

Sensitization and Prevention of violence against school going



Children in Tamil Nadu

PROJECT OFFICE :

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PHASE - II - Program Report of

Sensitization and Prevention of Violence Against School going Children

January 2017 to January 2018

Introduction:

Sensitization and Prevention of Violence Against School going Children (VASC) in Tamil Nadu is a new initiative that aims to sensitize all Government functionaries engaged with children in School, Hostels and any type of Child Care Institutions or Child related institutions. By monitoring and documenting cases of Child Rights violation against School going children; dissemination of Child Rights Violations reported in Tamil Nadu to the District Level Officials, State Commissions and Institutions; intervention by sending complaints and submitting RTIs to the concerned authorities; undertaking advocacy efforts with Government authorities at district, and state levels working with school going children; by providing legal intervention for and on behalf of victim' children and by undertaking lobbying efforts with Members of the Legislative Assembly for bringing about policy changes through interventions coinciding with the Sessions of the Legislative Assembly.

Project Focus Area:

1. Corporal Punishment
2. Child Marriage
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Discrimination including caste discrimination
5. Child Trafficking and
6. Death and Suicide of children in schools, hostels and institutions directly and indirectly connected with learning.

Objectives:

1. To engage in sensitization and take preventive measures against Violence against Children.
2. To document the incidence of these violations and to increase the number of reported violence against children cases.
3. To closely work with children affected by violence as well as their families, to provide assistance to them to get back to normalcy through counselling and adequate legal advice along with availing access to remedies.
4. To establish a state level 24x7 toll free helpline system to report violations, complaints and seek advice.
5. To capacitate local civil society organizations and individual activists at the grassroots level especially in the project area through a variety of trainings and interventions. To also enable them to stand with and extend solidarity to those children affected by violence and their families through concrete interventions which include advice, legal interventions and rehabilitation.
6. To sensitize the functionaries of the Government directly engaged with children in schools and hostels, lawyers working with the Legal Services Authority particularly at the District and Taluk level. To enhance their knowledge, capacity, skills and engagement with the child victims. To ensure that the perpetrators are duly indicted legally, subjected to departmental disciplinary actions and prosecutions as well.
7. To publish a manual in Tamil on Violence against Children and interventions required to bring justice to the victims to appeal the concerned authorities of the state publish them to be used by officials.
8. To gradually attempt and replicate this pilot project at the state level.
9. To advocate policy changes within the state through interventions with authorities who are engaged in; School Education, Juvenile Justice related institutions such as Child Welfare Committees, authorities engaged in registration and monitoring of hostels for children within and outside Government, and with the Taluk / District Legal Services Authorities etc.

Geographical Coverage:

S.No	Name of Region	Name of District	No of Blocks
1	Thoothukudi Region	Ramanathapuram	5
		Thoothukudi	5
2	ThiruchirapalliRegion	Perambalur	5
		Thiruchirapalli	5
3	Dharmapuri Region	Dharmapuri	5
		Salem	5
Total		6	30

I. Activities of the Program

1. State Level Capacity Building Program to the Project Team

The State-Level Capacity Building Program to the Project Team on Violence against Children has organized from 9th – 11th July, 2016 held at Cluny Provincialate, Trichy District. The project team was recruited in this training after inviting the qualifying candidate to this training to assess their performance. The number of participants were 30. The participants of this State-Level Capacity Building Program were oriented with the Child Rights Violations, Human Rights Violation and how to identify both, along with Laws relating to Children.



2. Capacity Building Program to the block level monitoring team on VAC:

The objective of the Capacity Building program was to invite people working at the grassroots level in the project districts and specifically the activists from the NGOs, Citizens for Human Rights Movement (CHRM) and individual activists who were selected by the Regional Coordinators and their participation was approved by the State Program Coordinator.

The participants of the Capacity Building program were oriented with the Child Rights Violations, Human Rights Violation and how to identify both, along with the Laws relating to Children. In the interest of building their capacity to provide effective intervention in cases

of Violence against Children, hands on session for Monitoring, Fact finding, Report Writing and Complaint writing was conducted. Special care was taken in choosing the most qualified Resource Persons to handle every session in the Capacity Building Programs. The most experienced and capable people were chosen.

The details about the Districts covered in the Capacity Building Program, with the districts covered in each of the training, number of participants and location is mentioned in the table below.

Training Batch	Date	Venue	Districts Covered	No of Participants			
				Female	Male	TG	Total
Batch IV	14 th & 15 th July 2017	Hotel Tilakam Nest, Yercaud, Salem	Dharmapuri Salem	10	36	-	46
Batch V	28 & 29 th July 2017	Cluny Provincialate, Trichy	Trichy Perambalur	14	27	-	41
Batch VI	29 th & 30 th August 2017	CESCI, Madurai	Tuticorin & Ramanathapuram	10	12	3	25
Total Beneficiaries				34	75	3	112

Key Learnings:

During the Capacity Building Programs: Laws relating to child rights were introduced to the participants. A primal understanding of the laws was brought about in the participants. Acts like:

- a) Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.
- b) Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.
- c) Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012.
- d) Persons with Disabilities (Equal Protection of Rights and Full participation) Act, 1996.
- e) Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 2015.
- f) The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Right to Information Act, 2005.

- g) The participants gave positive feedback on how this Capacity Building Program sets itself apart by providing the most logical information on legal intervention when dealing with Violence Against Children. They added that this training and resource material had made them aware of the various legal provisions for Children who are victims of various forms of violence.

3. Online monitoring of Violence Against School Going Children – On a Daily Basis:

In the Project Office, staff have been deputed to perform “**Online Monitoring on a Daily Basis**”. The Daily Newspapers monitored during online monitoring, the following mentioned English Newspapers; The Hindu, The New Indian Express, Deccan Chronicle, Deccan Herald, Times of India and the following mentioned Tamil Newspapers; The Hindu-Tamil, Daily Thanthi, Dinamalar, Dinakaran, Dinamani, Theekathir, Tamil Murasu, Malai Murasu and Malai Malar. Additionally the weekly Tamil magazines such as; Kumudham Reporter, Junior Vikadan and Puthiya Thalaimurai are also monitored. The news items collected from the above mentioned publications are all on the types of Violence against Children and School going Children.

Monthly Intimations Data Recorded from Jan 2017 to Jan 2018

S. No	Type of Violence	No. of Incidents												Total	
		Jan 17	Feb 17	Mar 17	Apr 17	May 17	Jun 17	Jul 17	Aug 17	Sep 17	Oct 17	Nov 17	Dec 17		Jan 18
1	Attempt to Murder	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	4
2	Attempt to Suicide	3	0	0	1	0	2	3	1	1	5	4	2	25	
3	Child Marriage	5	18	12	10	8	40	8	10	5	8	3	4	145	
4	Child Trafficking / Kidnap	5	16	9	12	12	21	17	20	13	23	13	13	186	
5	Corporal Punishment	3	5	3	2	0	5	10	4	7	4	2	5	55	
6	Discrimination	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	5	0	1	-	1	13	
7	Death	9	10	6	27	43	65	28	44	7	8	9	7	271	
9	Murder	5	1	0	1	2	6	1	4	2	3	3	1	31	
10	Suicide	10	7	18	14	26	26	10	12	18	13	14	10	190	
11	Sexual Assault	20	37	57	29	29	42	7	20	10	11	16	9	304	
12	Sexual Harassment	5	4	8	8	7	11	18	8	8	8	8	14	116	
13	Other*	20	32	35	22	24	70	68	26	13	7	6	4	339	
14	Death due to Dengue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	91	38	12	0	172	
	Total	86	134	150	126	154	288	170	160	175	129	90	70	1851	

These news items are to be catalogued and sorted into various categories, one of them being Violence Against School Going Children (VASC) for which special attention is given while collecting intimations. These VASC intimations are then sent to the State Program Coordinator on a daily basis. The intimation received from the Online monitoring Staff is then reviewed by the State Program Coordinator to decide on the extent of intervention that the Violence against Children and School going Children will initiate. The monthly intimation data are disseminated to concerned Government Officials through email once every month. From January 2017 to January 2018 the number of VAC Violations recorded is 1784.

4. Intervention Strategy:

After the process of Daily Online Monitoring on Violence against Children and School going Children's issues is done, it is recorded and filed under its respective category.

The project team undertakes intervention in the following strategies:

A. Sending Complaints:

Intimations received from all over the state of Tamil Nadu are reviewed by the State Program Coordinator who then decides which of the intimations are to be sent as a complaint. The complaints are then drafted by the Legal Assistant and finalized by the Law Officer. The finalized complaints are sent to all the concerned officials.

B. Fact Finding:

Intimations received specifically from the project districts are reviewed by the State Program Coordinator who then decides which of the intimations require our immediate intervention through Fact Finding. After which the Regional Coordinators are assigned to undertake Fact Finding along with the trained and experienced Child Rights activists. Additionally the trained Child Rights activists also undertake Fact Finding on VASC issues.

C. Intervention with the District Level Authorities:

After a Fact Finding is done, the VASC-Desk personnel exert pressure on the concerned authorities by filing complaints asking for their immediate action. They also file an application to the concerned authorities under Right To Information Act (RTI) asking for the details related to the case.

5. Complaints sent to the Child related Authorities:

From January 2017 to January 2018, as indicated in the table below, 163 complaints were dispatched to the concerned authorities.

S. No	Type of Violence	No. of Incidents												Total
		Jan 17	Feb 17	Mar 17	Apr 17	May 17	Jun 17	Jul 17	Aug 17	Sep 17	Oct 17	Nov 17	Dec 17	
1	Corporal Punishment	2	0	3	2	0	2	3	0	3	-	2	1	18
2	Child Traffic / Kidnap	2	2	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-	10
3	Child Marriage	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	1
4	Discrimination	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	-	2	-	5
5	Death	8	3	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	-	2	-	17
6	Murder	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	-	-	-	1
7	Suicide	5	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	-	-	-	13
8	Sexual Assault	6	6	8	4	2	1	2	0	2	-	1	-	33
9	Sexual Harassment	0	0	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	-	-	-	7
10	Other	8	8	10	3	3	7	7	0	9	-	3	-	58
	Total	32	22	30	13	6	13	17	0	18	-	10	1	163

6. Fact Finding:

The Regional Coordinators are assigned to undertake Fact Finding along with the trained and experienced Child Rights activists. The following table contains the details of the 57 fact findings done in the project districts in the months of January 2017 to January 2018.

S. No	Type of Violence	Fact Finding Details												Total					
		Jan17	Feb 17	Mar 17	Apr 17	May17	Jun 17	Jul17	Aug17	Sep 17	Oct 17	Nov 17	Dec 17		Jan 18				
1.	Corporal Punishment	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	8
2.	Child Traffick / Kidnap	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
3.	Child Marriage	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
4.	Discrimination	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
5.	Death	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	6
6.	Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
7.	Suicide	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	8
8.	Sexual Assault	1	0	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	1	13
9.	Sexual Harassment	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
10.	Other	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	9
	Total	5	1	3	2	5	3	6	8	5	8	5	8	5	4	2	2	57	

Annexure 1 - Details of the Cases.

Annexure 2 - Details of Interventions made at District Level apart from Fact Finding.

7. Sensitization and awareness program on Violence Against Children:

VASC Desk organized the 109 awareness program in project districts on violence against children the for the months of January 2017 January 2018 in Collaboration with Local NGOs, Activists & District Level Officials to School students, College students, publics, Self Help Group members etc.

VASC desk organized the 40 campaign meetings in project districts along with Local NGOs, Activists & District Level Officials.

8. RTI Application on VAC Related Issues:

The following table contains the status of interventions by sending applications under the Right To Information Act (RTI) seeking information related to the project focus area from the project districts and other districts in Tamil Nadu for the months of January 2017 to January 2018 by the Legal Assistant with the guidance of the Executive Director, Mentor, State Program Coordinator and Law Officer.

S. No	Application sent to the concerned authorities under Right To Information Act (RTI) filed Regarding	No. of Applications Sent				Total
		July' 17	Aug' 17	Nov' 17	Dec' 17	
1.	Particulars about the copy of the original appointment order of all Chairperson & Members of CWC, Annual Reports district wise, Annual Audit report to Directorate of Social Defence.	1	-	-	-	1
2.	Particulars about the copy of his original appointment order of all DCPO, Annual Reports district wise, Annual Audit report to Directorate of Social Defence.	1	-	-	-	1
3.	Particulars about the all district Juvenile Justice Board regarding the sanctioned strength of the staff, and their appointment order, Annual Reports district wise, Annual Audit report to Directorate of Social Defence.	1	-	-	-	1
4.	Particulars about the Trichy district CWC chairpersons and their appointment order to Trichy Collector	-	1	-	-	1
5.	Particulars about the how many teachers have been suspended from November 2012 to October 2017 to all Inspector of Matriculation Schools in Tamil Nadu.	-	-	15	-	15

6.	Particulars about the how many teachers have been suspended from November 2012 to October 2017 to all district Chief Education Officer in Tamil Nadu.	-	-	32	-	32
7.	Particulars about the how many teachers have been suspended from November 2012 to October 2017 to all district Elementary Education Officer in Tamil Nadu.	-	-	-	32	32
8.	Particulars about the copy of the report of the Juvenile Justice Committee to High Court of Madras.	-	-	-	1	1
9.	Particulars about the copy of the G.O.D NO.198 to Directorate of Social Defense	-	-	-	1	1
Total		3	1	47	34	85

II. A Study on Status of Minimum Standards at Government Children Homes / Hostels:

The VASC Project has undertaken "A Study on Status of Minimum Standards at Government Children Homes / Hostels" in Madurai District with the project staff and intern from the colleges. The Minimum Standards taken from the Juvenile Justice (care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016. The report was prepared by the State Program Coordinator and it was sent to the Director for his comments.

Objective of the study:

1. To find out the status of the mandates as per the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016 in the selected Government recognized homes and Hostels.
2. Study focuses on the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016 and if it has been implemented in Government recognized Children homes and Hostels run by the departments of Adi Dravidar Welfare (ADW), De Notified Community (DNC), Backward Caste and Most Backward Castes (MBC) and if children in these Homes and Hostels are cared for in every aspect.
3. This study focused on the status of the following mandates that have been listed in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016 and if they are being followed in the chosen Government recognized Homes and Hostels in and around Madurai.
 - a. Staffing pattern

- b. Physical infrastructure
- c. Sanitation and Hygiene
- d. Nutrition and Diet Scale
- e. Medical Care
- f. Vocational Training
- g. Recreational Facilities

Methodology:

1. A questionnaire detailing the mandates from the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016 was designed.
2. Government recognized Children homes and Hostels run by the departments of Adi Dravidar Welfare (ADW), De-Notified Community (DNC), Backward Caste and Most Backward Castes (MBC), in and around Madurai district were chosen for this study.
3. Student volunteers from Law College, Madurai & Law College - Trichy, American College, and Lady Doak College carried out this study. An orientation on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016 was given to the volunteer along with the legal mandate enlisted in the Act. After the first day's visit to the Government recognized homes and Hostels, the volunteers gave their feedback after which the questionnaire was finalized.

General observations:

1. The rooms for the children are not so adequate and spacious, in one of the Child Care Institutions not all the dormitories were in use, whereas some dormitories were overcrowded.
2. The sleeping conditions are not suitable due to lack of mattresses, in one of the Child Care Institutions the dormitories are not ventilated and children sleep under the trees.
3. Toilets and sanitary facilities are in bad condition, they are not kept clean and are in pathetic condition in most of the Child Care Institutions, whereas the few others were observed to maintain their toilets and bathrooms in a hygienic condition.
4. Recreation facilities like playground, library, and play materials are not provided to most Child Care Institutions, only a few have recreational facilities.

5. A couple of Child Care Institutions have been observed to have regularly scheduled Medical check-ups for the children.
6. Water pipes were found to be leaking during the time of observation.
7. No Library but there was few books on a shelf.
8. The expected Respondent was not in the Child Care Institutions during their working hours; hence there was difficulty in acquiring accurate information on the Physical Infrastructure of the Child Care Institution.

In some instances the Cook at the Child Care Institution was the Respondent due to the absence of the Person in-charge.

III. Staff Review Meetings:

Monthly Staff meetings are held, where the State Program Coordinator, Law Officer review the work and progress of the Violence Against School Going Children project staff.

S.No	Staff Review and planning meeting date	Participants
1	4.1.2017 & 5.1.2017	State program Coordinator, Law Officer, Documentation Officer & Three regional coordinators
2	10.3.2017	State program Coordinator, Law Officer, Documentation Officer & Three regional coordinators
3	12.4.2017	State program Coordinator, Law Officer, Documentation Officer & Three regional coordinators
4	10.7.2017	State program Coordinator, Law Officer, Documentation Officer & Three regional coordinators
5	8.9.2017	State program Coordinator, Law Officer, Documentation Officer & Three regional coordinators
6	10.11.2017	State program Coordinator, Law Officer, Documentation Officer & Three regional coordinators
7	29.1.2018	State program Coordinator, Law Officer, Documentation Officer & Three regional coordinators

The State Program Coordinator, Regional Coordinators, Law Officer, Legal Assistant and the Documentation Officer gathered to review the performance of each of the staff in their roles, by analyzing their performance and challenges faced while on the job. Towards the last session of the meeting, an action plan for the next quarter was drafted and decided upon. The same was presented to the Director for his review, approval and guidance.

Plan of Action for the Next Quarter:

1. Action Plan for the months of –February 18 & March 18

S. No	Activities	Decision Taken
1	Orientation Program on VAC to lawyers in association with legal aid.	
2	Publication of IEC materials like Posters, stickers, etc. 12 posters and stickers will be published.	Decided to publish Poster and sticker materials on VASC Issues
3	One Day Sensitization Program for the School Head Masters on Corporal Punishment, Sexual Assault and other VAC issues to 50 Members	We have decided to organize this activity along with the Tamil Nadu Government Education Department.

IV. Case Stories/ Impact Stories:

1. Class 7 abandoned student being sexually exploited by her caretaker:

On 25.01.2017, Gomathi teacher at a school in Therigai Government Higher Secondary School, Krishnagiri informed us of an incident where a Class 7 student, namely Ramya aged about 12 was being continually sexually assaulted by her caretaker, an elderly man named Seenappan from Krishnagiri District. The parents of the girl had abandoned her about 3-4 years ago, Seenappan has been taking care of her since. The girl had told her teacher in tears that she was being sexually abused since she was in Class 5.

Impact: Based on the Complaint sent by VASC to the Child Welfare Committee Chairperson, Krishnagiri, Mr. Vincent Sundaraj, the victim Ramya was rescued and lodged in another hostel and made to continue her education in another school.

2. 28 Class 10 students issued TC after being branded as average students:

28 students from Class 10 in St. Xaviers Boy's Higher Secondary School, Tuticorin, were issued a Transfer Certificate (TC) by the school, as they do not do well academically and the school to show a 100% pass percentage had issued TC.

Impact: The petition was submitted to the District Collector, Tuticorin, Chief Education Officer (CEO), Child Welfare Committee, District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), Tuticorin and

Childline for action. Due to the persistent efforts taken up by the Regional Coordinator and the Retainer Lawyer, the students were made to rejoin school.

3. A class 11 student sexually assaulted by PET teacher:

Cynthia, 16 a Class 11 student from Bishop Caldwell Higher Secondary School, Tuticorin was sexually assaulted by her Physical Education Teacher, Muthukumarasamy alias William, 29 on 03.02.2017 in Namakkal when she was in State Level Fencing Meet. The petition was submitted to the District Collector, Tuticorin, Chief Education Officer (CEO), Child Welfare Committee, District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), Tuticorin and Childline. The teacher was suspended.

Impact: The petition was submitted to the District Collector, Tuticorin, Chief Education Officer (CEO), Child Welfare Committee, District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), Tuticorin and Childline. The teacher was suspended

4. Girl rescued from bonded labor:

Rexona, 16 was working as a bonded labourer at a doctor Nawaz Sharif's house in Palacode. The girl was rescued from his house on 27.02.2017, and the Childline officials on receiving the information had gone to the spot and rescued her. The girl was found to have multiple scars on her body and her head was forcefully shaved by her master.

Impact: Intimation was given to the Childline officials who had rescued her and lodged her in a Children's Home for her safety.

5. Class 11 student child marriage stopped:

Durga, 16 daughter of Shanmugavel from Sridevimangalam in Manachanallur block in Trichy district, is a Class 11 student at the Padalur Government Higher Secondary School. The girl was to be married to a youth from Vellore district at Peragambi temple on 07.04.2017. The headmaster had informed the Regional Coordinator about the child marriage.

Impact: The Regional Coordinator after receiving information from the Headmaster had gone to the girls house and warned them against marrying off their daughter before she was 18 years of age. The marriage was stopped.

6. **A class 7 student sexually assaulted:**

Class 7 student from the Narayanan Middle School, which is a Government aided school in Yellainayakanpatti near Deivaseyapuram in Thoothukudi district was sexually assaulted by the Headmaster of her school named Senthil Arumugam, 49. The parents of the girl had lodged a complaint with the Pudukottai All Women's Police Station. Based on the complaint, the Police have registered a case and are investigating.

Impact: Complaint was filed with the Childline, a complaint was filed with the Pudukottai AWPS and Headmaster Senthil Arumugam was suspended.

7. **Class 10 students prevented from writing exams:**

Students of Government aided Ponnaiah Higher Secondary School in Palakkarai, Trichy district, 15 of the students were not allowed to write their exams. A petition was submitted to the CEO urging action in this regard.

Impact: Petition was submitted to the CEO urging action in this regard requesting re-enrolment of school children in the school.

8. **Class 1 student denied Transfer Certificate:**

Yuva Prakash, 5 son of Karpagam and Amudha from Tiruverumbur in Trichy district, a Class 1 student at Chellamal Matriculation Higher Secondary School nearby under the 25% reservation RTE Act where the mother of the boy also works. The boy wanted to be transferred to another school, but the Principal of the school Bhagavathiappan had denied him the Transfer Certificate since he was under the 25% reservation of RTE act. The Principal demanded fees for the free education availed by the boy.

Impact:The Regional Coordinator had submitted a petition via the NGO Federation that the schools are misusing the RTE Act with the Inspector of Matriculation Schools (IMS). The IMS had then contacted the Headmaster who then assured that the TC will be issued.

9. **Child Marriage stopped:**

Anushya, 17 daughter of Sekar, from Uttathur in Lalgudi block in Trichy. The girl was to be married to a man named Rengaraj, 32 son of Rathinam from Alagiyamanavalam in Manachanallur block in Trichy district. They were arranged to be married at a Sri Adhinayaka Perumal Temple, Gopurapatti on 29.05.2017.

Impact: The Regional Coordinator on 28.05.2017 had received information and had informed the DWSO who had intervened and stopped the marriage on 28.05.2017 night.

10. Class 7 student wrongfully booked under Cr.PC:

A Class 7, student aged 13 from Allikulam, Pudukottai in Thoothukudi district was asleep in his house. The Pudukottai Police Station had registered a case against him under 107 of Cr. PC that he had disturbed the public peace. The Police had booked a case against the boy under false accusations in the context of an ongoing temple feud among the two major communities in the village. The Police had booked and had also summoned the boy to the RDO court.

Impact: Intimation was submitted to the DCPU and Childline, due to which the newspapers had picked up the issue and had published the incident. The Juvenile Justice Board and the Magistrate Thiru.Annamalai had taken *suo-moto* cognizance and have registered a FIR against the concerned Pudukottai Police inspector Shanthakumari.

11. Class 6 student denied admission under 25% reservation under RTE:

Bhagyashree, 10 daughter of Vetricurugan from Sameervias Nagar near Thalamuthunagar in Thoothukudi, was seeking admission into Class 6 at St. Aloysius School in Thoothukudi under 25 % RTE reservation. The school had denied the girl admission. After intervention the Thoothukudi CEO, the girl was admitted into the school.

Impact: Intimation was given to the Thoothukudi CEO and the girl was admitted under 25 % RTE reservation into the school.

12. Class 12 student denied TC:

Sankar Eshwari, 17 from Ottapidaram in Thoothukudi district, student of Class 12 at Victoria Girls Higher Secondary School in Thoothukudi was denied her Transfer Certificate. After the Headmistress had received a complaint regarding this, the girl was issued her TC.

Impact: Intimation and a petition were submitted to the CEO and the Headmistress. After which the girl was issued her TC.

13. Child Marriage reported:

Muthulakshmi, 16 daughter of Lakshamana Perumal from Thoothukudi was married to Mariappan, 22 at Davisnagar on 14.06.2017. The Violence Against School going Children

Regional Coordinator had intervened and reported the marriage, a complaint was filed at the Thoothukudi All Women's Police Station. The girl was separated from the family and lodged in Muthukuviyal Children's Home in Thoothukudi.

Impact: Intimation was given to the Childline and the Thoothukudi AWPS. The marriage was stopped.

14. Child Marriage stopped:

Dharani daughter of Ramachandran from Top Sengattupatti studying in Government Tribal residential school in Topsengattupatti. Last ten days she did not come to school. The girl's parents had arranged the marriage for her. Finally they stopped the marriage.

Impact: The Regional Coordinator after receiving information from the Headmaster had gone to the girls house and warned them against marrying off their daughter before she was 18 years of age. The marriage was stopped.

15. School Management refused to issue the TC:

Paranitha and Paranika from Kannakullam studied in Panchayat Union Middle school Kannakullam. The girls family members had planned to move to another place. So they asked TC from the school. The school HM refused to give the T.C.

Impact: The Regional Coordinator had submitted a petition via the NGO Federation that the schools are misusing the RTE Act. After our intervention, they issued the T.C to her.

16. Child Marriage Held:

A 15 year old girl from Karimanagalam was forced to marry the boy on 3.9.17. She is studying 10th standard in Periyampatti government school. After the marriage she went to the school, but was not willing to go back home. So her teacher and her friends informed the Social welfare officer. They rushed to the spot and conducted the enquiry. They registered a case against the boy and she was handed over to the children's home.

Impact: The Regional Coordinator had received information and had informed the District Collector who had intervened and recovered the child.

17. A game of cricket turns awry for a 12 year old:

P. Vigneshwaraan son of Perumal of Nallur Kandampalayam near Thiruchengode was one among the unsuspecting adolescents. They were on the school grounds for cricket

coaching with the PE teacher Kuppuraj. It was the teachers turn to bat and teach. The bat hit the boy square on the head, injuring him grievously. He who had fallen unconscious by then was immediately rushed to the Salem government Mohan Kumaramangalam medical college hospital. The boy was severely injured with internal bleeding. The case has been booked against the teacher, under 338 of IPC.

Impact: The Regional Coordinator had registered a Complaint to the CEO, and Police stations, after our intervention they filed the case under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 2016. Compensation was given to the boys family.

V. Impact of the Program:

1. Federation of Violence Against Children (VAC) was formed by the NGOs and Movements working for child protection and child rights in 6 districts.
2. The School students who participated in the sensitization programs came to know various violations on Child Rights.
3. Victims come forward and express their issues to the respective authorities with the help of awareness programs like training in school, sensitization and campaign meetings.
4. We have sent more than 274 complaints to the respective government authorities including the State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) and Mr. Henri Tiphagne's meeting with the Chairperson of SCPCR, which helped SCPCR to develop their understanding of many VASC issues and they get started to take action.
5. The district level child protection officials are pressurized by the federation to take proper action.

VI. Challenges:

1. The Regional Coordinator for Trichy & Perambalur districts had organized the district level Silent Protest outside the District Child Protection Office, in Trichy with participants from other NGOs and individual activists. Due to misunderstanding over taking, photos outside the District Child Protection Officer's office which was situated in the vicinity of a Women's Home, the silent protesters were enquired by the Police at the KK Nagar Police Station, Trichy. Our retainer lawyer and senior advocate, Mr.Martin Susairaj from Trichy had sent two lawyers to sort out the issue in addition to the State Program Coordinator who spoke to the Sub-inspector at the Police station over the phone to explain the situation and sorted out the misunderstanding. The participants are now reluctant to come forth and participate in the same event. This is a potential challenge to overcome for the Regional Coordinators to re-build the rapport with the NGOs and the individual activists.
2. Our Thoothukudi District Lawyer Athisayakumar has been booked under false criminal case registered under Crime No 4 of 2017 in the All Women Police station Thoothukudi u/s 354, 509 IPS r/w Sec 4 of the Women indecent representation Act, for a complaint, he registered with the District Collector against the PT teacher in the Sexual Harassment issue of Class 10 student in Bishop Caldwell School in Thoothukudi. Thus, there is an eminent threat for not only the VAC Desk field staff, but also to those associated with us in this case our retainer lawyer Athisayakumar. In response to this challenge Human Rights Defenders Forum in Thoothukudi had organised a protest meeting on 25.03.2017, during this protest meeting representatives from various political parties had taken part and extended their solidarity against this injustice.
3. It is to be noted that has an additional challenge the organizers had difficulty because the police officials withdrew their permission for public protest on the day that the protest was to take place. Thus the organizers were forced to conduct the protest meeting in a hall. End of the day the district police authority filed a false case against Mr.Henri for disturbing public by sticking a poster in Thoothukudi city.
4. Most of the marriage ceremony takes place during the night time. If we pass the information about child marriage to the respective officials, they will take neither

quick nor early action to stop it at once. Simply responds that officials are not provided with vehicles to travel at the night-time. On the other hand, if we stopped it by way of our resilient and constant effort they would simply move to the nearby states like Karnataka, Andhra and got married.

5. Girl children below 18 are often kidnapped or run off with their loved one. If we lodge complaint against the offenders the police warn and threaten the parents of the girl children that the name of the girl will come out in the newspapers which will cause disrespect to your family. The inaction of the police favours the offenders who are discharged from the cases.
6. The work effort of DCPU is not appreciable. If we lodge complaint they will neither take immediate action, nor carry out fact finding. Likewise, if the children were affected by the police they would send no grievance letter to the respective higher officials.
7. DCPU by no means respects NGOs. In an ill-mannered way they treat the NGOs. If we ask about the course of action of any complaint, they will simply respond, who are you to ask questions against us?
8. Most of the government officials are reluctant to take action against the teachers who accused of sexual assault and sexual harassment against school going children though we had given complaints to them.
9. Police officials are not aware of POCSO Act and hence not taking proper action, moreover, they consciously concentrate on compromising the cases, if the victims refuse to compromise they are threatened by the police. Obviously police take action in favour of the perpetrators.

VII. Photo Documentation:

Sensitization and awareness program on Violence Against Children

Awareness on Violence Against School going Children on 23.01.2017 in Alathoor block of Perambalur district.



Awareness on VASC on 6.10.17 in Modal School, Karimangalam- Dharmapuri District.



Observed Girl children's day along with local Ngo's on 11.10.17 in Government Girl's Higher Secondary School , Dharmapuri District



**VASC Training Program to “Health Nurses in Primary Health Centre”, Ammapalyam,
Perambalur on 5.8.17**



**Awareness on Violence against School going Children on 16.8.17 in Panchyat Union
Middle School, Somaresanpettai – Trichy District**



VAC awareness trainings to NGO'S volunteers in Ramanathapuram district on 25.9.17



Observed Girl children's day along with Police officials on 11.10.17 in Government Girl's Higher Secondary School - Manachanallur, Trichy District



District Level Observance of Children's Week Program organized at Trichy Railway

Junction in collaboration with Raliway Police & Child Line on 17.11.2017



Child Marriage awareness program in Government Girls Higher Secondary School,

Thippampatti on 27.11.2017, Dharmapuri District.



27-11-2017 12:08

Child Marriage, awareness program to Self Help Group Members On 7.12.2017 in

Dharmapuri District



Organised the Protest Meeting for Condemning registered the false case against

Adv.Athisayakumar on 23.3.2017 at Bell Hotel, Thoothukudi.

