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Durbar Bulletin -34

Protecting rights and dignity of children of sex worker

On 23rd Decemeber, 2013 Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee in association with GOAL India organized a workshop on Integrated Child Protection Scheme. The idea was to design a pilot implementation strategy and plan in line with the Integrated Child Protection Scheme through the promotion of a community based invention program. In 2009 Indian Government launched the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) in order to develop collaboration with other civil society organizations to reduce vulnerability of children and to promote development of a comprehensive child safety net. The children of sex workers are more vulnerable than other children due to legal and social status of sex worker which is stigmatized and partially criminalized in our country. They have to face stigma, discrimination and violence almost in every occasion violence against children of sex workers in addition to child abuse, rape etc are extremely high among these children. Since 1997 DMSC though initiating Self Regulatory Board (SRB) with an objective to protect and prevent entry of minor and unwilling women into sex trade has resulted in significant improvement in this arena.

“Till date SRB has rescued total 982 unwilling girls and girls below 18 years of age from the red light areas of West Bengal. Along with this, Self Regulatory Board is also involved in other activities like preventing school dropout, measures taken against child abuse and domestic violence.” Bharti Dey mentioned in her presentation. In this context way of processing of SRB in rescuing and repatriating unwilling and minor girls which includes ossification test, pre and post counseling (if they wants to join sex trade) etc were mentioned in this session.

A dialogue was initiated between member of SRB and official engaged in ICPS system in order to develop possible convergence between SRB and ICPS to enhance the rights and security of children residing in red light area. It is believed that it would be better

maintained through a co-ordinated effort between the two. Among the government official who are present in the meeting are Mr. Kaji Sheri, Asst Executive of Social Welfare Department, Mr. Chirontan Nath from Kolkata CID, Mr. Sunil Jha, Project director of Save the Children, Ex MLA Mr. Porimal Biswas, Mr. Sunil Pal, Chairperson of CWC, Mr Ajay Saha, Councilor, Mr. Amit Samaddar, CDPO, Ms. Ushree Ray and Sima Sarkar, DCPO etc. Dr. Smarajit Jana mentioned this in his speech that ICPS can only be effective in sex work setting through (1) collectivization of the children of sex workers, (2) increase the level of awareness amongst the sex workers and their children and developing their leadership. (3) Changing the existing law and policies that strangulates and ostracize sex workers and their children. So that they could live with their head high in an environment free from fear and discrimination.

During group discussion participants came up with specific recommendations to operationalize convergence between SRB and ICPS.

Celebration of Sabar Adhikar Dibosh

Birsha Munda Gram Unnayan Committee in participation with Durbar organized a four daylong event to celebrate Sabar Adhikar Dibosh in Amlasole, on 30th December 2013.

Since 2005 Durbar is supporting celebration of Sabar Adhikar Dibosh in Amlasole. The main attraction of the program was sports and cultural events which was initiated on 29th December 2013 and continued till 30th December 2013.

Durbar organised football match named Sabar Cup involving Sabars and Mundas residing in a geographical terrain which includes West Medinipore and adjutant Jharkhand State. Other sports which includes Handi Bhanga, 200 meter race, 400 meter run, tug of war, 800 meter race, musical chair, biscuit race, chocolate race etc was participated by boys and girls of the subdivision of West Medinipore. A total of 32 football team representing Sabar and Munda and Lodha communities participated in the Sabar Cup competition. Hundreds of men, women, and children arrive at the ground to lend their support for respective teams. Various eminent personalities like local MLA, member of the Gram Panchayat, representatives of Amlasole Yuva Kalyan Samiti, representatives of BirshaMunda Gram Unnayan Committee etc were also present in the program. The program came to an end with a melodious song sung by the Secretary of Amra Padatik.

Durbar in participation with AINSW hosted a painting workshop in Kolkata

On 28th December 2013, in presence of prominent artists Durbar organised a painting workshop for sex workers children in Subham Hall in the heart of Sonagachi red light district, Kolkata. The sex workers' children who are socially marginalized and often deprived of their rights could hardly access to education and other career building opportunities since decades.

Though many children from the sex workers' community started painting of their own interest but get lost in the middle due to lack of confidence or financial constraints what

forced them to leave paintings or any other extracurricular activities which does not fetch income. This workshop was designed to build their self-esteem through inculcating a process of interaction with renowned artists, painters of the city.

The workshop was attended by 30 sex workers' children. They took part in a day long program with artists like Mr.Subrato Gangapadhay, Ms.ElinaBanik, Mr.Partha Dasgupta, Mr. Ashok Sardar and Mr.Subhanil Roy collage artist Mr.Pradip Paul and Mr.Bimal Kundu who at the end of the program donated their drawing and painting to be sold to raise fund for the betterment of the children of sex workers.

Up Coming Events:

Durbar has organized a 6 days Mela at Sarat Chatterjee Park (Triangular Park) in South Kolkata from 29th January 2014 to 3rd February 2014. The theme of the mela is "Protibade Nari, Protirodhi Nari"

The Day wise Themes of the Mela 2014 are

Theme 1: Women and their Right to information

Theme 2: Women and their Health related rights

Theme 3: Women and their right to food

Theme 4: Women and their right to education

Theme 5: Women and equal rights and legal issues

Theme 6: Women and their right to voice against Discrimination

Theme 7: Women and Economic independence

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