

**Consultation on
Strengthening North East Network Partners in Combating
Human Trafficking**

Dated: 27th & 28th March, 2018



**Venue: DON BOSCO INSTITUTE, GUWAHATI
Centre for Human Development, Leadership & Research
KHARGHULI, GUWAHATI
781004, ASSAM, INDIA**

The aim and objectives of the consultation on Strengthening North East Network Partners in Combating Human Trafficking was:

- Bailing out North east girls/boys from jail.
- Recovery & Reintegration of survivors.
- Survivor's Network forum in north East.
- Case profiling of Survivors& social entrepreneurship in North East.

There were 34 participants from the North East States and West Bengal who had meaningfully contributed to the two days Consultation.

Day 1

The consultation began at 9:30 a.m. with a welcome note and briefing of the objectives by Mr.

Digambar Narzary, Chairperson of NEDAN Foundation. He said Human Trafficking is a burning issue especially in the North East region as many adolescent girls are being recruited by some



vested interest placement agencies in Parlors and other hospitality industries. He mentioned that many North East girls are detained in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana jail. He further spoke about the need of bringing back these girls and the necessary collectivization efforts for repatriation and reintegration of trafficked victims.

Mr. Pishak Singh, General Secretary of New Life Foundation, Manipur began with a small video screening as part of introduction to trafficking and identity theft from the North East. He stated the problems of human trafficking in the region and so advised to have updated child policy in all the North Eastern States. There should be inter State Standard Operating Procedure for Rescue and Repatriation, all trafficked survivors must get victim compensation within the stipulated time frame through the National/State/District Legal services authority, there should be a common tracking system for fast recovery of missing/trafficked victims and Convergence Mechanism as a major tools for intervening Human Trafficking and Child related issues. He also stressed to check the customary laws while applying the existing laws & policies and make necessary amendments as per the requirements. He also spoke about the requirements for Rescue & Repatriation of Manipuri Girls from Myanmar.



Mr. Nirnay John Chetty, General Secretary of Mankind in Action for Rural Growth (MARG), presented the operational models of MARG in combating Human Trafficking from Darjeeling district in West Bengal. He mentioned the network he has formed like Students Against Trafficking, Police training for Combating Human Trafficking, Religious Leaders Against Trafficking, Drivers Club Against Trafficking and Villagers Against Trafficking.



Mr. Roshan Lakra, Project Coordinator, NEDAN Foundation presented on the operational models of NEDAN Foundation in combating Human Trafficking in the Bodoland Territorial Council, Assam. He mentioned Anti Human Trafficking Unit – Uniform Personnel training, formation of Child Protection Committee, Village Vigilance Committee, Youth Against Trafficking and the reporting mechanisms – CHILDLINE and SMSing system of NEDAN as an important tools in combating Human Trafficking.



Mr. Miguel Queah, Executive Director of UTSAH spoke about the failure of Anti Human Trafficking police Unit (AHTU) initiated in the 14 districts of Assam. He said that AHTU is just in paper, people are not aware about it and so they cannot avail benefits from it. He suggested having structural training of the AHTU and awareness at the grass root level should be taken into account.



Mr. Sunil Mao, HRLN, Arunachal Pradesh also spoke about the prevalence of Human Trafficking in the State. He mentioned that Arunachal Pradesh is also a source State from which girls are trafficked to neighboring countries and also to metro cities in India. He spoke about the recent Criminal Laws (Arunachal Pradesh) Amendments made, approving death penalty to those convicted of raping or gang-raping a girl up to 12 years of age. He also said that survivors are not getting victim compensation and Justice on time due to not complaining to State/District Legal

Services Authority. A child cannot be sent to private shelter home which is not recognized by Child Welfare Committee (CWC). The amended law has increased the victim compensation for rape victim from Rs.50000 to Rs. 500000. Out migration from NE are mainly due to Poverty, Livelihood opportunity, unemployment, lack of good parenting and peer pressure. He mentioned lack of good parenting as biggest problem in entire North East. Parents are not aware where their children are going. Cabinet has approved the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018. The new law will make India a leader among South Asian countries to

combat trafficking. Trafficking is a global concern also affecting a number of South Asian nations. Amongst them, India is now a pioneer in formulating a comprehensive legislation. The Bill has been prepared in consultation with line Ministries, Departments, State Governments, NGOs and domain experts.

Ms. Bariphylla Lyttan, Case manager, Impulse NGO Network shared their model 6Ps (Partnership, Prevention, Protection, Policing, Press & Prosecution) & 6Rs (Reporting, Rescue,



Repatriation, Reintegration, Re-compensation & Rehabilitation) to enable the stakeholders follow the case management procedures. She said that under the Impulse Model, all the stakeholders have their own specific mandate in the process of combating human trafficking; this ensures that the specific activities are conducted by the specialized agencies and there will not be any overlapping of work or resources. She also said the Impulse Case Info Center (ICIC) ensures that all human trafficking cases are managed appropriately and are transmitted to the network stakeholders. ICIC is a

systemic networking mechanism that creates a common platform for various stakeholders to fight against human trafficking in North East India and across borders such as Myanmar, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Sr. Elisha Gurung, Coordinator of Bal Suraksha Abhiyan (BSA), Kalimpong, West Bengal, spoke about the hardships during the initial periods of BSA formation. She said that 18 children were rescued from child labour and BSA started. She mentioned CHILDLINE 1098 as strong backbone of the organization. As they are also running children home, she related cases of children sheltering in their shelter home.



Dr. Chiranjeeb Kakoty, Director, NESPYM, being the core member of South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) spoke about its vision that all children, girls and boys, throughout South Asia enjoy their right to an environment free from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitations, neglect and discrimination. He shared the steps taken up by SAIEVAC to integrate CHILDLINE in all South Asian Countries. He also spoke about the recent formulation of Adolescents and Child Rights Network Assam (ACRNA) through having numerous consultations with concern stakeholders and children belonging to different communities in various parts of the State. He said that addressing violence against children and their rights was a key focus and it was one of the most important steps for the empowerment of children and adolescents. The government of India implemented multiple schemes and programs for the protection of children and fulfillment of their rights. People are ought to get benefits from those schemes and programs but it is not happening as per the government guidelines. Therefore, the representatives' children and adolescents presented themselves in the Assam Legislative

Assembly and raised their issues before the elected representative, so that the policy makers may reinforce the issues that to influence government's decision-making on matters affecting their future. The representatives' adolescent boys and girls were collectivized from different part of the Assam.

Mr. Jenpu Rongmei, Chief Functionary of CAN YOUTH Nagaland shared his experience working with Youth in Nagaland. He said that gap between teachers and students have caused drop out in the State. He and his team are working towards empowering the dropouts through regular home visit and training on skill development.



Mr. Abinash Narzary, All Bodo Students Union (ABSU), Guwahati, said they have largest network connecting all the metro cities in India. He shared their experience in protecting human rights and the challenges in rescuing victims from the clutches of traffickers. He mentioned cases they had handled for rescuing trafficked victims from cities of Siliguri and Delhi. There are lots of challenges the student body face due to lack of monetary support unlike NGOs but still they are compelled to take up cases for the cause of society with their own pocket money. And most of ABSU workers are students or employed, so sometimes it becomes problem for them to spare time and get involve for the work of society. He also mentioned that most of the cases remain pending and unsolved due to the delay tactics of police.



Mr. Tashi Raptan Barfungpa, Lawyer, Sikkim, spoke about human trafficking in Sikkim and problems of reintegration of survivors. He said that even the concern stakeholders are not supporting adequately for the rehabilitation of survivors. On this regard he related to a case the statement made by some judicial officers in the past at the highest level "If Schools does not have playground how can survivors have playground who have committed faults" which is very disheartening he

said. He further stated that there should be training and sensitizing members from the legal fraternity.

After the brief presentation of the human trafficking scenario in different North East State and West Bengal, the group had a healthy discussion on the processes of Repatriation and Reintegration of trafficked survivors. One of the major issues that had come up was unnecessary work pressure and hurdles created by some Govt. officials for the management of shelter home. After rescuing victims, Child Welfare Committee (CWC) refers them to shelter home of NGOs as State does not have shelter home in all the districts of the State. After one month DCPU comes for evaluation and questions which is considered as harassment and extra burden for maintaining a children home. The is raised was “If Govt. officials are so much concern about children in shelter home, why are they not running shelter homes in all districts in the State. In contradiction the house had a opinion that either the Government should run the shelter home or provide adequate facilities to NGOs registered under JJ Act to run shelter home. One of the members had suggested filing Public Interest Litigations (PIL) on the behalf of NGOs to be done by some third parties like student bodies for the smooth functioning of Reintegration of survivors without over lapsing. The group has also discussed about the child’s life after rescue for reintegration with the family. What the government supposed to do in order to provide the child for his/her dignified life in the society.

DAY 2

On the 2nd day overall review was discussed on the existing laws for the Repatriation and Reintegration. Suggestions were accepted from all the organizations present in the consultation. Following resolutions was put forward and discussed by the group to find ways and means for combating Human Trafficking and viable easy processes for Reintegration of survivors:

- To apply the best applicable successful model in all the North Eastern States.
- Connecting with the National level alliance group.
- Lawyers from Guwahati, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim will provide legal support.
- Guidance for NENFAT (North East Network Forum Against Trafficking) principles.
- Scrutinizing the job placement agencies by CSOs, Village vigilance committees with the help of police.
- Impulse NGO Network will take the lead to trace the missing girls and girls detained in the jails of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana.
- To prevent HT, recruitment of child soldier should also to be checked and observance home to be run by Govt. for over ground for their Rehabilitation and Reintegration in the society.
- Chicken neck CSOs is important for North East Anti Human Trafficking intervention.
- Rehabilitation:
 - Fund delayed
 - Supportive statement should be made by visitors in shelter homes for psychological support of survivors.
 - While attending school/college – teachers and peer groups are of very important concern.

- After care: Availing the free admission & scholarships on time.
- Adoption linked to trafficking need to be checked.
- Interventions to check dropout rate of the school/college students.
- Inviting the Cooperates to recruit in big companies from North Eastern region instead of being only targeted to be recruited in hospitality industry like in beauty parlors and massage parlors.
- There are no protective mechanisms for Human Right workers which need to be looked into with serious concern.
- Children from Assam are taken to Arunachal Pradesh in pretext of providing free education but they are made to work in the field or domestic help. At least one domestic worker is found in the family in AP hailing from Assam. As per RTE, every child has right to get education in his/her own language- mother tongue. Case can be filed by third party against the atrocities done to children.
- NENFAT should organize workshop/consultation involving concern stake holders and Govt. officials.
- Only Assam has Youth Policy, other States in North East does not have youth policy which needs to be addressed by CSOs collectively.



The core group of North East Network Forum Against Trafficking (NENFAT) will look into the feasibility of drafting interstate Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and the resolution can be finalized in the next consultation/workshop involving the State officials. The next workshop will be held in any of the 8 North East States involving the National Alliance groups for combating Human Trafficking.