DISSEMINATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN REPORT
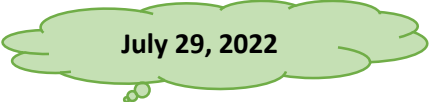
YWCA of Bombay,
18 Madam Cama Road,
Fort, Mumbai 400 001

July 29, 2022

Contents

Sharing of desk study

on

Sexual Violence Against Children in India
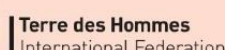
2020-2021

Date : 29 July 2022
10 am to 4 pm

Venue :
Lady Willingdon Hostel YWCA of Bombay, 18 Madam Cama Road, Fort, Mumbai 400001

Organised by

Introduction:

On 29th of July 2022 a Regional Launch of Desk Study of Sexual Violence Against Children in India was organised by the Joining Forces for Children-India at Lady Willingdon Hostel, YWCA of Bombay. The purpose of the consultation was to share and reflect on the findings of the desk study on Sexual Violence Against Children, more so to review and understand the sexual violence against children in India.

The study was commissioned to Dialectical Services, a research-based agency. Given the limited availability of officials, partners and other stake holders due to COVID – 19 and consequent restrictions, the study was conducted by October 2020 by a five-member team of Dialectical Services, who led the desk research, workshops, interviews and report writing.

76 Representatives comprising of several Government functionaries, eminent panelists, researchers, social activists, advocates, CSOs and community based organisations from across districts and state participated in the intense discussion on the sensitive subject of sexual violence against children.

The overall discussions helped the present members to deliberate and come up with a set of recommendations and a road map to work effectively in reducing violence against children.

The entire Joining Force team and their well-wishers jointly together organised the consultation along with untiring joint efforts led by SoS Children's Villages of India team.

The consultation began with a symbolic inaugural session by Chief Guest -Ms. Susieben Shah – Chairperson of SCPCR and Guest of Honour - Shri Deepak Pandey – Director PAW; by watering the potted plant. Just like plants need to be nurtured and cared for, children too need to be nurtured, cared and protected from all types of violence to help them grow in a more protected environment.

Welcome and Introduction of the

Later, the dignitaries were warmly welcomed to the stage and after brief round of felicitation and a warm welcome to the gathered by Ms. Pranami from Save the Children.

Introduction of Joining Forces India:

Ms Aruna from SOS Children's Villages of India welcomed all the members and participants give brief introduction of JFI – objectives of JFI, Key initiatives of JFI, work at state level, Ending of Violence against children, priority state and purpose of state level chapter.

Opening Remarks by Chief Guest:

Ms. Susieben Shah – Chairperson of MSPCR sharing her words of wisdom, thanked the organisers for putting together the programme. She cautioned the organisers and requested them to not limit themselves to the release of report and work towards implementation based on the findings and work towards changing the situation in the field. Giving her own example, she said, that, she began as a social activist and involved herself in the political process for

strengthening women; hence she called for more concrete work to strengthen children's voices and fulfilling their rights.

She cited the last evening Nagpur Rape incident and appreciated police system for working in coordination with CWC and registering the case immediately. She highlighted that, in such cases, the child's vulnerability is tremendous and the accused normally are always more powerful. As concerned members, there is a need for us to work more towards mainstreaming such children back to the society. She also added that the system and society is very complicated and victims are blamed every time. She reiterated that there is a need to raise our voices, without which nothing will change.

She also shared about the plan to launch program for a cyber-security in Maharashtra and likewise continue training the police officers. Resonating the importance of having trained officers at every police station, she requested IG to be mindful during the transfers of officers and continue them

with the same roles and responsibilities in the best interest of children so that then they can handle cases more sensitively.

Concluding, she motivated everyone and said, "let us all take concrete steps and work on a plan of action to create a safe environment for children and march together towards implementation of a better policy"

Release of the Study:

The study was released by the dignitaries on Stage – Ms. Susieben – Chairperson of MSCPCR, Shri Deepak Pandey – Director – PAW, Panelist – Ms. Alpa Vora – UNICEF, Adv. Audrey – Majlis, Mr. Pradip – CHILDLINE India Foundation and Mr. Santosh Shinde – Vidhyak Bharti and Joining Force Representatives

SVAC Report presentation:

Key Findings and Recommendations: Presented by Mr. Mandar from TDH

Some of the Key Findings and Recommendations

Findings

1. POCSO 36%
2. Online sexual abuse 843 cases.
3. 86% Family members and friends or known person were abusers.
4. SC, ST, Sex worker's children, laborers children's and mentally challenged children are more abused.

Recommendations

1. Crime identification, Reporting of cases and Networking
2. Formation of VCPC, WCPC
3. All stakeholders to work together in collaboration
4. Zero tolerance policies in schools
5. Formation of online space for crime against children

(Details of the presentation is part of Annexure 1)

Panel Discussion on Redressal of Sexual Violence Against Children – Experiences and Challenges:

1. **Shri. Deepak Pandey – PCWC (Protection of Crime Against Women and Children) – Director.**

   Belonging to the 1999 batch IPS informed the participants that the department has now changed the name PAW to PCWC. He shared in brief on the role of his department playing the role of a nodal agency for trafficking that handles crimes against woman and children.

He shared that approximately 5,000 cases are registered under POCSO and 50 cases under JJ Act. He added that all these cases are received by IG PCWC, and reports for the same are sent to the government.

He also emphasised on the need to focus on kidnapping as an offence, since 10,000 cases are registered in Maharashtra itself.

2. **Ms. Alpa Vora – UNICEF – (State Protection Officer):**

Ms. Alpa pointed out that the current digital violence against children has increased and very scary and therefore it is important to critically prioritise work on this front. She also added that most of the sexual violence is committed by known people and as known to many the conviction rate is very low and the pendency rate is very high.

She suggested the need for:

a. Integrated multi-sectorial approach / response very important. The protection system needs to include medical, health, police, etc.

b. Need for creating a convergence platform for addressing the issue on a daily basis. A forum at Collector's level with convergence would be an ideal situation.

c. Important to work on the existing mind set and norms in the society along with the prevention framework.

d. Child affected by violence need rehabilitation services. The gap in service need to be addressed, even with the laws being stringent children need support since they go through huge trauma and the families are not able to support them.

3. **Adv. Audrey – Co-Founder Majlis**

In her introductory remarks she highlighted the importance to see the issues of women and children together and not to be seen in different tangents. Majlis, for the last 20 years has been giving social and legal support to the victims. The paradigm shift of addressing Domestic or Sexual violence cases should be reminisced as **CRIME AGAINST SOCIETY** and seen as a *State Against the Criminal.* She also resonated the importance of treating every victim as a witness, believe in

them and stop checking or weighing the genuinity of the case. Normally, when a victim from 14 to 18 years comes to seek support, cases are largely considered as love stories and the genuineness of the case is further investigated.

When 10% of sexual violence cases are from family members like father, grandfather, brother or stepbrother and the police insists on speaking to them before registering there is no hope for the victim and sexual violence cases to booked before the law. Believing the victim when she approaches the police is the core to address the issue.

The need for treating every case separately because of the nature and need being different was emphasised. She cautioned the gathering that it important to be doubly sure while demanding laws, because the end result – the user / victim suffers because of lack of coordination between court, lawyer, police, etc.

She summarised her inputs by adding:

- Dignity of victim in the system should be ensured
- Best evidence should be brought forward
- Provide support and confidence to the victim.

4. Mr. Pradip Pachpinde - CHILDLINE India Foundation – Maharashtra Lead

Giving a brief back ground of CHILDLINE India foundation and its work, a nodal agency that is currently monitoring and funding 600 districts in the country along with its collaboration with Ministries of Railways and its presence in 144 railway station across the country. In Maharashtra, 36 districts and 16 railway stations with the help of 64 partner organisation managing 1098 is the current reach.

The helpline has registered over 50,000 cases but all cases do not see the end result because of proper lack of awareness that exist in the society. Coordination between the police, CWC, Children's home, etc have improved to certain extent. In 2021-2022, total of 5,000 cases were registered, out which 341 were SVAC cases registered in Mumbai alone and 110 cases were purely POCSO cases. The CHILDLINE team makes it a point to be present with the victim and the family from the beginning to the end of the cases. There is plenty of handholding done for families because of the societal fear and not wanting to be alienated from the mainstream of the society. The team provides support in helping the victims avail of the existing schemes through DALSA.

5. Mr. Santosh Shinde – Founder - Vidhayak Bharti

Mr. Santosh began with the reality in the society where there is a saying which says "Avoid climbing the stairs of a police station and the Courts". This is the very reason why there is psycho-fear that exist in the society.

He emphasized on the need for every organisation working with children to plan all its intervention from the entry point to the exit point. Most of them, prefer working on the prevention aspect and there is a change required in the mind set of these organisations.

He highlighted the following few important factors:

- Response time after one reaches the police station
- To have designated officers dealing with the case, so that the victim is not forced to narrate the incident several times.
- Medical evidence. Hospitals need to collect medical evidence for all required cases and avoid waiting for the consent from the victim, since many a times victim is forced to say no to the test for collection of medical evidence.

- January 3, 2022 – there is a circular from Palghar court which clearly quotes that all cases should be informed to CWC, but in rural areas they refuse to do so, saying they have not received any such circular or direction from the authorities.
- Child friendly processes (not only physical infrastructure – procedures and systems required), support person to the victims, etc is very important.
- Collaborative work with all departments is a must.
- Manodhairya Yojana – Need for strengthening the implementation. The objective of the scheme is to ensure the victim of rape and acid attacks (women and children) are brought out from the psychological shock that they suffer and also be provided with shelter, financial assistance, medical and legal aid and counselling services. With this in mind the WCD Dept is providing financial assistance of Rs. 1 lakh and 10 lakhs for special cases. But most of them initially receive 50,000/- and then do not receive the balance amount, since they do not receive proper guidance and support. It is important to work together on creating awareness, so that the desired results could be achieved by the year 2070.
- Maharashtra has 1257 police stations. The police research system could collect 5 cases on acquittal and convicted from every police station, there could be an enriching way forward in the best interest of children.

In his concluding remarks, he said there is a need to pull up our socks and work together in a fashion that in future there is no need of police station, courts, etc. Together we should move forward to a ZERO FIR registered under any violence cases.

Comment/ Observation by Shri Deepak Pandey

He spoke on his general observation with regards to 498A, which according to him is the most abused law. He further made a thought provoking question on why prevention of sexual harassment

at work place is not abused. In POCSO Act 2012, if any wrong complaint is made, only 6 months' punishment is given. In India there is no provision to punish wrong complaint and the ones that exist it is very minimal.

He cited the Arnesh Kumar v. State of Bihar with directions passed by the Supreme Court about the procedure for arrest shall be applicable to offences punishable with less than or up to seven years of imprisonment.

Adv. Audrey from the panel, responded that this is not a suitable example that is being cited and requested on behalf of all the like-minded organisations that the police system needs to be sensitized and it is a request and as per the procedure, FIR to be registered of any complainant who approached the police station. Arrest can be decided later based on the severity of the case and that none of them gathered here is requesting for compulsion of immediate arrest.

One of the CHILDLINE participant also added that, since most of the times abuser is a family member for eg: father. Since the family is depended on his earnings and if a complaint is registered against him and other family members are dependent on him for their survival, there is always pressure to not file a complaint against him. Also many times medical reports are blur and there is no mention of Sexual Violence in the report.

Open House Discussion:

The session was led by Ms. Shefali Shirsekar - PLAN India.

Mr. Shailendra from CRY pointed out since Mumbai being a Mayanagari there are many children to are trafficked to Mumbai from source areas like Chhattisgarh, etc. Given the context he suggested that it is important to have the child protection committees in place and therefore it is important to streamline this important process. Mr. Santosh, replied saying that there is already a G.R issued by the state on June 10th, 2014 on constituting the CPCs and the same has been replicated in Gujarat and Rajasthan. Furthermore, adding to this it is the responsibility of the society and government to take responsibility and look at how this can be effectively implemented to protect every child. In Mumbai itself there are 157 WCPC to be constituted. Each one is responsible to form these committees.

One of the participant pointed out that for such studies categories of NT-DNT should also be considered.

Since children spend most of their time in schools, the need to have child protection systems in the schools was suggested. Mr. Santosh, pointed out there is a GR dated March 10th, only for Mumbai city which talks about the importance and compulsion of forming CPC in all schools. These committees are called Sakhi Savitiri Committee that is to be formed to ensure protection of child rights. These committees will comprise representatives from school management, teachers, parents and students besides experts from sectors such as counselling, medicine, police and law.

Ongoing training for CWC members including internet and different forms of online abuse which go unreported and many of the children unknowingly committing cybercrime. Representative from Arpan shared on the already available module online on their website. She requested members to go through them and educate themselves.

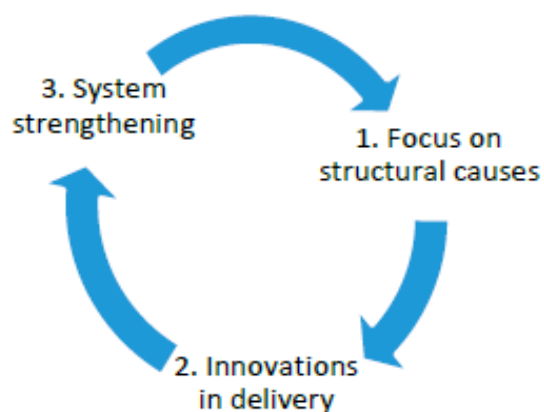## Address by Guest of Honour – Mr. Rahul More – Dy. Commissioner - DWCD

Mr. Rahul spoke based on the many years of experience he has in the field. He said, "just like,

during our childhood days, we have been told Do This Don't Do and we exactly liked to do the opposite, so is the current trend. We need to teach children to remain safe. All the facilities that we currently have two sides of the same coin. Good and Bad. We will have to mentor them to choose the good one. Illiterate parents will not able to teach their children but we should teach their children. All the committees are formed but many issues still can't be solved. We recently had cyber safety trainings. There is a need for coordination in all departments to do better work. Duplication of work could be avoided".

He also added that the issue of child marriage exists not only in lower classes, it is very much prevalent in higher classes too. He requested all the gathered to have a holistic child centric approach. He shared that CHILDLINE – 1098 alone could stop approximately around 1,500 child marriages. Around 55,000 women and children were affected due to COVID 19. Some women have lost their husband while some children have lost their parents. He said it is important to work together, and government alone will not be able to work for the betterment of the society. Together, there is a need to strengthen the system. In all the six divisions of the state along with NGOs a good coordinated effort can bring change in the society.

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Way Forward – Ms. Arokia Mary – Advocacy Lead, ChildFund India

After thanking the participants and panel for the fruitful reflective discussions, she shared a few pointers as _way forward_ that emerged out of the day's deliberation. She also added that, "even after putting in hard work by all of us, we are falling short of the desired results of creating safe and protective environment for children and hence there is a need for more concentrated efforts to be put in and collectively work together".

She shared on how the entire discussion during the day resonates the recommendations shared through the study disseminated today, as illustrated in the adjoining diagram.

Action Points:

Digital Violence

Digital violence is scary and very critical and hence needs to be priortised

Sexual Reproductive Health and Education

Arpan's model to be reviewed and replicated in Maharashtra. To be included in the school curriculum

Creating Awareness

Working on creating positive mindset in the society and focussing on strutural causes

Action Points (Contd):

Integrated Multi-sectoral Approach

Very important to have a intergrated multi -sectoral approach and a need for convergence platform to address issues on a regular basis.

Strengthening Systems leading to child friendly procedures

Strengthening of Courts, SCPCRs, CPCs, CWCs, SCPUs,Police Systems - especially to have a time-frame for police to respond to cases, avoid change in roles for SJPUs (specially), Data tracking

Rehabilitation /Service Delivery

Mental Health of the victim to be addressed.

Rehabilitation and service needs to be supported and improved

Immediate Set of Action /

Outcome of the consultation:

In collaboration with MSCPCR, Joining Force India for children and technical experts to study Challenges faced by various stakeholders while managing cases on SVAC

Vote of thanks:

Meeting concluded with vote of thanks proposed by Mr. Moses from World Vision, India.

He thanked the presence of every individual, and the youth volunteers for World Vision, who had done a wonderful job in helping with the entire registration work.

On behalf on the entire organizing team, he resonated saying, "Together we will be able to build an enabling and safe environment for children"

Findings of the study:

1. **Rising incidence of Sexual Violence Against Children (SVAC) in India:** As per the National Crime Records Bureaus (NCRB) data, the number of recorded cases of crimes against children has seen an increase from 1,06,958 cases in 2016 to 1,28,531 cases in 2020. Kidnapping and abduction took the lead with 46.6% of cases, a significant portion of cases, i.e. 35.3% cases (amounting to 47,221 cases), that is one out of every 3 cases were reported under the POCSO Act, 2012.

2. **Lack of accurate data on SVAC:** Reports published by NCRB are one of the major and only large-scale sources of data on the issue of SVAC in India. However, these reports are not representative of the actual number of incidents of SVAC as child sexual abuse still remains largely under-reported although reporting has increased in the past few years. Also, to be taken into consideration is that many of the cases reported under POCSO Act are of minors in consensual or romantic relationships which further skews the accuracy of the data and creates a challenge in gauging the extent of child sexual abuse in India. There is a lack of comprehensive data on the outcome of the trials of cases, including the number of cases in which witnesses turn hostile, reasons for the same, awarding of victim compensation, among others.

3. **Growing menace of online SVAC:** In the year 2020, 842 incidents of cyber-crimes against children were reported under the Information Technology Act, 2000. With children's increasing access to electronic devices and the internet, sexual offences against children in online spaces continue to grow. The number of cases reported represent only a small fraction of actual incidences. It is a matter of concern that more and more children are getting exposed to sexual violence in online spaces. Investigating agencies have limited capacities to respond to sexual violence against children in online spaces. A recent study by INTERPOL and ECPAT International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) image and video database has shown alarming trends which includes (a) the younger the victim, the more severe the abuse, (b)84% images contains explicit sexual activity of and with children, (c) more than 60% unidentified child victims were prepubescent, including infants as well as toddlers, (d)65% unidentified child victims were girls, (e) severe abuse images were likely to feature boys and (f)92% of the visible offenders were male.

4. **SVAC is being perpetrated by person known to the child:** As per NCRB Crime in India 2020, in 96.0% of cases registered under Section 4 and Section 6 (dealing with penetrative and aggravated sexual assault child rape) under the POCSO Act, the accused person was known to the offender. A break-up of the relationship between the accused person and the victim in respect of cases registered under the provisions on child rape under the POCSO Act (Section 4 and 6 of the POCSO Act) is given below:

	Family Members	Family friends/ Neighbours/ Employer of Other Known Persons	Friends/Online Friends or Live in Partners on Pretext of Marriage	Unknown Offenders	Total
Number of Cases registered under Section 4 and 6 of the POCSO Act	2,556	11,272	13,106	1,131	28,065
Percentage to total	9.11%	40.16%	46.70%	4.03%	100%

5. **Disasters, emergencies and elevated risk for children:** Children, the largest population segment in low and middle-income countries are often the most severely affected during disasters and emergency situations. Children's education, nutrition, safety and overall care are jeopardised in times of disasters and humanitarian emergencies. This has been seen in cases of cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis and floods in different parts of India. More recently, reports by ECPAT, UNICEF and INTERPOL warned of the threats and risks of sexual violence against children associated with the COVID-19 – induced lockdowns across the world.

6. **Categories of children at higher risk of abuse and exploitation:** Children with physical or intellectual disabilities, children from scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities, transgender children, children of sex workers and migrant workers, children on street situations and other categories of children are at higher risk of exploitation and violence, including sexual violence. For these children reporting poses even greater challenges owing to either the inability to express themselves, caregiver's inability to take action, dependence of the perpetrator or the systemic inadequacies to respond to children from these categories.

7. **Implementation of legislations to address SVAC in India:** India has a wide range of rights-based policy and legislations that resonate with, borrow from and adhere to the United Nations Child Rights Convention (UNHRC) and other conventions and frameworks. Besides national laws and frameworks, several states have framed their own specific programmes and initiatives to respond to children in difficult circumstances. However, challenges in implementation of these initiatives persist and the ground level owing to challenges such as poor infrastructural, staffing patterns, insufficient training and lack of active and efficient monitoring systems.

Recommendations on steps to address the gaps:

1. **Influence norms and practices that perpetuate SVAC:** It is important to raise awareness among families, communities, formal and informal stakeholders, children and young people on reporting and redressal mechanisms including services such as CHILDLINE, Child Welfare Committees and child friendly laws. At the same time, it is equally important to address harmful and discriminatory social norms and practices which perpetuate and justify SVAC by working closely with children and communities to bring a positive change.

2. **Strengthen Local Child Protection Committees:** Village and Ward Level Child Protection Committees need to be strengthened. It is important to have consistent mentoring of the CPC members to function effectively as per their role. CPC has a major role to play in the prevention of abuse, neglect and any kind of violation against children.

3. **Improve coordination between Stakeholders:** An effective response to child and adolescent sexual violence requires a collaborative approach that incorporates the education, health, justice and social services sectors, along with civil society, academic institutions and other NGOs. There is a need to establish mechanisms to improve coordination among different stakeholders, including those in the private and public, for prevention of and response to SVAC.

4. **Effective monitoring of implementation of laws and schemes:** There is a need to improve the monitoring of the implementation of laws and schemes formulated to address sexual violence against children. The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) needs to be strengthened and monitored. Ombudsman bodies like the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCRs) have a major role in monitoring the implementation of child protection legislation like the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and POCSO Act. As part of its mandate, the NCPCR and SCPCRs are required to monitor the formulation of guidelines for different stakeholders, the designation of special courts and appointment of dissemination of information through various forms of media. In addition, the Commissions are required to call for reports on specific cases of child sexual abuse and collect information and data on POCSO cases. The Commissions need to be allowed to perform their roles without interference from state or national agencies and political parties.

5. **Ensure zero-tolerance policy by schools**: Schools and other educational institutions need to adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of violence against children and CSA in particular. All schools should have a functional child protection and child safe guarding policy with a structured reporting mechanism and a monitoring mechanism involving a statutory body. Each child safety violation that is reported needs to be brought to a logical and speedy conclusion. The Education Department in each state needs to ensure and monitor that the Child Protection Policy is notified and implemented.

6. **Strengthen CHILDLINE**: There is a need to strengthen CHILDLINE agencies and functionaries at the State and district levels. Recognising CHILDLINE as an essential service is one step in that direction. Awareness creation on CHILDLINE services and roles needs to be undertaken in all forms of media with a special focus on children receiving such information. There should also be a digital reporting process in place to increase reporting of cases.

7. **Fill data and research gaps**: Data is crucial for effective decision-making and to influence policy at a national and state level. Following the National study on Child Abuse which was conducted in 2007, no subsequent studies have been undertaken to ascertain the extent of sexual violence against children in India. On-going research on factors that influence judgements needs to be undertaken and the finding disseminated widely among investigation and judicial officers.

8. **Improving the capacities of stakeholders**: A large number of service providers are not trained and lack capacities for prevention and response services. Considering this, it is important to invest in Systematic, robust and standardized capacity building of Child Protection Workforce including Police Officials (Child Welfare Police Officers (CWPOs), Special Police Juvenile Police Units (SJPUs), and Anti Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs), medical officers (doctors, nurses, mental health professionals, staff of One Stop Centers), Child Protection Officers (CWC members, CHILDLINE Staff, staff of District Child Protection Units), judicial officers (Public Prosecutors), judges, Legal Services Authorities). For this, firstly, all gaps in the skills and capacities should be identified, followed by comprehensive training programmes designed to address them and training imparted on an on-going and phased manner.

9. **Attention to SVAC risks in disaster management laws, policies and plans**: India's national disaster and state disaster management policies do not address the issue of SVAC during disasters and emergencies. There is a need to incorporate the heightened risk of SVAC in disaster management laws and policies, such as the National Disaster Management Authority Act and state-level disaster management plans. SVAC should also be included in local-level plans, such as district or city disaster management plans. There is also a need to establish coordination and communication between monitoring authorities at national and state level for child protection and disaster management which includes the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) for Disaster Management and NCPCR and SCPCR for child protection.

10. **Implement measures to prevent risk of SVAC due to COVID-19 pandemic**: COVID-19 is having a devastating impact on children and their families. Measures taken to contain the pandemic further increased the risks of physical, sexual and emotional violence against children. Hence, it is important to have robust social protection programmes for families to ensure that these families do not rely on negative coping strategies to supplement family income through sexual exploitation or child marriage. There is also a need to sensitise parents as well as children on the sage use of internet.

11. **Ensure rights-based child participation:** Building agency, empowerment and resilience of children is essential for their enhanced self and collective efficacy so that they can take transformational actions and bring about a change in their lives and lives of their peers. This can be achieved be ensuring rights-based child participation in program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and advocacy pertaining to SVAC.

12. **Measures to address Sexual violence against children in online spaces:**
    - Proactive role of CERT-In (India Computer Emergency Response Team) is required at the National and State level for talking the issue of sexual violence against children in online spaces. CERT-In is the nodal agency to deal with cyber security threats like hacking and phishing. It strengthens security-related defence of the Indian Internet domain.

- Government blocking of websites containing extreme Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) based on INTERPOL's "Worst-of-list" shared periodically by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) which is the National Nodal Agency for Interpol. This should be regularly monitored.

- The CBI facilitated had set-up online Child-Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (OCSAE) Prevention and Investigation unit in November 2019 under special crime zone. The newly specialised Unit should regularly collect, collate and disseminate information regarding publication, transmission, creation, collection, seeking, browsing, downloading, advertising, promoting, exchanging, distribution of information relating to Online child sexual abuse and exploitation; and investigation of such offences covered under provisions of the IPC 1860, POCSO Act 2012, and the IT Act 2000.

- India should consider signing the Cybercrime Convention and adopting Model Guidelines defining Child Sexual Abuse Related Offences.

- The new forms of online child sexual abuse including extreme pornography, revenge porn; circulating private sexual images of a person without their consent, sexting, sextortion, cyber defamation, and malafide taking of personal information from children can be presently tackled under the existing provisions of the POCSO Act, IT Act and the IPC. The potential of these provisions must be publicised. In addition, schools and social media platforms and internet service providers need to take proactive measures to spread cyber awareness among children and add new safeguards to improve safety of children.