

# Let's Stop Child Labour - National Child Labour Project Scheme in India and Its Impact

DR. SAMIR KUMAR NANDA

*Programme Manager, National Child Labour Project, Labour & Employment, Government of India.*

**Abstract-** *Child labour problem is very common in the more developing countries. The economic exploitation of children in India including Odisha State has always been an area of concern. Most children work in highly exploitative conditions and all are deprived of even the most minimal educational facilities. Nobody or organizations except the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) has taken interest for the rehabilitation of child labours in Odisha including Western Odisha. This article highlights how NCLP scheme plays an important role in India especially in Odisha and Western Odisha for the welfare of child labour and parents and to reduce the magnitude of child labour.*

**Indexed Terms-** *Odisha, Western Odisha, NCLP, Mainstreaming, Child Labour, Special Training Centre*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The problem of child labour is a global issue and torment of all developing countries. This problem is little higher in the developing country like India. When children participate and contribute to the labour force, either due to poverty or illiteracy or lack of sensitization, the situation demands to locate them, to bring them into mainstream socio economic system and to make them stand as the partner of development. This phenomenon is persisting in the backward states like Odisha due to poor socio economic condition of the people who are living below the poverty line. Circumstances compel the little children to discontinue their studies and engage themselves in certain work with or without the knowledge of their parents. When the poverty stricken families are in quest of employment and frequently shift from one place to another, their children live with them in the workplace. It is a matter of concern that, in spite of continuous effort,

some of our children are engaged in Agrarian, manufacturing and service sector. Besides, children are also engaged in other sectors.

## II. OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

It is an empirical-analytical study. The aims of this research study were-

1. To analyse the magnitude of child labour in India, Odisha and Western Odisha.
2. To study in details the provisions of NCLP scheme & its applications for rehabilitation of child labour.
3. To analyze the beneficiaries under the scheme.
4. To find out the effectiveness of the NCLP scheme in Odisha and Western Odisha.
5. To draw conclusions about the resources invested in the scheme, their impacts to put forward suggestions.

The data for the study were collected both from the primary and secondary sources. A cross-section of Labour Department Officials, beneficiary Child Labours, Parents of the child labours and different NGOs functioning in the area constituted primary sources.

The secondary sources included files, records and documents of the Departments, NCLP Offices of all districts. Other source through which relevant data were collected was books, journals, website, and newspapers and also visiting different libraries and institutions.

## III. MAGNITUDE OF CHILD LABOUR

Most of the official estimates of child labour in India are based on Labour Force Survey of National Sample Survey Organization and Decadal Census. Although these sources capture a wide range of data

such as nature of work, status and sector of employment, etc. at a highly disaggregated level, many of the work areas performed by children usually do not get captured under the definition of 'work' adopted by these sources.

Child Labour Identified in different Census in India

Census Year	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Child Labour	10,753,985	13,640,870	11,285,349	12,591,667	43,53,247
Trend		26% (+)	25% (-)	12% (+)	65% (-)

(Source-Census of India)

#### IV. NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR POLICY

In February, 1979, the Government of India set up a Committee, headed by Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy to enquire into the causes leading to and the problems arising out of the employment of children and to suggest suitable measures for their protection and welfare. The problem of child labour received special emphasis in 1979 following, the submission of the Gurupadaswamy Committee report on Child Labour. Government of India implemented The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986. On 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1987 Government of India announced National Child Labour Policy during the Seventh Plan Period following the Gurupadaswamy Committee Report. The National Child Labour Policy was formulated with the basic objective of suitably rehabilitating the children withdrawn from employment and to reduce the incidence of child labour in areas where there is a known concentration of child labour.

The policy consists of three main ingredients:

Legal Action Plan-

Focusing of general development programmes:-

Project based plan of Action:-Under this plan National Child Labour Projects were started for Identification, Rehabilitation and mainstreaming of

working children in hazardous works in the nine districts of five states as follows-

S	Place	State	Year	Special Schools	Child labour rehabilitated.
1	Sivakasi	Tamil Nadu	1986	27	1800
2	Jaipur	Rajasthan	1988	20	1000
3	Mandsaur	Madhya Pradesh	1988	08	600
4	Markapur	Andhra Pradesh	1988	20	1000
5	Mirzapur	Uttar Pradesh	1988	20	1000
6	Ferozabad	Uttar Pradesh	1988	10	500
7	Aligarh	Uttar Pradesh	1988	10	500
8	Moradabad	Uttar Pradesh	1988	10	500
9	Jagga mpet	Andhra Pradesh	1989		100

(Source- Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India)

V. NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR PROJECT (NCLP)

This is the major scheme implemented for the rehabilitation of child labour in the world. Under the scheme, Project Societies at the district level are fully funded by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India for opening up of Special Training Centres/Rehabilitation Centres for the rehabilitation of child labour.

The NCLP runs through various stages of operation viz., Establishment of a District Project Office (DPO) in each of the child labour-endemic districts; conducting survey and identification of child labour. Opening up of Special Training Centres(STC)and supporting them; enrolment of working children in the Special Training Centres and ensuring their formal/ informal education up to a maximum period of three years; providing mid-day meals and regular health check-ups to the enrolled children; and finally (mainstreaming those children and keeping track of them for a few years after mainstreaming.

VI. STATUS OF SCHEME

Till 9th Plan 100 Projects were sanctioned for covering about 2.11 lakh children in 13 States. Under the Scheme 4002 schools has been sanctioned in 100 NCLPs during the Ninth 4,00,200 working children have been covered under the scheme. About 3.08 lakh children have been mainstreamed into formal education system till 2012. On the basis of census figures of 2001, other new 100 districts have been identified for setting up of NCLPs during the Tenth Plan. In the Eleventh Plan Period another 21 districts were included in the NCLP scheme.

STATE WISE FIGURE OF NCLP (2018-19)

State	Districts	State	Districts	State	Districts
A.P	13	J&K	3	Punjab	3
Assam	4	Jharkhand	8	Rajasthan	27
Bihar	24	Karnataka	17	Tamil Nadu	18
Chhatti	8	Madhy	22	Teleng	31

Uttar Pradesh	18	Uttar Pradesh	47		
Gujarat	9	Nagaland	1	Uttarakhand	13
Haryana	3	Odisha	24	West Bengal	19
7 States	62	7 States	93	7 States	158

(Source- Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India)

The above said table indicates the list of NCLP District in India. Presently, NCLPs are functioning in 313 districts in 21 states.

VII. THE TARGET GROUP

The project societies are required to conduct survey to identify children working in different occupations and processes. These children then form the target group for the project society. Of the children identified those in the age group 5-8 years have to be mainstreamed directly to formal educational system through the SSA. Working children in the age group of 9- 14 years have to be rehabilitated through NCLP schools established by the Project Society.

The scheme focuses on:

All child workers below the age of 14 years in the identified target area, Adolescent workers below the age of 18 years in the target area engaged in hazardous occupations / processes & Families of Child workers in the identified target area

VIII. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The principal agency for implementation of the NCLP is the Project Society formed at district levels and registered under the Registration of Societies Act, 1860. The Project Society functions under the overall chairpersonship of District Collector. The District Collector is assisted by the members of the Project Society who could be drawn from the relevant departments of the Government at the district levels, trade unions, employers' associations, and voluntary organizations.

IX. STAFFING PATTERN

- Chairperson

The project societies implement all project components in the district under the Chairpersonship of the District Collector/Magistrate.

- Project Director

The Project Director has have the direct responsibility for implementing the project under the overall supervision and guidance of the Chairperson. The Project Director requires to coordinate with the concerned department and the implementing partners such as NGOs to enable smooth execution of the project activities.

- Programme Manager

Two Programme Managers assist the Project Director in each district. They make frequent visits to the project area and ensure that the different components of programme are properly implemented. They designate as Labour Inspectors so that they can also enforce the provisions of the various labour laws relating to child labour.

One Clerk-cum-Accountant to keep the records and accounts of the Project office.

One Steno/Data Entry Operator

One Peon

- Funding pattern:

The projects have been taken up in the Central Sector, the entire funding is done by the Central Government (Ministry of Labour & Employment). Funds are released to the concerned Project Societies depending upon the progress of project activities.

The funds under the Scheme are sanctioned by the Ministry directly to the District Collector, who in turn, disburses them amongst the NGOs for running these Special Training Centres (STC) for working children. The funds are also provided under the Scheme for conducting regular child labour surveys, awareness generation programmes and training of instructors/teachers, etc.

- Programme Component of NCLP Scheme-

Survey to identify child labour- Survey is the starting point for the National Child Labour Project. The project societies must conduct survey in the project area once in every three years to identify the target group. Of the children identified, those in the age group 5-8 years will have to mainstreamed directly to formal educational system through the Sarva

Shikshya Abhijan(Education for All Scheme). Working children in the age group 9-14 years will have to be rehabilitated through National Child Labour Project Special Training Centres / Rehabilitation Centres.

X. ODISHA STATE

Odisha state extends from 17-degree 49 N to 22-degree 34 N latitude and from 81-degree 27-E to 87-degree 29 E longitudes on the eastern coast of India. Odisha state comprises thirty districts. The name of Orissa renamed Odisha on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2011. The English rendering of the name Odisha was officially changed from Orissa to Odisha. The Oriya language is officially rendered “Odia” in English.

IDENTIFICATION OF CHILD LABOUR IN ODISHA

State	1971	1981	1991	1997	2001	2011
Odisha	4,92,477	7,02,293	4,52,394	2,15,222	3,77,594	92.087
Trend		43% (+)	36% (-)		17% (-)	75% (-)

Above table describes about the number of child labours identified in Odisha in the five different Census. We can observe that the percentage of number of child labour has increased 43% in the year 1981 in comparison to 1971 Census whereas the percentage has decreased up to 36% in the 1991 census in comparison to 1981 and 17% decreased in 2001 in comparison to 1991 and decreased 75% in 2011 in comparison to 2001 census. If we compare the census report of 1971 and 2001 than we find the percentage has decreased to 23% over the years.

XI. WESTERN ODISHA

Western Odisha which was known as Dakshin Kosala Kingdom prior to 5<sup>th</sup> Century A.D comprises the vast geographical & culturally homogeneous area of India. If we go through the life style we see a great degree of cultural uniformity which extends from

northwest to south part. The whole Western Odisha includes ten districts of Odisha State namely- Balangir, Bargarh, Boudh, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Kalahandi, Nuapara, Sambalpur, Sonapur & Sundargarh districts.

IDENTIFICATION OF CHILD LABOUR IN WESTERN ODISHA

Region	1971	1981	1991	1997	2001	2011	2018
Western Odisha	1,89,414	2,70,112	1,39,526	58,431	1,09,276	75,440	62,095
Trend		43% (+)	48% (-)		22% (+)	31% (-)	

(Source- NCLP Districts & Census of India)

The above table indicates the number of child labours identified in the 10 Districts of Western Odisha during the year 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 & 2011 Census and 1997 and 2018 NCLP District Level Child labour Survey. We can observe that the percentage of number of child labour has increased 43% in the year 1981 in comparison to 1971 Census whereas the percentage has decreased up to 48% in the 1991 census in comparison to 1981 and 22% decreased in 2001 in comparison to 1991 and decreased 31% in 2011 in comparison to 2001 census. If we compare the census report of 1971 and 2011 then we find the percentage has decreased to 60% over the years. In the year 1997 NCLP has conducted survey of child labour in the ten districts and the number of child labour was 58431 whereas during the year 2018 NCLP identified 6209 of child labours in five number districts in Western Odisha. In Deogarh district 4910 numbers of child labour identified in 1997, 10014 numbers in 2005, 7163 in 2011 and 1875 number of child labour identified by the NCLP in the year 2016.

XII. NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR PROJECT IN ODISHA & WESTERN ODISHA

In Odisha the first NCLP was inaugurated in Sambalpur district in the year 1994 however, in other districts NCLP started after 1995. Primarily, in the year 1994 only one NCLP was there and in 1995 NCLP were started in 17 districts and in the year 2002 another 06 NCLP districts have been functioning. In Western Odisha NCLP started in five districts in the year 1995, in Balangir during the year 1996, in Subarnapur in the year 1997 & in Sundargarh in the year 2007. No NCLP has yet been opened in Boudh district. By May, 2012 NCLP was in operation in 24 districts of Odisha.

XIII. SPECIAL TRAINING CENTRES

Rehabilitation of working children in the age's group of 9-14 years through the Special Training Centres/ Learning-cum-Rehabilitation Centres is the most important component of the project. The project society involve reliable and reputed NGOs including Panchayat Raj Institutions/Trade Unions/Self-Help Groups, etc for running the centres. In case an adequate number of NGOs or other implementing agencies are not available, the centres could be run by the project societies themselves.

Imparting Non-formal/Formal Education up to class-V level, Imparting Vocational Training Provide Supplementary Nutrition, Stipend of Rs.400/- per month to each student through bank account through Direct Benefit Transfer System., Free health care services by the Doctors., Mainstreaming- After imparting education and vocational training within two years the student will be mainstreamed into higher education of Government Schools.

- Staffing Pattern of the Special Training Centre  
Two Educational Instructors- To impart Non-Formal/Formal Educations to the children.  
One Clerk- To keep records of the Centre  
One Vocational Trainer for three Centres- To impart Vocational Training.  
One Helper- To prepare cooked meal for the children and take care of them.

Details of NCLP Special Training Centres as on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2012

Number of Districts	Number of Special Training Centres
15 Districts of Odisha	489
9 Districts of Western Odisha	325
24 Districts	814

(Source- NCLP Districts)

Enrolment/Rehabilitation of Child Labour through NCLP in Western Odisha

Number of Districts	Enrolment of Child Labour in NCLP centres			Total Enrolment	Identified Child Labour	% of Child Labour Enrolled/Rehabilitated by NCLP
	1994-1999-2000	2000-2005	2005-2010			
08	20423	24358	27702	72483	162305	51%
01(Balangir)	10559					
01(Boudha)	0	0	0	0		
Total	20423	24358	27702	83042		

(Source- NCLP Districts)

• Vocational Training

Vocational Training has been given special emphasis in the scheme. The reason is that the children enrolled are mainly in the older age group of 9-14 years and have had previous work experience. It was also felt that 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 training centres.

Enrolment for Vocational Training in Western Odisha

Number of Districts	1994-1999-2000	2000-2005	2005-2010	Total	Enrolment	Identification	% of Enrolment	% of Identification
08	27906	11046	20981	34843	83042	162305	53%	27%
01 (Balangir)				9487				
01 (Boudha)	0	0	0	0				
10 Districts				44304				

(Source- NCLP Districts)

Number of child labour students undergone Vocational Training in the different NCLP of the Western Odisha are given above. Almost all the districts have provided more than one type of Vocational training and all the trades are self-dependent trades and all are related to local needs. As per the data available Nuapada NCLP has provided vocational training to maximum number of child labour students in term of enrolment. Likewise Bargarh NCLP ranked the lowest in term of both enrolment and identification of child labour students. In the whole Western Odisha 53% of child labour students had undergone Vocational Training in term of enrolment and 27% in term of identification. Again all the NCLP districts have adopted the education system same as SSA which make clear that both NCLP and SSA students are getting equal opportunity in the field of education. In Deogarh

district 40 NCLP Schools are functioning where Vocational Training in the trades of Tailoring, Cycle repairing, Commercial Art & Painting and Tasar Reeling, Spinning & Weaving are being imparted to the students. So far the Vocational figure of Deogarh district is concerned it is 31% of the enrolment of child labour and 20% of the total child labour identified in the district. As Boudha district has no NCLP therefore the Vocational Training in the said district does not arise. So from this table we can see that the child labour identified in Western Odisha have undergone vocational training through which they can become self-dependent.

**Mainstreaming (Mainstreaming of Child Labour through NCLP)**

The main purpose of the NCLPs is to mainstream the children rescued from work either into regular schools or else in the vocational stream and subsequently, on reaching legal age for employment, in acceptable and productive work, suited for their aptitude and skills. Priority to these children in admission to residential schools such as those under the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya scheme, ashram pathshalas, hostels etc would help in retention of these children in the mainstream schools. The district administration / State Government is required to oversee this crucial support to children rescued from work and admitted to NCLPs Special Training Centres

**Mainstreaming in India & Odisha**

State	Mainstreamed Figures				
	Up to 1995-96	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Total
16 States	7,87,220	1,22,255	80,241	1,12,520	11,02,236
Odisha	1,08,309	10,585	14,416	13,196	1,46,506
Total	8,95,529	1,32,840	94,657	1,25,716	12,48,742

(Source- NCLP Districts)

**Mainstreaming in Western Odisha**

Number of Districts	Year	Number of Mainstreaming	% of Enrolment	% of identification
09	1995-96 To 2011-12	55,986	87%	45%
	2012-2014	16,250		
Total		72,236		

(Source- NCLP Districts)

The number of Child labour students mainstreamed from NCLP Schools into higher education after completion of three academic years in the sixteen states of India and Odisha up to the academic session 2011-12 and Western Odisha up to the academic session 2013-14 is indicated in the above table. So far the whole Western Odisha is concerned around 87% of child labour students mainstreamed through NCLP in terms of enrolment and 45% of students mainstreamed in term of total identified child labour in the whole Western Odisha. If we see the data of Deogarh district we find that the percentage of child labours mainstreamed is 100 % (12444) in terms of enrolment and 56% (22087) in terms of total child labour identified in the district.

**Awareness Generation**

After identification of the target group, the project staff sensitize the parents, employers and the children themselves about the need for schooling. The project society through street plays, exhibitions, rallies, display of posters, banners and stickers and constant interaction with the local communities, create awakening among the society against Child Labour and impress upon them about the need for education.

The result of Awareness programme organized by NCLP in Western Odisha

Number of Districts	Types of Awareness programme performed	Result of programme
09	Pamphlets, Slideshows, Walling, Rallies, Dance, Meeting, Mike announcement, Parents Meeting, Leaflet & posters, Slide show, Print media, Seminars with NGOs. Sports, Exhibition stall, Cultural programme. Street plays, Cultural troops of the district & hoardings. Folk media, folk dance and wall painting,	Public aware about the Child Labour (P&R) Act. General public have been made aware on the evils of Child labour and the incidence of Child Labour decreased. Disengagement of child labour from works,

The above table give a clear idea about the magnitude of awareness generation programme in the Western Odisha. According to the table it can be observed the impact of the awareness generation programme conducted by NCLP on the evil of child labour system. It is also clear that awareness among people help for elimination of child labour system in the Western Odisha. In Deogarh district awareness programmes like Rallies, Publication in News Papers and programme in District festival are being a result of which public became aware of the evil practices of child labour. Again, we can also see that the child labour can be mainstreamed into higher education and become success like other children in the society.

Convergence of services

Poverty being the most important contributing factor of child labour. It is necessary to effect convergence of the various department programme under

implementation at the district level for the benefit of the working children and their parents. In Western Odisha almost all families of child labours have been included in various poverty alleviation programme of the Government by NCLP. About 1269 families of child labours have been included in anti-poverty programmes of the Government in Deogarh district. In all the districts NCLP has taken steps to cover maximum child labour families to cover under different poverty alleviation programme.

#### XIV. IMPACT EVALUATION

After implementation of NCLP scheme in Western Odisha many changes took place among the identified child labour. During the period from 1994 to 2010 around 162305 child labours have been identified in Western Odisha out of which 83042 students have been enrolled through NCLP Special Training Centres which is 51% of the total child labour. 87% of child labour students enrolled have been mainstreamed into higher education after passing from NCLP Special Training Centres during the period which is 45% of the total Child labour identified. About 53% of the students enrolled in NCLP Special Training Centres have undergone Vocational Training for self-employment after being educated which is 27% of the total child labour identified in the Western Odisha after implementation of NCLP Scheme. So NCLP Scheme had played a major role for the rehabilitation, identification and mainstreaming of the child labour in Western Odisha. The Project Directors & the Programme Managers of the National Child Labour Projects of 24 NCLP districts play an important role for the success of the project. National Child Labour Project of Odisha has conducted State Level Sports Meet of the students of 24 NCLP districts for seven times. The child labour students of NCLP Special Training Centres have become many Government jobs after mainstreaming.

#### CONCLUSION

Social changes do not happen very easily. People who deal with production in industry often apply erroneously the same yardstick to movements for social and educational transformation too. Nothing could be so usualistic as that. Viewed against the



general trend, it is our feeling that consequent on the formation of National Child Labour Project and the various steps taken to reduce child labour and rehabilitate them by the District Administration, the problem has got considerably reduced which is reflected from the 2001 census figures & the 2011 census. {i.e. from 377594 of 2001, to 92087 in 2011 in Odisha and from 92087 of 2001 to 75,440 in 2011}. This is a great achievement in this state despite of several constraints.

#### SUGGESTION

- 1) In India there are 726 districts spread across various states and union territories. Out of these about 313 (43%) districts are covered by the NCLP and the remaining, that is 413(57%) are non-NCLP districts. If Government would take steps to implement NCLP in all the districts in India, the entire child labourer would be benefited and the system of child labour could be vanished.
- 2) Supply of Supplementary Nutrition has been handed over from NCLP to the State Education Department with effect from 2009, which was a wrong decision taken by the Government of India. NCLP Special Training Centres are facing many kinds of disturbances due to such decision. As a result of which the innocent child labours are suffering due to the monopoly attitude of the concerned department. In Odisha supply of nutrition materials has been suspended by the state government in Sundargarh and Keonjhar districts as a result of which the NCLP Special Training Centres have been closed. In order to make the scheme more effective, provision of supplementary nutrition programme should be adopted by the NCLP itself.
- 3) More frequent surveys of child labour are required in order to get the correct statistics of child labour.
- 4) As per the provisions of the NCLP scheme, it does not provide financial assistance for land, buildings and capital assets like vehicles etc. Thus the assistance is highly inadequate.
- 5) Inadequate monitoring of the scheme by the concerned authority.
- 6) Non adoption of uniform guidelines in each districts.

- 7) It is matter of regret that Government of India engages many highly qualified people in different position in National Child Labour Projects functioning throughout the country (for the rehabilitation of child labour) as volunteers with a very negligible honorarium. In spite of several requests neither the Government of India nor the State Government has considered those staff for regularisation of their services. Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India and the State Labour & Employee State Insurance Department exploiting those highly qualified and experienced staff engaged for the betterment of child & adolescent labour. The staff engaged in the National Child Labour Projects in the country has no job security and get wages less than that of a peon of the country. Even after continuance of the scheme of 30 years Government still utilises word like volunteer, honorarium for the staff. It is the only scheme of Government in India where staff are treated as volunteers even after working more than two decades. Government is also silent regarding payment of salary at par with other staff of the Government. The word volunteer, honorarium should be removed immediately and salary should be provided to all the staff along with other facilities like similar staff of the Government with immediate effect otherwise one day the whole country will see that the children of those staff will become child labour.
- 8) NCLP is functioning in many states. But, in Odisha the State Government has closed the NCLP in almost all the districts since 2014. As a result of which the child labours again come to the street. Thousands of staff of the concerned NCLP districts who had dedicated their whole life for the rehabilitation and elimination of child labour in the state become beggars as they have no age limit to serve anywhere.

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