this' objective, continuous and sustained awareness generation programmes will have to be carried out on regular basis. For this purpose an enhanced budgetary provision amounting upto Rs. 1.25 lakhs per year has been earmarked in respect of each NCLP.

**(iii) Convergence of Services:**

In the Tenth Plan, child labour elimination efforts would be linked with the Scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan of the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD). The intention is to ensure that all children in the age group of 5-8 years get directly linked to the formal school education system through a close, coordinated attempt with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Poverty, apart from illiteracy, being the main cause of child labour, it is necessary to raise the economic standard of the parents of working children by exploiting the synergy of benefits of various schemes under implementation at the district level. A substantial number of parents of working children could be covered under the Department of Rural Development's self-employment and poverty alleviation schemes. In the context of the above objectives concerted, focused and rigorous efforts at converging important activities at the Central Government, State Government and the District level would be needed to be put in place. Similarly, convergence with ongoing schemes of other Departments such as Health, Women and Child Development, Social Welfare, Tribal Welfare, Labour etc

could be critical for the ultimate attainment of the objective of elimination of child labour in a time-bound manner.

#### **(iv) Enforcement Legal Action**

It is felt that a more focused and effective enforcement of the provisions of the Child Labour (Prevention & Regulation) Act, 1986 needs to be put in place in the districts during the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan period. Concerted and serious efforts should be made to enforce the law at the state and district level. In order to achieve this objective, the enforcement machinery will have to be geared up and activated suitably.

#### **6. Operationalisation of child labour special schools**

- In view of the crucial role of education in prevention and elimination of child labour, a component of education is provided in the project. As the working children are from diverse backgrounds, skill and experience, it is important that the children in the special schools are imparted education on a formal/non-formal pattern with a condensed syllabus for a maximum period of 3 years after which the children are expected to reach a level of 5th standard. The children are also to be imparted craft and pre-vocational training as considered appropriate to their age. After completion of formal/non-formal education, the children are expected to join the formal stream of education in the 6th standard. Some children, who are capable of being mainstreamed before the completion of three years of education, could be encouraged to be mainstreamed earlier than the prescribed maximum period of three years. Flexibility in this regard could be exercised by the concerned NCLP. The choice of Vocational Training should be available to those children who wish to take up skill based work after the initial training in the special schools. Apart from education, children are also provided with a package of welfare inputs such as supplementary nutrition and health-care through special schools to meet their special needs.
- Focus of enrollment should be on children in the age group of 9-14 years. The working children in the lower age group should be motivated to join formal school system (primary and upper primary) directly.
- The curriculum, course content and textual material should be finalized at the District/State level by associating the SCERT, DIET, DRU and non-governmental organizations working in the field of child labour and other related areas. The State Governmental/District Child Labour

Project Societies have the freedom to decide the ground conditions. The training of volunteers in the form of a brief orientation programme should be organized at the district level with the help of DIETs and DRUs.

- Considering the nature of work the children are employed in, it is necessary to ensure that the special schools are run in a manner so as to effectively prevent children from working in prohibited employment and enable them to be mainstreamed into the regular education system. Therefore, the Project Societies/Implementing Agencies are permitted some amount of flexibility, in terms of timing and duration of the special schools with a view to ensure reduction in the number of children going to work.

**7.** The child labour project has a specific time frame and it will not continue indefinitely. The teaching volunteers for the special schools and other staff of the project, society should be engaged with the clear understanding/agreement that they will be paid only a consolidated amount of honorarium for their services which are more or less voluntary in nature and in no case be considered permanent. No regular scale of pay is prescribed. There should not be any centralized system of recruitment of teaching volunteers at the district head quarters level. The volunteers should be from the local community/village to be selected and engaged by the Implementing Agencies/NGOs. The main criteria for their selection would be their commitment to the cause of community service. Minimum level of qualification of the teaching volunteers could be prescribed by the project societies.

The timing and the duration of the Centres are flexible. The timing of the centres should be adjusted to suit the convenience of the children who are the target group under the project. While the duration of the special schools could be around five hours a day, the duration of duty of each of the project personnel/volunteers should not exceed five hours a day to enable them to work elsewhere also. While deciding on the timing, duration and working hours of the volunteers, the project society must keep in view the convenience of the target group and the objective of the project, which is sought to be achieved.

**8.** If a situation arises where building and other infrastructure for the special schools are not available in a particular area in the district, the special schools could also be run in the buildings of the regular schools after the regular school hours are over,

9. Certain important and enhanced parameters that introduced in the scheme **now** are as under:

**(i) Stipend:** In the existing arrangement, the stipend of Rs.100/- per child per month was being disbursed every month. As per the revised scheme, the monthly stipend of Rs.100/- per month per child will be disbursed only after the child is successfully mainstreamed into formal have been system of schooling. Till that period, the amount of stipend will be regularly deposited in the Bank Account of the child. The accumulated stipend amount could be handed over to the child at the time of her/his getting mainstreamed.

**(ii) Nutrition:** The amount for provision of nutrition to the children in the special schools has been doubled from Rs. 2.50/- per child per day to Rs. 5/- per child per day.

**(iii) Health component:** In the existing scheme, there was no separate budgetary provision for any health component to take care of the health- related aspects of the children. In the revised scheme an amount of honorarium (Rs. 5,000/- per month for one doctor for every 20 schools) has been provided to put in place an institutionalized mechanism for regular and periodical effective health care of the children by a doctor.

The NCLP may give clear guidelines to the doctor to the effect that he/she should give more emphasis to the normal growth -related aspects of the child including weight, height etc. A health card in respect of every child also needs to be maintained with all the necessary entries.

**(iv) Vocational Training:** In the existing scheme, there was no separate budgetary provision for the services of any Master Trainer for imparting training to the children/teachers. In the revised scheme, budgetary provision (Rs. 5,000/- for one Master Trainer for each NCLP) has been provided to hire the services of a Master Trainer for each NCLP.

**(v) Training for educational teachers:** In the existing scheme, there was no separate budgetary provision for providing training to the educational teachers. In the revised scheme, budgetary provision has been provided to impart training to the teachers twice during the 10th Plan period.

**(vi)** In the revised Scheme, provision (Rs. 2.75 lakh per survey) has been made to conduct surveys of working children **two times during the 10th Plan period.**

## **10. Project Implementation:**

- The entire project is required to be implemented through a registered society under the Chairmanship of the administrative head of the district namely, District Magistrate/Collector/Dy. Commissioner of the district. Members of the society may be drawn from concerned Government Departments, representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, NGOs, Trade Unions, etc.
- It is necessary to involve suitable voluntary organizations in the implementation of the project, especially in the running of the special schools. However, the project society can itself directly execute some of the programme activities. The project society would draw up its own criteria regarding the eligibility of NGOs for associating them in the project activities.
- The rehabilitation of child labour calls, for a lot of voluntarism and a high level of motivation on the part of those implementing the scheme. Therefore, the running of special schools should be entrusted to good, reliable and reputed non-governmental organizations, including Panchayati Raj institutions and Trade Unions. Experiment of running special schools through small implementing agencies like Yuvak Sangh, Women's Group, Village Club, Youth Club etc. have been found to be successful. Implementing Agencies, with adequate checks and balances, should be encouraged by the project societies to take up running of the special schools. In case adequate number of good NGOs or implementing agencies is not available, the centres could be run by the Project Society only as a temporary measure. However, running of this special school should be progressively passed on to NGOs, and other implementing agencies.

## **11. Monitoring & Evaluation:**

Regular monitoring at the Central, State and district level is important for the effective implementation of the project. At the national level, a Central Monitoring Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of Union Labour Secretary for overall supervision, monitoring and evaluation of various child labour projects. At the District Level, the Chairperson should review the functioning of the project continuously. The functioning of the child labour projects are to be monitored and reviewed at the State level by the State Department of Labour (or any other designated Department). In addition, the State Governments are expected to oversee the enforcement of protective legal provisions and act as a focal

point for child labour issues in the State and be instrumental in the coordination of the developmental programmes for the benefit of the child labour which is an essential part of the National Child Labour Policy. Apart from regular monitoring of the projects, periodic evaluations are required to be undertaken to take mid- course corrective measure and also to assess the overall efficacy of the projects.

## **12. Role of the State Government:**

There are a number of areas in which the intervention of the State Government is essential. Few of them are illustrated below:

- Finalization of uniform curriculum, course content and textual material through involvement of the Department of Education, SCERT, SIET, etc.
- Coordination with the State Education Department for facilitating the enrolment of children passing out of the Special schools/ Rehabilitation Centres into the mainstream education system.
- Finalization of craft and pre-vocational training module for children enrolled in the special schools.
- Ensuring inspection of the child labour projects and sending periodic (at least once a year) inspection reports to the Ministry of Labour.
- Regular interaction with project societies for **ensuring timely submission of Audited Accounts and Utilization Certificates** by the project societies. The State Government must review the progress in the implementation of the child labour programme twice every year.
- Brief training of the volunteers by way of orientation programmes.
- National Child Labour Projects are demonstrative projects, which cover limited number of working children. State Government should' find ways and means for rehabilitating other working children either through their enrolment in the formal system or through any other methods deemed appropriate.

## **13. Funding:**

Since the projects have been taken up in the Central Sector, the entire funding is done by the Central Government (Ministry of Labour). Funds are released to the concerned project societies depending upon

the progress of project activities. The release of funds for a financial year will be made in two equal installments. The first installment for the months of April-September will be released, in case it is proposed to implement! Continue the project in that financial year. The second installment will be sanctioned **after** the receipt of Audited Accounts, Utilization Certificates of the grants released earlier in the previous financial year and a progress report in the prescribed format for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March of the previous financial year.

#### **14. Project staffing and Budget:**

The project society must conform to the approved model budget and any change in the pattern and norms of expenditure either on project personnel or on welfare inputs must be with prior and express approval of the Ministry of Labour, Government of India. The pattern of budget, engagement of personnel/volunteers etc under the existing project should progressively conform to the revised pattern.

#### **15. STRATEGY TO BE ADOPTED DURING THE TENTH PLAN FOR ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR**

- Focused and reinforced action to eliminate child labour in the hazardous occupations by the end of the Plan period.
- Expansion of the NCLPs to additional 150 districts during the Plan.
- Ensuring that the NCLPs have a focused time frame of 5 years with clearly defined targets.
- Linking the child labour elimination efforts with the scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan of the **MHRD** an attempt to ensure that small children in the age group of 5-8 years get directly linked to school and the older children are mainstreamed to the formal education system through the rehabilitation centres. Increased efforts to provide vocational training to the older children
- Strengthening of the formal school mechanism in the endemic child labour areas in the country both in terms of quality and numbers in such a manner as to provide an attractive schooling system to the child labour force and its parents so that motivational levels of both the parents and such children are high and sending these children to school becomes an attractive proposition.
- Effective provision for health care for all children would be made.
- Implementation of the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act would be made much more effective.

- The monitoring system would be further systematized with the close involvement of the State Government to ensure that the project is able to attain its objectives within the given period.
- Equal important would be paid to the aspect of continuous awareness generation through print, folk and electronic media. Requisite training and sensitization of workshops would be conducted for officials at all levels.
- The task of elimination of child labour be placed on the top of the nation's Agenda and given a "Mission Mode".
- Convergence with the ongoing schemes of the Dept. of Education, Rural Development, Health and women & Child Development would be critical for the ultimate attainment of the objective of elimination of child labour in a time bound manner.
- Large-scale involvement of the voluntary organizations at the district level to assist in the running of the NCLP schools. The attempt during this Plan would be to encourage the running of the rehabilitation schools only through accepted and committed NGOs so that the Government machinery is not burdened with running of such schools.