

Children Core Group Meeting

Date : 12.08.2006

Time : 03.50 pm – 06.00 pm

Venue : Front Office, Collectorate, Nagapattinam

Agenda of the meeting was the following: Discussion on

1. Prime Minister's Children Educational Scheme
2. GO 33
3. Home for Children

With a view to chance children participate in discussing their own issues along with NGO representatives, school children were represented in the Children Core Group Meeting for the first time. It has been decided to include children for the further core group meetings. After a self introduction by the participants, Mr Jerald explained the purpose of the meeting in which he explained the agenda pointers in brief and set the forum for exclusive discussions on the same.

Prime Minister's Children Educational Scheme

Mr. Jerald informed the participants of the meeting with Mr Kanthasamy, the Special Deputy Collector (R&R) on Prime Minister's Children Educational Scheme. It had been expressed by the Special Deputy Collector that there were around 12, 000 children on the excluded list, as per the government, who were eligible under the scheme. In order to implement the scheme, Mr Kanthasamy is planning to commission a team comprising School Head Masters, Representatives of Parents' Association and AEO to collect the list of the eligible children. He had also asked Mr Jerald to give a petition for the same.

#GO 33

Various opinions and pointers were discussed on the revised GO 33 for the academic year 2006-2007. Following are the outcome:

- Cheque for reimbursement of fees by the government would be addressed in the name of the individual child
- The revised GO covers three kinds of fees: Special, Tuition and examination
- NGOs were asked to take initiative to reimburse fees for students
- Children were asked to find out students who skip schooling due to the fees issue and inform cases to the NGOs
- The participating children also informed that the children who could not pay fees were asked to kneel down at the schools. Some schools have also not issued receipt for the payment made on fees. Mr Jerald suggested NGOs to collect records of such cases and bring them for next meeting for further action
- It was also reported that few schools, including a school at Tharangapadi misuse students for the benefit of teachers like asking them to purchase kits

- The children reported that uniform given by World Vision to Natarajan Thamayanthi School have not been distributed to the students, owing non-payment of fees. The Core Group decided to ask World Vision to verify the stuff. In addition, the children commented that if any NGO would decide to distribute kits to children, they could distribute directly than giving through a school
- It was decided to print posters on the revised GO 33 for the benefit of the students and place them in the temporary shelters and school campus across the district
- A total of 1000 posters would be printed. AVVAI and LCP took up the responsibility of printing the posters. However, NCRC would provide the back end support for the same
- When asked to comment on the poster printed on GO 33 released previous year, the children commented to increase the font and paste the posters after the independence day as the schools would be cleaning the campus before it

Home for children

Briefing on the development of the initiatives taken so far by the Core Group on home for children, Mr Jerald said that a study report has been presented on homes run by private organizations. He said that the JJ act has to be enforced and a committee involving NGOs and government will have to be formed for monitoring homes. Following points came through the discussion:

- Fifteen out of the 20 homes run in the district have been reported in the study
- Most of these homes provide food alone. Infrastructure and other developmental facilities remain a cause of concern
- The homes have got no guidelines
- Water scarcity in Annai Sathya home was also reported
- When asked about what would be great to have in the home for children, the participating children accounted for play ground and good infra structure
- The children were asked to get in touch with the students who come from homes with a view to understanding their difficulties
- As the JJ board at Mayiladuthurai was going to be regrouped shortly, it was decided to request the District Collector and the Magistrate to select a committee that is committed and accessible and that could work from Nagapattinam at least once a week if not permanently
- Dissatisfaction was also expressed over the watch dog committee existing in the villages for their non-functionalism
- Commenting on the guidelines for the home for children, the participating children suggested to prepare a guideline and get the signature from homes, ask the government to monitor and confiscate homes from the authorities who do not follow the guidelines
- Mr Jerald presented a copy of the guidelines on Home for Children to the Core Group for correction and approval. The NGOs made few suggestions like highlighting child friendly atmosphere in the homes and omit the section that stop

children performing household duties like sweeping and cleaning, with a view to orient them to family life after marriage

- It was also decided to ask opinions from the children in homes and children who are back to community after staying in homes
- In this regard, a group consisting of Ms Revathi, Ms Dhanalakshmi, Sr Mercy, Mr Gopi and Mr Jerald would visit DMI children home and HOPE children home on 18th August. Guidelines would be modified after the visit, incorporating the suggestions made at the Core Group meeting as well as the knowledge gained from the visits

Other Concerns

- ♣ Following the discussion on the Home for Children Mr Jerald informed the group about the get together programme organized for orphan and semi orphan in Tharangambadi by NCRC and SNEHA. He asked the gathering if it was wise to conduct further taluk level get together? The group suggested to go ahead with the meetings as it gives children a forum to release their inner burden
- ♣ Planning meeting for the taluk level children meeting with MLAs for Sirkali taluk will be held on 19th August
- ♣ Mr Jerald informed that two NGOs have contributed towards the Children's Educational Fund so far. He requested other NGOs to contribute at the earliest
- ♣ An application seeking help for 22 school children of Manickampangu for notebooks for an estimate of Rs.2500 was sanctioned by the Core Group. The application was brought by SCORD. AVVAI came forward to help these children
- ♣ All the NGOs were asked to bring a couple of children each for the Core Group Meetings
- ♣ Save the Children informed that ban on children as domestic workers has been made legal by the Indian court

The Children Core Group was tamilised in the following name to go in the posters of the revised GO 33: ***NCRC Kuzhanthaigal Orunginaippu Kuzhu***

Annexure: List of participants

List of participants attending CHILDREN REVIEW MEETING on 12.08.2006
(Saturday) at Front Office, No:313, Collectorate, Nagapattinam

Sl.No	Village/Organisation	Name of the person	Phone/Mobile	E-mail
1	PHOENIX	K.Vengatesh	9894229500	phoenixfedaration@gmail.com
2	Peace Trust	S.Raja	9865772766	peacetrust@vsnl.com
3	SNEHA	V.Kalvi	9894899823	
4	Good Shepherd	Sr.L.Vinnarasi		
5	LCPN	S.Rajan	9842454087	pascalrajan@yahoo.co.in
6	Good shepherd	Sr. Mercy	9840570122	srmercy_ngt@sancharnet.in
7	VANAVIL	Revathi.R	9940301353	revathi.work@gmail.com
8	AVVAI village welfare society	Krishna Kumar	9443317544	avvaikk@yahoo.com
9	Save The Children	Jonakey Dey	9444907970	j.dey@scfukindia.org
10	SNEHA	N.Dhanalakshmi	9443885119	
11	AVVAI	T.Gopi	9894499114	
12	REAL-Plan	Alfred.S.P	9894395115	real@md4.vsnl.net.in

Sl.No	Name of the Student	Name of the NGO	Standard	Name of the school
1	R. Priyathalshini	SNEHA	6	Natarajan Dhamyanthi High School
2	C.Ranjitha	AVVAI	9	Natarajan Dhamyanthi High School