

OPERATIONALIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THREE-TIER CHILD PROTECTION MECHANISM IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

A PILOT INITIATIVE TOWARDS COMMUNITY BASED CHILD PROTECTION



**District Magistrate
Rajouri (J&K)**



OP Bhagat, JKAS

Message

As I share my message for the report, I am delighted to note that the Rajouri district pioneered the establishment of a three-tier child protection mechanism in Jammu and Kashmir, which was envisioned in Mission Vatsalaya. I was delighted to be part of this as District Magistrate in the Rajouri district. This pioneering initiative has been made possible by the tireless efforts of the District Child Protection Officer, Child Welfare Committee, Police, Mission Vatsalya, National Development Foundation, UNICEF India and numerous stakeholders. I appreciate the National Development Foundation for documenting this for its replication and scaleup.

The three-tier system, comprising community-based, village, block, and district-level mechanisms, has shown tremendous promise in strengthening child protection mechanisms. This innovative approach ensures a safe and supportive environment for our children, empowering them to thrive. By engaging communities, we have been able to identify and address child protection concerns more effectively.

A key aspect of this initiative is the convergent approach, which brings together various government departments, NGOs, and community members to address the complex needs of children. This collaborative strategy has been instrumental in promoting the well-being and rights of our children. By leveraging the strengths of each stakeholder, we have been able to set up a child welfare and protection mechanism for children in need of care and protection and those who are in conflict with the law.

I commend this report to all stakeholders and look forward to our continued collaboration. This pioneering initiative serves as a model for replication in other districts, and I am confident that it will have a lasting impact on the lives of our children. I compliment the District Social Welfare Officer/DCPO Rajouri, Mr. Abdul Raheem, and Mr. Rajiv Khajuria, President of National Development Foundation J&K Jammu, for its rollout on the ground.

As we move forward, I urge all stakeholders to remain committed to this critical cause. Let us continue to work together to ensure that every child in Jammu and Kashmir has access to a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

**O.P. Bhagat, JKAS
July 27, 2024**



**Senior Superintendent of Police
Rajouri (J&K)**



Randeep Kumar, JKPS

Message

As the Senior Superintendent of Police, I am honoured to present this message for the report on the pioneering project of establishing a three-tier child protection system in Jammu and Kashmir and supporting the district police in establishing the first-ever child-friendly police station. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the District Magistrate, the District Child Protection Officer, the President of the National Development Foundation, UNICEF India, and all stakeholders who have worked tirelessly to make this project a reality.

As a law enforcement officer, I have witnessed firsthand the impact of crime and trauma on children. It is our responsibility as a society to ensure that our children feel safe, supported, and protected. The establishment of child-friendly police stations is a crucial step in this direction.

I am particularly pleased to note the emphasis on creating child-friendly spaces in police stations. These spaces provide a safe and non-threatening environment for children to report crimes and access support services. This initiative will not only help to increase the reporting of child-related crimes but also ensure that children receive the support and care they need to recover from traumatic experiences.

The child-friendly police stations are equipped with specially trained personnel, counselling services, and recreational facilities, making them comfortable places for children in distress. This space will have a positive impact on children and their families, and I firmly believe that this initiative has the potential to transform the way we respond to child-related crimes.

I commend this report to all stakeholders and look forward to our continued collaboration in promoting the well-being and rights of our children. This pioneering project serves as a model for replication in other districts, and I am confident that it will have a lasting impact on the lives of our children.

As we move forward, I urge all stakeholders to remain committed to this critical cause. Let us continue to work together to ensure that every child in Jammu and Kashmir has access to a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

**Randeep Kumar, JKPS
November 02, 2024**



for every child

Chief of Child Protection
UNICEF India, New Delhi



Soledad Herrero

Message

I am delighted to present this report on the development of a three-tier child protection mechanism in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (UT of J&K), a pioneering initiative undertaken in collaboration with the National Development Foundation (NDF) and the Government of the UT of J&K. This intervention stands as a testament to our collective commitment to safeguarding every child's right to protection, safety, and well-being.

The programme outlined in the report focuses on strengthening and implementing community-based structures and mechanisms to create a robust social safety net for children. The three-tier model, spanning village, block, and district levels, ensures timely support and services for the welfare and protection of children. Through this model, communities are empowered to prevent and respond to child vulnerabilities, creating a more resilient child protection ecosystem.

Aligned with the Government of India's flagship Mission Vatsalya scheme, this initiative represents a groundbreaking step forward in Jammu and Kashmir. It serves as a first-of-its-kind model within the region, laying a strong foundation for replication and scale-up across the UT.

This report captures the initiative's key achievements, lessons learned, and its potential for scalability. It is a valuable resource for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders dedicated to child protection. UNICEF remains committed to fostering collaboration among government, civil society, and community partners to ensure the most vulnerable children are protected and nurtured.

I extend my best wishes to our partners as this programme continues to expand its reach and impact.

Soledad Herrero
November 25, 2024



Rajiv Kumar Khajuria

**President
National Development Foundation
Member Selection Committee under JJ Rules**

Foreword and Acknowledgement

I am pleased to introduce this vital report on child protection in Jammu and Kashmir, a region with unique challenges that demand special attention to safeguard its most vulnerable citizens - children. This comprehensive document provides an in-depth analysis of the region's child protection landscape, highlighting successes, challenges, and opportunities for growth.

The report emphasises the significant impact of strategic partnerships among stakeholders in improving the lives of children in Jammu and Kashmir. It serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders to collaborate, ensuring children's well-being through collective effort. By working together, we can foster an environment where all children flourish. This collaborative strategy has already demonstrated positive outcomes in promoting the welfare and protection of children in the region.

The National Development Foundation (NDF) would like to express its sincere gratitude for the cooperation and support extended by the Government of UT of J&K, to the Department of Social Welfare and the District Administrations of Jammu and Rajouri. We appreciate UNICEF's financial and technical support. I particularly appreciate the technical inputs and support provided by Mr. Hilal Bhat, the Child Protection Specialist in J&K. We recognize the tireless efforts of our team, guided by Ms Arti Sharma, CEO, managed by Mr Sunny Kumar and supported by Mr. Amit Kundal, Mr. Amit Sharma, Mr. Ajay Dev Singh, as well as the volunteers who worked diligently to implement project activities. I also appreciate the support extended by Mr. Bal Ji Raina, Mr. Aman Deep, Ms Nisha Pandita and Mr. Aman Sharma.

We appreciate the active participation and feedback from stakeholders, community members, and beneficiaries, which greatly enriched the project.

Special thanks to the following people for their visionary leadership and guidance: Mr. Sanjeev Chadha IFS - Additional Secretary - Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India. Mr Anand Jain IPS, ADG Police Jammu. Ms. Harvinder Kour JKAS, former Mission Director - Mission Vatsalya. Sh. O.P. Bhagat, former District Magistrate - Rajouri. Sh. Amritpal Singh IPS and Sh. Randeep Kumar JKPS, former SSP Rajouri. I also want to express my gratitude to Mr. Abdul Raheem JKAS, DSWO/District Child Protection Officer Rajouri, for his expertise and support.

NDF also gratefully acknowledges invaluable contributions, expertise and dedication of Mr. Manish Jain in authoring this report.

**Rajiv Kumar Khajuria
November 10, 2024**

**DSWO/District Child Protection Officer
Rajouri (J&K)**



Abdul Raheem, JKAS

Foreword

I am happy to share this comprehensive report on the implementation of a pioneering project on child protection in Rajouri district, Jammu and Kashmir. This report showcases our team efforts with the National Development Foundation (NDF), Police department, other government departments, and local communities to strengthen community-based mechanisms for child welfare and protection.

Our community-based approach empowers local communities to take ownership of child protection, fostering a culture of responsibility and care. This approach has been instrumental in identifying and addressing child protection concerns more effectively. By engaging with local communities, we will be able to provide support services to children in need, ensuring their safety and well-being.

One of the key highlights of this project is the establishment of child-friendly police stations. These police stations provide a safe and secure space for children to report crimes and seek services. The project has provided technical support, training of police personnel and counseling services, and supported the police station with material resources, making the place a comfortable space for children in distress.

I extend my gratitude to all partners who have contributed to this report, including the National Development Foundation (NDF). I urge stakeholders to utilize the findings and recommendations to strengthen community-led initiatives for the welfare and protection of children.

This project serves as a model for replication in other districts, and I am confident that it will have a lasting impact on the lives of our children. By working together, we can create a safer, supportive environment for all children in Jammu and Kashmir.

As we move forward, I emphasize the importance of continued collaboration and community engagement. We must remain committed to promoting the well-being and rights of our children.

**Abdul Raheem JKAS
November 15, 2024**



Arti Sharma

**Chief Executive Officer
National Development Foundation**

Preface

National Development Foundation (NDF) implemented a yearlong project supported by UNICEF India to strengthen child protection mechanisms in Jammu and Kashmir. The project's larger aim was to protect children and their welfare and prioritize their well-being amidst the region's unique socio-political challenges.

Key accomplishments include successfully piloting the first-ever three-tier community-based child Protection mechanism as envisioned in Mission Vatsalya, i.e., establishing District, Block, and Village-level Child Protection Committees and capacity building for committee members, police personnel, and other stakeholders.

This report documents the project's journey, highlighting successes, challenges, and lessons learned. It provides an in-depth analysis of Jammu and Kashmir's child protection landscape, identifying areas for improvement and recommending strategic interventions.

The report is organized into sections focusing on contextualizing child protection in Jammu and Kashmir, the institutional framework, the formation and capacity building of Child Welfare and Protection Committees, and community engagement and participation. It presents exciting case studies and success stories, as well as challenges and future directions.

This documentation serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders working towards child protection in Jammu and Kashmir. It emphasizes the importance of collaborative efforts, community ownership and institutional strengthening in ensuring children's safety and well-being.

The report acknowledges the efforts of the NDF's team, UNICEF's support, and the dedication of government officials, community leaders, and stakeholders.

As the project's outcomes are reflected upon, the commitment to protecting Jammu and Kashmir's children is reaffirmed. This report demonstrates the power of collective action and serves as a stepping-stone towards creating a safer environment for all children.

Arti Sharma

Arti Sharma

November 10, 2024

Abstract

This report documents the experience of the National Development Foundation (NDF) in implementing a one-year programme on child protection with active collaboration with the district administration of Rajouri, Jammu, Mission Vatsalaya, Communities, and UNICEF India. This document examines the context of child protection issues in Jammu and Kashmir and outlines key strategies, activities, and accomplishments in strengthening child protection mechanisms. It mainly focuses on a three-tier child protection mechanism and highlights successes and challenges. Key areas covered are child protection mechanisms, capacity building, community engagement, policy implementation, and stakeholder coordination. Key lessons include - Collaboration, capacity building, community engagement, addressing knowledge gaps, child-friendly spaces in Police stations, flexibility and adaptability, sustainability, and partnerships with civil society organisations.



List of Acronyms and definitions

ADDC	Additional District Development Commissioner
Article 35-A	Article 35A of the Constitution of India gave special rights and privileges to permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian government scrapped Article 35A in 2019.
Article 370	Article 370 was a constitutional provision that granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The Indian government scrapped Article 370 in 2019.
ARCs	Adolescent resource centres
ASHA	An Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) is a community health worker who promotes health and healthcare in their community
BDO	Block Development Officer
BDC	Block Development Council
BLCWPC	Block-Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees
CARA	Child Adoption Resource Authorities
CCI	Child care institutions
CCL	Children in conflict with law
CDPO	Child Development Project Officer
CEO	Chief Education Officer
CFS	Child-friendly spaces
CMO	Chief Medical Officer
CNCP	Children in need of care and protection
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
CSS	Centrally Sponsored Scheme
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
CWSN	Children with special needs
DCPU	District Child Protection Unit
DLCWPC	District-Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee
DLSA	District Legal Services Authority
DM	District Magistrate
DO Letter	Demi Official Letter, a form of a letter written by the Ministers and Senior Officers of the State or Central Government to other officers
DPO	District Project Officer
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
GoI	Government of India
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
ICPS	Integrated Child Protection Scheme
IEC	Information, Education, Communication
ITI	Industrial Training Institute
J&K	Jammu and Kashmir
JJB	Juvenile Justice Board

KAS	Kashmir Administrative Services
LOC	Line of Control
MHPSS	Mental health and psychosocial support
Mission Vatsalya	Mission Vatsalya is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), Government of India, in 2009. The scheme aims to provide holistic care and protection to children in difficult circumstances.
MWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India
NCPCR	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
NDF	National Development Foundation
NGO	Non-government Organisation
OBC	Other backward class
POCSO	Protection of Children from Sexual Offences
SC	Scheduled caste
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEDGs	Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups
SJPU	Special Juvenile Police Unit
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRS	Sample Registration System
SSP	Senior Superintendent of Police
ST	Scheduled tribe
UNCRC	United Nations Child Rights Convention
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UT	Union Territory
VLCWPC	Village level child welfare and protection committee
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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1. Executive Summary

The National Development Foundation, in active collaboration with the Government, Communities, and UNICEF, successfully implemented a project to strengthen child protection mechanisms in Jammu and Kashmir. This executive summary highlights the project's key achievements, lessons learned, and recommendations for future initiatives.

The project addressed critical gaps in child protection mechanisms by building three-tier Child Welfare and Protection Committees at the District, Block, and Village levels, focusing on capacity building, community engagement, and the establishment of child-friendly spaces. Training programs for police officers, JJB, CWC, and DCPU officials enhanced their understanding of child rights and protection, resulting in improved confidence in delivering services. The formation of Block Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees and Village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees fostered community ownership and participation.

Key achievements include the following:

- Forming/re-invigorating of Child Welfare and Protection Committees (CWPC),
- Training of a range of stakeholders on child welfare and protection,
- Establishing a child-friendly police station,
- Conducting child rights camps and sensitising about 19,000 community members,
- Facilitating a central government commitment to provide sponsored support for children facing adversity, and
- Highlighted the need to address knowledge gaps on alternative care mechanisms and the importance of sustainability through continuous effort.

Despite challenges, including the dissolution of Block Development Councils (BDCs) and Panchayats, the project demonstrated the power of collaborative efforts. The National Development Foundation's expertise, UNICEF Support and government stakeholders' commitment converged to create a lasting impact.

Lessons learned from this project underscore the importance of several key factors in strengthening child protection mechanisms. These are:

- Collaboration is crucial for effective child protection, as it fosters a cohesive approach among stakeholders, ensuring a unified response to child protection issues.
- Capacity building and community engagement are essential, as they empower government officials, police officers, and community members to recognise and address child protection concerns.
- Addressing knowledge gaps on alternative care mechanisms is vital, as it ensures that children receive appropriate care and support.
- Child-friendly spaces enhance child protection by providing safe and supportive environments for vulnerable children.
- Sustainability requires continuous effort, emphasising the need for ongoing commitment, resources, and engagement to maintain momentum and ensure lasting impact.
- Effective child protection mechanisms also require flexibility, adaptability, and innovation, leveraging community-led initiatives to address emerging challenges.

By integrating these lessons, future initiatives can strengthen child protection systems, ensuring the well-being and dignity of vulnerable children.

Future Directions: Building on the project's success, future initiatives should focus on the following:

- Strengthen child protection mechanisms,
- Enhance community engagement,
- Address emerging challenges,
- Build capacities,
- Create child-friendly spaces,
- Scale up successful interventions

Key Statistics

- 19000 community members sensitised (i.e. the indirect reach which is targeted through IEC material and indirect awareness modes)
- 250 government officials trained.
- One child-friendly police station was established.
- Successful advocacy prompted the issuance of various government orders and circulars, paving the way for the constitution of three tiers of Child Welfare and Protection Committees (CWPCs) - district, block, and village levels.
- Constitution of first District and Block level Child Welfare and Protection Committees in District Rajouri.
- Five Village level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (VLCWPC) made functional

Stakeholder engagement: National Development Foundation, UNICEF, different departments of the Government of the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), and communities, including women and children.

This initiative paves the way for sustainable child protection mechanisms, safeguarding children's well-being and dignity through collaborative efforts.

2. Context

Jammu and Kashmir faces unique child protection challenges due to its socio-political context. The socio-political context of child protection in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) is complex and influenced by various factors:

Socio-Cultural Factors: Jammu and Kashmir is a conservative society where traditional norms prioritise family honour, modesty, and obedience. This influences child-rearing practices, limiting autonomy, and reinforces gender roles, particularly for girls. Families and society in J&K are predominantly patriarchal structures where male dominance affects decision-making and resource allocation and children's futures, often marginalising women's voices and limiting girls' education and autonomy. Ethnic and religious diversity: Multiple communities with distinct needs and challenges. J&K has a diverse population. It includes Kashmiri Muslims, Dogra Hindus, Gujjars, Bakarwals, and Paharis, each with unique cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic needs and requiring tailored child protection strategies. Poverty and economic instability in Jammu and Kashmir have affected access to basic services like healthcare, education, and nutrition, exacerbating child vulnerability and hindering holistic development.

Political Factors: Three consecutive wars with Pakistan and violence and unrest from the 1990s had created an unsafe environment for children. Unrest from the 1990s had affected child protection and disrupted education, healthcare, and psychosocial well-being while exacerbating vulnerability to exploitation and trauma in Jammu and Kashmir. Decades-long armed violence had severely impacted civilian life, exposing children to trauma, fear, and instability, disrupting education, healthcare, and socialisation while curtailing freedoms and exacerbating psychological distress. Political instability in the past, marked by frequent government changes and imposition of the Governor's rule, had hindered consistency in policy implementation and fragmented services, leaving vulnerable children without crucial support many times.

Economic Factors: High rates of unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir eroded economic security, heightening child vulnerability. Livelihood challenges led to frustration, increasing domestic violence, child labour, and early marriages. Reduced household income compromised access to education, healthcare, and nutrition, exacerbating child exploitation, trauma, and psychological distress, ultimately undermining child protection and well-being.

Infrastructure challenges in remote areas in J&K hinder access to child protection services, exacerbating vulnerability. Access to healthcare facilities, schools, and communication networks often leads to inadequate child protection infrastructure and limited access to education, healthcare, and social services, especially in isolated and vulnerable communities.

It is in the above context that key child protection issues in J&K have historically included the following:

Armed violence-related child protection issues: Use of children and young people in militant activities, displacement and psychological trauma with exposure to violence, loss, and fear. Militancy led to a large number of children getting orphaned, and these children faced vulnerability to exploitation.

Social issues related to child protection issues: Jammu and Kashmir grapple with pressing child protection concerns, including child labour and child exploitation, exacerbated by poverty, conflict, and displacement. Key problems persist, such as limited access to quality education and healthcare, psychological trauma and distress, orphaned and abandoned children, substance abuse, and juvenile delinquency, as well as gender-based violence and discrimination, underscoring the need for community engagement, capacity building, and policy reforms. Some link these issues to economic distress and inflation. Children engaged in hazardous work, and the vulnerability of children to drug addiction are among the main issues. In March 2023, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment stated that approximately one million individuals in the union territory were grappling with substance abuse. Others estimate its extent to be 3.5 million, including women and children.

Education-related issues: There is a high number of out-of-school children, mainly identified by high dropout rates. Infrastructure is inadequate, and there are concerns about the quality of education.

Health-related issues: Limited access to quality healthcare, including mental health and counselling services.

Other child protection issues: Orphaned children face vulnerability to exploitation, absence of inclusive services for children with disabilities.

Protection mechanisms: Weak implementation of child protection laws, limited capacity of child welfare institutions, and insufficient funding for child protection initiatives.

To address these challenges, the Jammu and Kashmir government and civil society organisations are working together to:

- Strengthen child protection laws and policies.
- Enhance community awareness and engagement.
- Improve access to education, healthcare, and social services.
- Support vulnerable children and families.

3. Background Post - 2019 Scenario

J&K is undergoing a period of transition involving numerous institutional, structural, and legislative reforms that have influenced child welfare and protection services. These reforms are outlined below:

The transition from ICPS to Mission Vatsalya

The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) was a landmark initiative launched by the Government of India in 2009 to provide a protective environment for children in need of care and protection (CNCP) and children in conflict with law (CCL). In Jammu and Kashmir, the ICPS was implemented in 2016, seven years after its implementation in the rest of the country. Its Actual functioning started in 2018, following the constitution of the Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) and Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs), with the objective of ensuring children's safety, security, and well-being. However, despite its noble intentions, ICPS faced several challenges, including inadequate funding, infrastructure, and human resources. To address these gaps and strengthen child protection mechanisms, the Government of India launched Mission Vatsalya in 2021, a revamped and expanded version of ICPS.

Mission Vatsalya aims to provide a more comprehensive and integrated approach to child protection, focusing on the prevention, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children in need of care and protection.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the transition from ICPS to Mission Vatsalya has presented significant opportunities, including the potential for enhanced funding, improved infrastructure, and capacity building for stakeholders. The mission prioritises community engagement, awareness, and participation, recognising the critical role of community members in preventing child abuse and exploitation.

¹According to the recent 2024 PLFS data, unemployment rate in J&K stands at 11.8% as compared with a national average of 3.2%

Under Mission Vatsalya, Jammu and Kashmir is strengthening a robust child protection system comprising District Child Protection Units (DCPUs), Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), and Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs). These institutions work in tandem to identify, rescue, and rehabilitate children in need of care and protection. The mission also focuses on strengthening institutional care services, including children's homes, shelter homes, and observation homes.

One of Mission Vatsalya's significant features is its emphasis on family-based care and alternative care arrangements. In Jammu and Kashmir, the mission aims to promote foster care, sponsorship, and adoption, ensuring children grow up in a loving and supportive family environment. To achieve this, the government has established Family Counseling Centers and the Child Adoption Resource Authority (CARA).

The transition from ICPS to Mission Vatsalya has also brought about technological advancements, including the introduction of an online child tracking system, which enables real-time monitoring of child protection cases. This digital platform has improved data management, streamlined service delivery, and enhanced accountability.

In Jammu and Kashmir, Mission Vatsalya has partnered with NGOs, community organisations, and civil society groups to amplify its impact. This collaborative approach ensures that child protection services reach the most vulnerable and marginalised communities. By leveraging community resources and expertise, Mission Vatsalya aims to create a protective environment where children can thrive.

As Mission Vatsalya continues to roll out in Jammu and Kashmir, it is essential to address the unique challenges posed by the region's conflict-affected context. The mission must prioritise capacity building, infrastructure development, and community engagement to ensure the safety and well-being of children. By learning from ICPS's successes and challenges, Mission Vatsalya can create a more robust and responsive child protection system, transforming the lives of Jammu and Kashmir's most vulnerable citizens – its children.

Challenges faced by the Juvenile Justice System in Jammu and Kashmir

The Juvenile Justice system in Jammu and Kashmir has faced challenges due to the inactivity of Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) and Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) after their tenure ends. However, as of now, new CWCs and JJBs are in place.

The Department of Social Welfare in Jammu and Kashmir has been addressing these issues through various government orders and notifications. For instance, they have issued orders for the appointment of inquiry officers, the assignment of additional charges, and the constitution of committees to scrutinise selection processes.

These orders demonstrate the government's efforts to address the challenges faced by child protection mechanisms, CWCs and JJBs.

District Child Protection Units (DCPUs)

The District Child Protection Units (DCPUs) under Mission Vatsalya are crucial in facilitating the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act. Mission Vatsalya aims to ensure children's safety and well-being, especially those affected by child labour, trafficking, natural disasters, and other CNCP and CCL Children. The DCPUs play a vital role in executing this mission.

Key Challenges:

- **Funding Issues:** Delays in fund disbursements hinder effective implementation, making it difficult for DCPUs to visit institutions and communities.
- **Legal Disputes:** The outsourcing of DCPU staff has led to an ongoing legal battle between the government and the affected parties, with the case remaining sub-judice.

Mission Vatsalya's Objectives:

- Provide support and protection to children in need
- Strengthen child protection services
- Ensure effective implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, serves as the backbone of child protection in India. The Act's amendments in 2021 and the model rules in 2022 aim to further strengthen child protection mechanisms.

Transition and integration of the 1098 Childline service in J&K with existing child protection mechanisms

The 1098 Child Line service is a crucial toll-free emergency number for children in distress. In Jammu and Kashmir, Childline services are being strengthened through transition and integration with existing child protection mechanisms. Key Features of 1098 Childline Services include a 24/7 toll-free emergency number (1098), free and confidential support accessible from any phone or mobile network, immediate response and intervention, and collaboration with local authorities, NGOs, and hospitals.

Transition and Integration Phase of 1098 services in J&K: Merger with District Child Protection Units (DCPUs). Strengthening linkages with existing child protection mechanisms. Capacity building of staff and stakeholders. Enhancing technology infrastructure. Expanding services to remote and inaccessible areas. Childline Services in J&K are operational in 20 districts, and the government itself runs them. They are equipped with call centres (helpdesks) and response teams, as well as linkages with Child Welfare Committees (CWCs).

Transition from the J&K State legislative framework to Central legislation

The repeal of Article 370 in 2019 marked a significant turning point in Jammu and Kashmir's history, paving the way for the extension of Central Acts to the region. This transition has profoundly changed child protection laws, strengthening the safeguards for children in need of care and protection.

Prior to 2019, Jammu and Kashmir had their own set of laws governing child protection, including the Jammu and Kashmir Juvenile Justice Act of 2013 and the Jammu and Kashmir Children Act of 2003. While these laws aimed to protect children's rights, they had limitations and inconsistencies in relation to Central Acts.

The extension of central acts to Jammu and Kashmir has harmonised child protection laws, ensuring uniformity and consistency. Key central acts now applicable in J&K include the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015; the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012; the Child and adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986; amended in 2016 and the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

These Central Acts provide comprehensive protections for children, addressing issues such as child abuse and exploitation, child labour and trafficking, education and healthcare, and juvenile justice and rehabilitation.

The Juvenile Justice Act 2015, for instance, establishes a robust framework for child protection, including Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs), Special Juvenile Police Units (SJPU) and District Child Protection Units (DCPU).

The POCSO Act of 2012 provides stringent measures to prevent child sexual abuse, including mandatory reporting, special courts, and child-friendly procedures.

The transition from the J&K Acts to the Central Acts has also facilitated increased funding and resources, capacity building and training, and improved infrastructure and services. However, challenges persist, including limited awareness and sensitisation, inadequate infrastructure and resources and socio-cultural barriers. To address these challenges, the government and civil society organisations must work together to raise awareness and sensitise stakeholders, strengthen institutions and services and promote community engagement and participation.

In conclusion, the transition from J&K Acts to Central Acts in Jammu and Kashmir marks a significant milestone in child protection. While challenges remain, the harmonisation of laws provides a robust framework for protecting children's rights.

4. Project Design

In designing the project, NDF conducted a situation analysis of child protection mechanisms in Jammu and Kashmir. The study revealed inadequate child protection services, limited capacity of existing child protection structures, insufficient community awareness of child protection and high incidence of child abuse and exploitation.

To address these issues, NDF consulted with government departments (Social Welfare, Education, and Health), local civil society organisations, community leaders, members and child protection experts. These consultations identified the need for strengthened child protection mechanisms, the importance of community engagement and awareness, capacity building for child protection service providers, and the establishment of district, block, and village-level CWPCs.

A review of existing policies and frameworks, including the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015; the National Child Policy, 2013; the Integrated Child Protection Scheme, 2019; and Mission Vatsalya, was conducted. This review highlighted gaps in policy implementation, limited resources & infrastructure, and insufficient data on child protection.

NDF undertook field visits to assess existing child protection services, community awareness and perceptions, and the capacity of local authorities and service providers. These visits revealed inadequate infrastructure and resources, the need for capacity development of local authorities, and high demand for child protection services.

An outline of a project concept was developed based on the situation analysis, stakeholder consultations, policy review, and field visits.

Project objective: Strengthen child protection mechanisms in Jammu and Kashmir.

Project components: formation and training of CWPCs, community engagement, capacity building, and creation of child-friendly spaces.

Project outcomes: Improved child protection services, reduced child abuse and exploitation.

The project focused on forming district, block, and village-level CWPCs, training and capacity building for CWPC members, community engagement and awareness programs, and transforming a police station into a child-friendly police station.

Finalisation of project design: The project design was finalised through review and feedback from stakeholders, incorporation of suggestions and recommendations, and finalisation of the project proposal.

The resulting project design aimed to strengthen child protection mechanisms in Jammu and Kashmir by forming and training district, block, and village-level CWPCs.

Project Title: Strengthening Child Protection Mechanisms in Jammu and Kashmir

Project Objective: To establish a robust child protection system in Jammu and Kashmir, ensuring children's rights are protected and their well-being prioritised.

Project Framework:

- **Contextual Analysis:** Understanding Jammu and Kashmir's unique socio-political landscape and child protection challenges.
- **Institutional Strengthening:** Establishing and capacitating District, Block, and Village-level Child Protection Committees.
- **Capacity Building:** Training committee members, police personnel, and stakeholders on child protection policies and procedures.
- **Community Engagement:** Raising awareness and promoting community ownership through sensitisation programs.
- **Service Delivery:** Ensuring access to child protection services, including counselling, case management, and referral mechanisms.

Project Approach:

- **Partnerships:** Collaboration with government agencies, UNICEF, civil society organisations, and community stakeholders.
- **Intervention Strategy:** Multi-faceted approach addressing prevention, protection, and response to child protection concerns.

Theoretical Framework:

- **Child Rights Approach:** Prioritising children's rights and well-being, aligning with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and various provisions of Indian constitutional, legal, and policy frameworks, the project adopts a child rights approach, prioritising children's participation, protection, and empowerment. This initiative also creates child-friendly spaces within police stations, providing a secure, non-threatening environment for child victims/witnesses to share their experiences. Child-friendly spaces in police stations are designed to minimise trauma, ensure privacy, and facilitate child-sensitive interactions between children and law enforcement officials.

- **Community-Based Approach:** This project adopts a Community-Based Approach by empowering local communities to take ownership of child protection, fostering collective responsibility and sustainability through capacity building and community engagement.

- **Capacity-building approach:** Enhancing stakeholders' capacities and implementing a capacity-building framework; this project enhances stakeholders' skills and knowledge in child protection, fostering a trained workforce for sustainable impact.

Methodology:

- Participatory work: Engaging stakeholders and communities in project activities.
- Capacity Building Workshops: Training stakeholders on child protection policies and procedures.
- Community Outreach: Conducting sensitisation programs and awareness campaigns.

Expected Outcomes:

- Established and functional child protection committees.
- Increased capacity among stakeholders.
- Improved community awareness and engagement.
- Enhanced access to child protection services.

Sustainability Plan:

- Institutionalising child protection mechanisms.
- Ensuring government and community ownership and commitment.
- Building community capacity for long-term sustainability.

5. Result Areas and Activities

The project had envisioned three result areas, and these include the following:

Result area 1: District Level CP mechanism strengthened to bring a convergent approach in the delivery of Child Protection Services.

Result area 2: Community-based prevention/ protection mechanism is capacitated in five border villages.

Result area 3: The capacity of police officers is enhanced by child-friendly procedures.

Several activities were planned to lead to the above result areas. Each of these results and the associated activities are discussed in detail below:

5.1 Result Area 1: District Level Child Protection mechanism strengthened to bring convergent approach in the delivery of Child Protection Services.

An earlier section of this document has discussions on the need for strengthening child protection mechanisms. In line with the local needs and with the directives of Mission Vatsalya, the project made a major contribution in establishing the three-tier mechanism to address child welfare and protection issues. In Jammu and Kashmir's District Rajouri, particularly in Nowshera Block's five border villages along the Line of Control, the establishment of a three-tier child welfare and protection committee system has been a crucial step towards safeguarding the well-being and dignity of vulnerable children.



This structured approach, inter alia, involves Village-Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (VLCWPCs), Block-Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (BLCWPCs), and District-Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (DLCWPCs), working in tandem to address child protection concerns.

For the first time, such committees were constituted at the district and block levels, marking a significant achievement of the project. VLCWPCs, however, had existed in these villages, but they were dysfunctional, and even members of the village-level committees were unaware that they were part of those committees. The project reinvigorated these committees, making them aware of their roles and responsibilities. Members were trained and informed about their roles.

At the village level, VLCWPCs serve as the first point of contact for children and families, providing immediate support and connecting them with essential services. Comprising local community members, these committees facilitate awareness campaigns, identify child protection issues, and ensure timely interventions to address these concerns. In Nowshera Block's border villages, VLCWPCs are becoming instrumental in addressing child-related concerns, such as education, health, and protection from exploitation.

The BLCWPCs, operating at the block level, oversee and support VLCWPCs, ensuring coordination and resource allocation. These committees comprise stakeholders from education, health, and social welfare departments, enabling a multi-sectoral approach to child protection. In Nowshera Block, BLCWPCs have facilitated training programs for VLCWPC members, enhancing their capacity to address complex child protection issues.

At the district level, DLCWPCs provide strategic guidance, technical support, and oversight to BLCWPCs and VLCWPCs and review overall Child Protection Mechanisms at the district level. This tier ensures integration with existing government schemes and programs, leveraging resources for child welfare and protection. In District Rajouri, DLCWPCs have played a pivotal role in converging services, streamlining processes, and advocating for policy reforms to strengthen child protection mechanisms.

The effectiveness of the three-tier system is evident in the enhanced community engagement and increased awareness about child rights and protection in Nowshera Block's border villages. This structured approach has also facilitated collaboration among government departments, civil society organisations, community members, and children, fostering a cohesive response to child protection concerns.

However, challenges persist, including remoteness and the impact of the Line of Control's proximity on children's lives. Despite these challenges, the three-tier child welfare and protection committee system has the potential to safeguard the well-being and dignity of children in Jammu and Kashmir's border areas. As this initiative continues to evolve, its impact will be pivotal in shaping a safer and more supportive environment for vulnerable children, ensuring that their rights and protection are upheld.

Key achievements of the three-tier system include:

- Enhanced community engagement and awareness about child rights and protection.
- Improved coordination among stakeholders.
- Increased capacity of VLCWPC and BLCWPC members.

Sustaining momentum will require continued commitment, resource mobilisation, and innovation moving forward. By strengthening the three-tier child welfare and protection committee system, District Rajouri and Nowshera Block can ensure a brighter future for their children, one where their rights, dignity, and well-being are safeguarded.

The success of this initiative serves as a model for replication in other districts, demonstrating the power of collaborative efforts in strengthening child protection mechanisms. As we look to the future, it is essential to prioritise the well-being and dignity of children, particularly those living in vulnerable contexts, and continue to work towards a safer, supportive environment for all.

This result area lays emphasis not only on such a mechanism but also on a convergent approach to strengthen this mechanism. The project had focused on a convergent approach as is also mandated in the Mission Vatsalya for protection and welfare of children. A convergent approach is crucial in delivering Child Protection Services as it provides holistic support by addressing interconnected issues such as education, health, and nutrition.

This collaborative methodology fosters cooperation among government agencies and communities, optimizing resources and expertise. By integrating services, convergence maximizes impact, increases efficiency, and reduces duplication, ultimately leading to better outcomes. This approach also influences systemic change in policy, legislation, and institutional reforms. A convergent approach prioritizes child-centeredness, tailoring services to meet children's unique needs, and ensuring a comprehensive, effective, and sustainable child protection system. With this approach, the project worked with all relevant stakeholders at district, block and village levels to strengthen child protection mechanisms.

The project had planned and delivered various activities to contribute to strengthening and delivery of child protection services. These activities and accomplishments are described below:

5.1.1 Capacitating JJB, CWC, DCPU, and SJPU officials and stakeholders through workshops, training and orientation for effective child protection mechanisms and service delivery.

Description of the activity: The capacity-building initiative enhanced the capacities of Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), Child Welfare Committee (CWC), District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), and State Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) officials and stakeholders. Through workshops, trainings, and orientations, participants acquired knowledge and skills to effectively respond to child protection concerns, ensure juvenile justice, and promote child welfare.

96 participants from Rajouri and Jammu districts took part in the capacity-building processes, comprising:

- 3 CWC staff members from Rajouri district
- 2 DCPU staff members from Rajouri district
- 18 police officials (including SJPU) from Rajouri district
- 6 Social Welfare Department officials from Rajouri district
- 6 Mission Vatsalya representatives from Rajouri district
- 6 Labour Department officials from Rajouri district
- 15 CCI representatives from Rajouri district
- 16 Education Department officials from Rajouri district
- 5 Health Department officials from Rajouri district
- 2 Childline representatives from Rajouri district
- 3 media personnel from Rajouri district, and
- 14 additional stakeholders from Jammu district

Outcomes: Feedback from the participants helped the project understand the following outcomes.

- Strengthened the convergent approach by collaborating with inter-agency coordination.
- Improved understanding of child rights and protection laws.
- Enhanced counselling skills.
- Effective case management and disposal.
- Increased awareness of child safety and prevention of abuse.
- Better decision-making and dispute resolution.
- Improved data collection and reporting.
- Enhanced capacity to handle complicated child protection cases.
- Increased sensitivity and empathy towards vulnerable children.
- Improved overall efficiency of child protection mechanisms.

5.1.2 Organizing and conducting strategic meetings with stakeholders to drive progress in child protection services and foster effective decision-making

Description of the activity: The project organised and conducted various meetings with a range of stakeholders. These included the district administration, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), and with representatives from Mission Vatsalya, District Child Protection officers (DCPOs), Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), State Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU), District level Child Welfare and Protection Committee (DLCWPC), and Village level Child Welfare and Protection Committee (VLCWPCs) in the five border area villages. Some of these meetings were bilateral, while others involved larger groups of these stakeholders.



These meetings were conducted throughout the project period. The focus of these meetings was to highlight issues of child welfare and protection, the existing legal framework, the JJ Act, Mission Vatsalya, and the mandate given by Mission Vatsalya to establish three-tier child welfare and protection committees at the District, Block, and Village levels. In addition, training of stakeholders and collaboration between child protection agencies were discussed to ensure quick responses to cases of child abuse and exploitation.

Outcome of these meetings:

- Constitution of the Rajouri District Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee, which is the first functional committee in UT after the abrogation of Article 370 and the launch of Mission Vatsalya. (Refer to Annexure 2)
- Constitution of the Block and five Village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees in (names of the villages). (Refer to Annexure 2)
- District administration in Rajouri district co-opted the President of the NDF as an expert domain member. (Refer to Annexure 5)
- Establish a child-friendly police station in Rajouri. (Refer to Annexure 7))
- Established an urgent need for training of DLCWPC, BLCWPC, VLCWPCs, law enforcement officials and judiciary personnel to handle cases involving children with more sensitivity and efficiency.
- In the meeting of the DLCWPC, various decisions were made in the children's best interest. (Refer to Annexure 6)
- These strategic meetings facilitated rapport-building, interagency coordination, and resource leveraging among stakeholders, maximising impact and minimising duplication. These meetings empowered local communities to take ownership of child protection initiatives, ensuring their sustainability and contextual relevance. Stakeholder capacity was enhanced, aligning child protection mechanisms with national policies and regulations. District-level child protection mechanisms were strengthened, safeguarding the rights and well-being of vulnerable children in the project area through community-driven, policy-aligned, and coordinated efforts.

5.1.3 Educating school and college/university students on Juvenile Justice Act, Child Rights, and Child Labour prevention through interactive sessions

Description of the activity: With an understanding that students need child rights and protection sensitisation to address challenges, foster empathy, and promote a culture of safety and well-being, the National Development Foundation, in collaboration with key stakeholders, organised seven symposiums/seminars in Rajouri and Jammu to raise awareness about child rights and protection among students. These events brought together DCPU, Directorate of School Education, District Administration, Central University of Jammu, and local schools and colleges to foster a safer environment for children. By sensitising students, the symposiums aimed to prevent child exploitation, abuse, and neglect, ensuring children's emotional, social, and physical well-being.

The sensitisation events revealed alarming knowledge gaps. Students and teachers lacked awareness of child rights and protection issues, highlighting the need for comprehensive education and training. The symposia highlighted national and international laws protecting children's rights, as well as issues related to child protection and welfare. Media coverage helped amplify the message, reaching a broader audience and promoting community engagement.



This collective effort demonstrates the power of collaboration in safeguarding children's rights and well-being.

A total of 1290 students and teachers, against a targeted 1200, were sensitised in these events.

Key Stakeholders Involved:

- District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) in Rajouri and Jammu districts
- Directorate of School Education – Jammu
- District Administration – Jammu
- Central University of Jammu
- Local schools and colleges in Rajouri and Jammu districts

Outcomes: Feedback from the students helped the project understand the following outcomes.

- Increased awareness about child rights and protection laws.
- Improved understanding of child exploitation and abuse.
- Recognition of personal rights and responsibilities.
- Increased confidence to report child protection concerns.

5.1.4 Child protection and child rights training for teachers and professors in Jammu and Rajouri districts to foster safe, supportive environment for children

Description of the activity: Capacity building of teachers and professors on child protection and child rights is vital for creating a protective ecosystem around children. Teachers who are equipped to identify and respond to protection concerns can ensure a secure school environment. By empowering educators, the project aimed to reduce exploitation, improve the well-being, and holistic development of children, thereby fostering a safer and more supportive society.

Outcomes: Feedback from the teachers helped the project understand the following outcomes.

- Professional development of teachers.
- Improved relationships with students.
- Enhanced knowledge and understanding of child rights and protection laws.
- Improved ability to identify and report child protection concerns.
- Increased confidence in responding to child protection cases.
- Better communication skills for working with students.



Eighty-five teachers, out of 100 targeted numbers, were trained on child rights and child protection.

5.1.5 Sensitization of people through IEC material

Description of the activity: A remarkable initiative took place in Jammu and Kashmir, where 19,000 children, parents, community members, and government officers were sensitised on child protection and welfare through specially developed Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials. These materials included a brochure on child protection, guidelines on dos and don'ts when working with children in conflict with the law (CCL) or children in need of care and protection (CNCP), and a full text of the Juvenile Justice Act and Rules.

The IEC material was released jointly by Sh. Sanjeev Kumar Chadha, Additional Secretary to the Government of India (GoI), Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), Director of Mission Vatsalya J&K, along with the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Rajouri. This effort to develop IEC material aims to raise awareness and promote a safe and supportive environment for children in the region. By empowering the wider public and stakeholders with knowledge, this initiative strives to prevent child exploitation, abuse, and neglect, ensuring children's emotional, social, and physical well-being.

Outcomes: Feedback from some of those who received the IEC material helped us understand the following outcomes of distributing the IEC material.

- Contribute to increased awareness of child rights and protection laws among stakeholders
- Likelihood of improved reporting on child exploitation abuse cases
- Likelihood that this will contribute to a reduction in child exploitation abuse cases due to community awareness.
- Positive shift in community attitudes towards child protection and welfare.
- Increased confidence amongst children and parents to report and address child protection concerns.
- Creation of safer environments for children to develop.

5.2 Result Area 2: Community based child protection mechanism capacitated in five border villages

Capacity building of community-based child protection mechanisms is essential for safeguarding children from violence, abuse, and exploitation. It helps communities to identify and address child protection issues, build resilience, and support vulnerable children. Strengthening these mechanisms ensures children's safety and well-being. This approach promotes community engagement, participation, and ownership, resulting in more effective and sustainable child protection systems. Capacity building enables communities to defend children's rights and foster a supportive environment for their growth and development. Moreover, the project targeted five villages bordering India and Pakistan along the Line of Control (LOC): a) Hanjana Thakra, b) Bhawani, c) Gania, d) Bhajnowa, and e) Chownki Handan. In border villages, child protection efforts are particularly important due to increased vulnerabilities, risks to children's safety and well-being, and resilience challenges amidst conflict and displacement, especially since these remote areas face significant infrastructure shortages.



The project had planned and delivered various activities to contribute to this result area. These activities and accomplishments are described below:

5.2.1 Establishment of Block level and Village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees

DLCWPC, BLCWPC (Block Nowshera), and VLCWPC in five border and scheduled tribe (ST) villages in Nowshera were established as a three-tier child protection mechanism in district Rajouri, following the approach outlined in Mission Vatsalya. (See annexure 2 & Annexure 5)

See below the composition of these committees.

Composition of District Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee

S. No.	Designation	Position in Committee
1	District Magistrate (DM), Rajouri	Chairperson
2	Superintendent of Police (SP), Rajouri	Member
3	Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Rajouri	Member
4	Representative from District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Rajouri	Member
5	DPO, POSHAN Abhiyan, Rajouri	Member
6	Chief Planning Officer, Rajouri	Member
7	Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Rajouri	Member
8	Chief Education Officer (CEO), Rajouri	Member
9	Assistant Labour Commissioner, Rajouri	Member
10	District Youth Services and Sports Officer, Rajouri	Member
11	District Social Welfare Officer, Rajouri	Member Secretary
12	Principal Industrial Training Institute (ITI) (Nodal Officer – Skill Development), Rajouri	Member
13	Community Development Project Officer (CDPO), Rajouri	Member
14	District Manager, SC/ST/OBC Corporation, Rajouri	Member
15	Executive Officer Rajouri, Thannamandi, Nowshera, Sunderbani and Kalakote)	Member
16	Rajeev Khajuria, President, National Development Foundation	Co-opted member

Composition of Block Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee

S. No.	Designation	Position in Committee
1	Head of Block Development Council (BDC)	Chairperson
2	Concernment Block Development Officer	Member Secretary
3	Representative of District Child Protection Unit (DCPU)	Member
4	Concernment Child Development Project Officer (CDPO)	Member
5	Representative of Education Department	Member
6	Representative of Health Department	Member
7	Chairperson(s) of Village Level Child Protection Committee(s)	Member
8	Respected Community Members	Member
9	Child Representative (Boy)	Member
10	Child Representative (Girl)	Member

Composition of Village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee

S. No.	Designation	Position in Committee
1	Sarpanch	Chairperson
2	Panchayat Secretary	Member Secretary
3	Child Representative (Boy)	Member
4	Child Representative (Girl)	Member
5	Anganwadi Worker	Member
6	School Teacher	Member
7	ASHA Worker	Member
8	Women (actively involved in child and women related issues)	Member
9	Civil Society Representative	Member
10	Chowkidar	Member

Terms of reference of the DLCWPC as mandated by the District Administration.

- a) The committee shall closely supervise and monitor the activities as well as the overall implementation of Mission Vatsalya at the district level.
- b) The committee, with the assistance of the DCPU, shall conduct periodic and regular mapping of all children-related services in the district for creating a resource directory and making information available to the committee and Board from time to time.
- c) The committee shall assess children living in difficult circumstances.
- d) The committee shall facilitate the implementation of non-institutional care programmes, including sponsorship, foster care and aftercare, at the district level.
- e) The committee, with the assistance of the DCPU, may also frame a media and communication plan to generate awareness amongst the public on various aspects of the Mission for rehabilitation and procedures for better protection of children.
- f) The committee shall make special efforts towards convergence with other government departments to ensure the benefit of welfare schemes for children percolates to the concerned stakeholders in the district.

All Children Welfare and Protection Committees at District, Block and Village levels, as were targeted for formation, were formed.

These committees have started demonstrating their impact. This is exemplified through the following excerpts from three different case studies.

“Manmeet Choudhary, 15, from Hanjana Thakra village, Jammu and Kashmir, emerged as a child rights advocate after training with NDF and district administration. As a BLCWPC Child Representative, she addresses protection concerns, plans a school child-friendly club, and conducts awareness programs, inspiring peers to join and amplify their collective voice.”

“Puspa Devi” (real Name changed), a resident of Bhawani village, became a child rights advocate after attending VLCWC training. She conducts awareness sessions on child protection, identifies signs of abuse, and provides emotional support. Her efforts inspired women to join the efforts of VLCWC, and earned her recognition as a community change-maker.”

“Raj Mohd, a Nowshera block Education Department representative, championed child protection after attending BLCWPC training. He integrated child protection into school policies and curricula, conducted teacher workshops, and became a resource person for child safety. His efforts transformed educational institutions, ensuring a safer environment for students and inspiring systemic change.”

5.2.2 Support to Village and Block level Child Welfare and Protection Committees

The project provided basic furniture (chairs and table) to one Block-level CWPC and basic furniture and office stationery to the five Village-level CWPCs. Providing essential office furniture and stationery to the committees was crucial for operational efficiency and legitimacy. This enables the committees to establish functional workspaces, hold meetings, and maintain records, fostering transparency and accountability. Proper infrastructure boosts morale, motivation, and productivity among committee members, ensuring the effective implementation of child protection initiatives. It also improves community perception, reinforcing the committee's role as a credible, well-organised entity dedicated to protecting vulnerable children.

5.2.3 Village level Child Welfare and Protection Meetings

Forty meetings (eight meetings in each of the five project villages, namely 1. Ganya, 2. Handan, 3. Bhajnowa, 4. Hanjan Thakra, and 5. Bhawani) with the VLCWPC were held. These meetings were held with support from the DCPU, Rajouri.

Outcomes: Empowering Village Child Welfare and Protection Committees (VCWPC) transformed them from dormant into functional units, clarifying the roles of members and strengthening child protection mechanisms. Members actively participated in meetings, identifying issues affecting local children. Each village committee made decisions for child protection and welfare. Key discussions included the Vatsalya sponsorship scheme, resource needs, rising drug abuse, and counselling requirements. Members requested child rights camps to address violations and launched a "Drug-Free Society" campaign. Resolutions by these committees included a request to NDF for office furniture and office stationery, a campaign on a drug-free society and safeguarding child rights, enhancing community engagement, and collaborating with authorities to ensure a secure environment for vulnerable children, ultimately fostering a protective ecosystem. See below an excerpt from a case study describing how VLCWPC are changing the lives of vulnerable children.

"In village Ganya, brothers Sumit and Karan, orphaned and struggling to survive, received vital support from the Village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee (VLCWPC). With NDF's intervention and Mission Vatsalya's sponsorship, they gained access to education, nutrition, and healthcare, transforming their lives from hardship to hope and self-sufficiency.

5.2.4 Training of members of block and village level committees

Sixty members from one Block Child Welfare and Protection Committee (BCWPC) and five Village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (VLCWPC) underwent comprehensive training. Participants gained clarity on their roles and responsibilities within the hierarchical structure of Mission Vatsalya, connecting Village, Block, and District Level Committees. The training raised awareness among members about safeguarding provisions for children in need of care and protection (CNCP), and children in conflict with the law (CCL). Alternate care mechanisms, including adoption, foster care, and sponsorship, were highlighted. With this knowledge, committee members are now better prepared to support children living in difficult circumstances.



5.2.5 Block Level Child Welfare and Protection meetings



Two Block-Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee (CWPC) meetings were held, promoting collaborative action for child protection. Notably, the Block Development Officer (BDO), Nowshera, chaired one meeting, demonstrating government commitment and oversight.

Outcomes: These meetings facilitated inter-departmental coordination, reviewed ongoing initiatives, and identified gaps in services. Members discussed strategies to strengthen community mechanisms, ensure timely interventions, and protect vulnerable children's rights. Minutes and action plans were distributed, assigning responsibilities to members. The meetings reinforced the CWPC's role in safeguarding children and promoting their well-being, aligning with Mission Vatsalya's objectives and guiding principles. Effective implementation and follow-up were maintained.

5.2.6 Conducting Child Rights and Child Protection Camps

Awareness camps on child rights and protection were held in all five target villages—Handan, Ganya, Hanjana Thakra, Bhawani—with around 485 children and youth participating. The camps aimed to create a child-friendly environment, promote behavioural change towards child rights, and strengthen the Village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (VLCWPCs). Organised by NDF in collaboration with the District Child Protection Unit and the Tehsil Social Welfare Office, the camps focused on sensitising communities about child rights and protection.



Participants engaged in discussions on strengthening the three-tier child protection mechanism, ensuring prevention, reporting, monitoring, and response to child protection issues. The initiative supported community-based organisations and promoted community awareness, consciousness, and action to protect child rights.

The project developed IEC materials, which helped raise awareness among communities and other stakeholders about child protection, the UNCRC, and the Juvenile Justice Act. (See annexures 11, 12 and 13 for the IEC material)



5.3 Result Area 3: Capacity building of police officers on child friendly procedures

Capacity building of police officers in child-friendly procedures is essential for safeguarding children's rights, safety, and well-being. Effective training helps officers respond compassionately to child-related cases, reducing trauma and harm, while fostering trust and encouraging child participation. It addresses the specific needs of child victims, witnesses, and offenders, promoting a child-centred approach that emphasises prevention and early intervention. The benefits include better investigations, enhanced child protection, increased community trust, and improved outcomes for children, families, and communities. Investing in capacity building creates a safer environment for children, aligning with international standards and best practices in child protection, and supporting collaborative efforts with social services. The project planned and implemented various activities to support this goal. These activities and achievements are outlined below.

5.3.1 Training of police officers/other key stakeholders on child friendly policing

Sixty police officers enhanced their understanding of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 through a joint training initiative supported by the District Administration, Police Office, and Child Protection Unit in Rajouri. The program, inaugurated by SSP Mr. Amritpal Singh, aimed to sensitise officers on the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act. Expert resource persons, including Mr. Rajiv Khajuria and Ms Nimisha Srivastava, led the training. The training focused on:

- Procedures for dealing with Children in Conflict with Law (CCL).
- Recording and reporting of juvenile cases.
- Role of JJBs and CWC.
- Unique needs and vulnerability of children.
- Required communication skills & Do's and Don'ts for police officers when dealing with children, and
- Collaborative approaches. The platform brought together police, the Child Welfare Committee, the Juvenile Justice Board, and the District Child Protection Unit to strengthen child protection mechanisms, focusing on police roles.



The collaborative effort promoted a unified approach to safeguarding children's rights and well-being in the district. (See annexe 8 for the training agenda) (See annexure 9 for government order deputing police personnel to participate in the training) (See annexure 10 for press coverage).

5.3.2 Establishment of a Child friendly Police Station

A child-friendly police station was established in Rajouri, a collaborative effort among the National Development Foundation (NDF), the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) of Rajouri, and UNICEF. This initiative transformed a room at the Rajouri Police Station into a welcoming space for children, marking significant progress in creating a supportive environment for young individuals involved in legal processes. Planning meetings were held in Rajouri to discuss the project's details, with Sh. Abdul Rahim KAS, DCPO, ensuring full support for the child-friendly police station.



A committee was formed to conduct market surveys for procuring necessary items, and a three-member committee was constituted through order DCPO/MV/R/2024/1008-1011 dated June 27, 2024 (See Annexure 7). Mr. Rajiv Khajuria, President of NDF, and SSP Rajouri inaugurated the child-friendly police station on August 30, 2024. This achievement demonstrates a commitment to child rights and sets a precedent for future developments in child welfare within the justice system. Key features of child-friendly police stations are 1) focusing on rehabilitating children in need, and 2) providing a child-friendly environment that allows children to report cases without fear and better coordination with Juvenile Justice boards and Child welfare committees.

The establishment of a child-friendly police station in the district headquarters in Rajouri District is a shining example of collaborative efforts in action. The National Development Foundation (NDF) played a crucial role in mobilising resources through strategic partnerships, bringing together the District Child Protection officer's valuable technical expertise, the police department's infrastructure and personnel, UNICEF's financial support, and facilitating training and awareness programmes for police officers, while also supplying materials. This collaboration helped create a safe and supportive environment for children, allowing them to interact with police without fear.

This partnership demonstrated the power of collective efforts, leveraging expertise, resources, and networks to ensure the success and sustainability of the child-friendly police station.

The child-friendly police station's key features include a space designed for children to report cases and a preventative approach to rehabilitation. This initiative aims to shift negative perceptions of the police and foster a supportive environment for children in need. This collaborative effort has paved the way for a safer and more supportive community for children in Rajouri.

See below an excerpt from a case study on Inspector Sushma Kumari's Journey to Child-Friendly Policing

Inspector Sushma Kumari's commitment to child-friendly policing in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district is truly inspiring. With support from the project, she transformed her station into a safe haven for vulnerable children, offering trained counsellors and a play area. Through detailed training, she developed expertise in child protection, juvenile justice, and trauma management, making her station a benchmark for child-friendly policing in the region.

6. Gender Equity

Gender equity is a valuable component of this project. An explicit gender perspective was incorporated when efforts were made to ensure the participation and leadership of women and girls in Village-level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (VCWPCs), in accordance with GOI guidelines. Additionally, women and girls are the primary target groups of the project, benefiting from activities such as participating in raising issues affecting them through IEC and other initiatives. The project also aims to strengthen child protection mechanisms and promote the welfare and protection of girl children alongside boys. In future, NDF can prioritise gender considerations when formulating action plans, ensuring that each step taken by committees at various levels duly considers gender perspectives. Advocacy with the government should be undertaken to ensure adequate representation of females in VLCWCs. In programme implementation, females will be granted due representation.

7. Equity

Gender equity is a valuable component of this project. An explicit gender perspective was incorporated when efforts were made to ensure the participation and leadership of women and girls in Village-level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (VCWPCs), in accordance with GOI guidelines. Additionally, women and girls are the primary target groups of the project, benefiting from activities such as participating in raising issues affecting them through IEC and other initiatives. The project also aims to strengthen child protection mechanisms and promote the welfare and protection of girl children alongside boys. In future, NDF can prioritise gender considerations when formulating action plans, ensuring that each step taken by committees at various levels duly considers gender perspectives. Advocacy with the government should be undertaken to ensure adequate representation of females in VLCWCs. In programme implementation, females will be granted due representation.

The project played a pivotal role in promoting equity by specifically targeting marginalised communities, with a focus on children residing in border and scheduled tribal villages. Historically, these areas have faced significant challenges in accessing basic services, including child protection, education, and healthcare. Through targeted interventions, the project bridged existing gaps and ensured inclusive participation, regardless of caste, religion, or socio-economic status.

Capacity building and awareness programs empowered vulnerable groups, including girls, children with disabilities, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Community-led initiatives fostered ownership and responsibility, enabling local stakeholders to address child protection concerns effectively. By strengthening community-based child protection mechanisms, the project ensured equitable access to essential services.

Furthermore, the project's convergent approach united government agencies and community organisations, fostering collaboration and resource optimisation. This collective effort helped address systemic barriers, challenge discriminatory practices, and promote policy reforms. As a result, marginalised communities experienced improved outcomes in education, health, and overall well-being. By prioritising equity, the project contributed to a fairer and more just society, where all children have equal opportunities to thrive. The project's focus on community engagement, capacity building, and inclusive participation helped break cycles of disadvantage, empowering marginalised communities to claim and access their rights.

Key equity-promoting strategies included:

- a) Targeted interventions in marginalised communities
- b) Inclusive participation and decision-making processes
- c) Capacity building for vulnerable groups
- d) Community-led initiatives and ownership
- e) Convergent approach and collaboration
- f) Addressing systemic barriers and policy reforms
- g) Emphasis on community engagement and empowerment

By integrating these strategies, the project demonstrated a commitment to equity, recognising that every child deserves equal opportunities to grow, develop, and reach their full potential.

8. Sustainability

This section will assess the project's sustainability, evaluating the likelihood of maintaining its benefits over time and identifying key factors that will ensure continued progress. In discussing the dimension of sustainability, three aspects –

- a) institutional sustainability,
- b) community ownership and engagement, and
- c) partnership were considered. These aspects are discussed below:

8.1 Institutional sustainability

There are strong links between Child Welfare and Protection Committees (CWPCs) and government departments, which ensure a comprehensive response to child protection issues. Government representation in the committees, along with clear orders and circulars from the government, and the involvement of social welfare, health, and education departments, guarantees the committees' sustainability. Additionally, their alignment with national policies and Mission Vatsalya, as well as the use of government resources, further strengthens their sustainability.

The government's commitment to CWPCs is secured through legislative anchorage, signed government orders, and interdepartmental coordination mechanisms. Budgetary resources are leveraged and accessed from participating government departments. Designated government officers in the CWPCs provide oversight. Integration with national policies ensures alignment with broader goals, while capacity building and joint planning frameworks foster collaborative problem solving. Institutionalised reporting mechanisms ensure transparency and accountability.

To sustain operations, CWPCs will employ a multifaceted approach, comprising a mandated three-tier structure, clear policy frameworks, and defined roles. Financial stability is provided by government agencies, while regular capacity-building programs enhance the expertise of members. Oversight mechanisms maintain quality standards, and effective interagency coordination facilitates case management. Community engagement and legislative backing ensure ownership and inclusivity.

8.2 Community ownership and engagement

Developing standard operating procedures (SOPs), which currently do not exist, is necessary. These strategic measures ensure the longevity, effectiveness, and scalability of CWPCS, safeguarding the rights and well-being of vulnerable children across all levels. By leveraging government resources, expertise, and authority, CWPCs enhance their impact, fostering a culture of accountability, collaboration, and collective responsibility for child welfare. This comprehensive framework fosters a protective environment that enables children to thrive.

Community members will continue to participate in the CWPCs. Government-backed Child Welfare and Protection Committees (CWPCs) ensure sustained community participation through mandated community representation in committee membership, regular meetings, capacity building for community members on child rights and government-supported community outreach and mobilisation. This comprehensive approach guarantees community voices will be heard, fostering ownership and accountability in CWPC decision-making. Community ownership and engagement drive sustainability through local leadership and collective action, ensuring child protection initiatives remain relevant, effective, and self-sustaining, even after external support phases out.

8.3 Partnerships

Child Welfare and Protection Committees offer a unique partnership platform for the government, community, children, and CSOs to come together and address issues related to the protection and welfare of children. In this partnership, the government provides legislative backing, funding, systems, outreach, and infrastructure, while community representation fosters ownership, trust, and inclusivity, ensuring culturally sensitive child protection solutions. Representation of children in CWPCs ensures their voices are heard, promoting child-centred decision-making and empowerment. Furthermore, engagement with civil society brings flexibility and specialised knowledge, collectively safeguarding the rights of vulnerable children.

However, one concern remains. The government already mandates the creation and operation of three tiers of CWPCs at district, block, and village levels, with CSO representation required at the village level. While in the current case in Rajouri district, one representative from a CSO (NDF) has been included in the district-level CWPC by the district administration, there is still a strong need to formalise this representation of local CSOs at the block and district levels.

Institutional sustainability, partnership approaches, and community ownership and engagement collectively ensure the long-term viability of Child Welfare and Protection Committees, fostering a self-sustaining ecosystem where communities safeguard children's rights, leveraging collaborative resources and expertise.

The Programme was implemented by NDF in close collaboration with the government, communities, and children, and has earned the trust of the government to provide essential technical support, advocate for children's achievements, and leverage government funding for children.

The project aims to strengthen the government programme so that sustainability is built into the project. The committees are formal structures under Mission Vatsalya, and the project added value by expediting their formation and capacity building. The committees at the District, Block, and Village levels in District Rajouri, established as part of this project, represent a significant milestone. This has been subsequently promoted to other districts through various programs with the support of UNICEF partner organisations.

The Programme, a collaborative effort between NDF, UNICEF, and the Government, is poised to have a lasting impact on child protection in Jammu and Kashmir. By working closely with government institutions, communities, and children, this initiative ensures sustainability from the outset. NDF's established trust with the government enables it to provide technical expertise and advocate for child-centric outcomes, leveraging government resources for the welfare of children.

Key factors ensuring sustainability: The project staff's retrospective reflection reveals that the following factors contribute to ensuring sustainability.

- a) **Government Program Strengthening:** The project focuses on enhancing existing government programs, guaranteeing long-term viability.
- b) **Community Engagement:** Active participation from local communities fosters ownership and commitment.
- c) **The capacities developed by the project serve as a lasting legacy even after its completion, ensuring ongoing results.** By improving the knowledge and skills of district, block, and village-level Child Welfare and Protection Committees, along with police personnel, the project established a resilient and self-reliant system. These empowered stakeholders are likely to continue delivering effective child protection services, responding to cases, and mobilising communities independently of external support. Consequently, the project's positive influence will persist, safeguarding children's rights and well-being well beyond its conclusion. This institutionalised capacity guarantees continuity, scalability, and enduring change, making the project's outcomes genuinely sustainable.

9. Advocacy

The National Development Foundation (NDF) has made significant progress in advocating for the protection and welfare of children in Rajouri district, as well as at the UT and central levels. Through persistent efforts, NDF has successfully influenced the issuance of various government orders and circulars, leading to the establishment of three tiers of Child Welfare and Protection Committees (CWPCs) - district, block, and village levels.

These CWPCs serve as a vital mechanism for ensuring child safety and well-being, providing a platform for community engagement and awareness. NDF's advocacy also resulted in the establishment of the first-ever child-friendly police station in Rajouri, designed to offer a sensitive and supportive environment for children in conflict with the law or victims of crime.

Another significant achievement has been the convergence of action among different departments, including education, health, labour, police, POSHAN, the social welfare department, child welfare committees, Juvenile Justice Boards, and Caregivers. This collaborative approach ensures a comprehensive response to child protection concerns, fostering a protective environment for children.

NDF's tireless efforts have also secured a commitment from the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), Government of India (GoI), to sponsor all identified children living in difficult circumstances under the Mission VATSALYA Sponsorship component. This initiative provides financial support of Rs. 4,000 per month to vulnerable children, enabling them to access education, healthcare, and other essential services.

The collaboration between government departments and agencies has been crucial in tackling child protection issues. NDF has organised regular meetings and workshops, bringing together stakeholders to share knowledge, expertise, and resources. This united approach has improved the effectiveness of child protection and welfare services.

Establishing child-friendly police stations and CWPCs will eventually lead to more reports of child-related cases. NDF's awareness campaigns have empowered communities to recognise and report child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Mission VATSALYA's sponsorship program will transform the lives of many children. Education, nutrition, and healthcare support will enable these children to overcome adversity and thrive.

NDF's work in Rajouri serves as a model for replication in other districts. The Foundation's commitment to child protection and welfare has demonstrated the value of collaborative efforts, ensuring a safer and more supportive environment for children.

Key achievements:

- Constitution of three-tier CWPCs in Rajouri district and district CWPC in Jammu district
- Establishment of a child-friendly police station
- Convergence of government departments and agencies
- Commitment to sponsorship of children in difficult circumstances under Mission VATSALYA

Impact:

- Enhanced child protection system
- Likely increase in reporting of child-related cases
- Improved community awareness and engagement
- Transformative support potential for vulnerable children living in difficult circumstances

Conclusion:

NDF's advocacy efforts have significantly contributed to the protection and welfare of children in Rajouri and Jammu. Continued collaboration and support will ensure sustained progress, safeguarding children's rights and well-being.

Recommendations:

- a) Replicate the constitution of the three-tier CWPCs model in other districts.
- b) Strengthen CWPCs and child-friendly police stations.
- c) Enhance community engagement and awareness.
- d) Expand sponsorship programs for vulnerable children.
- e) NDF to support CWCs in the identification and documentation of children living in difficult circumstances so that CWCs can recommend these to Mission Vatsalya for sponsorship.

By scaling up these initiatives, the state can create a safer, more supportive environment for children, empowering them to thrive and reach their full potential.

It is also crucial to examine the factors that contributed to NDF's successful advocacy. These include a combination of strategic planning, strong leadership, community engagement, collaborative partnerships, data-driven approaches, and capacity-building initiatives, ultimately leading to transformative policy changes and improved outcomes for vulnerable children.

The National Development Foundation's (NDF) successful advocacy for child protection and welfare in Rajouri can be attributed to several key factors. Firstly, NDF's strong leadership and expertise in child protection and welfare issues provided a solid foundation for their advocacy efforts. Their credibility and trustworthiness, built over years of working with local communities, enabled them to establish effective relationships with key stakeholders, including government officials and departments. NDF's strategic planning and goal-setting allowed them to focus their advocacy efforts and persistently follow up with stakeholders.

Collaboration with like-minded organisations and stakeholders amplified NDF's advocacy impact, while their data-driven approach provided evidence-based solutions to support policy changes. Community engagement and participation were also crucial, as NDF involved local communities in their advocacy efforts, empowering them to take ownership and drive change. Media coverage and public support further bolstered NDF's advocacy messages.

The government's willingness to engage and collaborate, coupled with an enabling policy environment, facilitated NDF's advocacy successes. Capacity-building and training programs for government officials and stakeholders enhanced their ability to respond to child protection concerns. NDF's flexibility and adaptability allowed them to adjust their advocacy strategies in response to changing circumstances.

Ultimately, NDF's comprehensive approach, combining internal strengths, strategic partnerships, and community engagement, helped achieve significant policy implementation changes, transforming the lives of vulnerable children. By replicating these strategies, NDF can continue to advocate effectively for child protection and welfare, inspiring meaningful change in communities across the state.

10. Lessons Learnt

Enhancing Child Protection Mechanisms - The project provided valuable lessons in strengthening child protection systems. These insights will guide future initiatives, ensuring ongoing progress in safeguarding the well-being and dignity of vulnerable children.

Lesson 1: Collaboration is Key - Effective collaboration among civil society organisations, national and international agencies, and government stakeholders is vital. This project showed that combining expertise, resources, and commitment can lead to meaningful change.

Lesson 2: Capacity building is essential - Training and capacity development for government officials, police officers, and community members improved their understanding of child rights and protection. This investment in human capital will yield long-term benefits.

Lesson 3: Community Engagement Fosters Ownership - Empowering communities through engagement and participation ensures sustainability. Block-level Child Welfare and Protection Committees and Village-level Child Welfare and Protection Committees exemplified community-led initiatives.

Lesson 4: Addressing Knowledge Gaps Is Critical - The project highlighted the need to address knowledge gaps regarding alternative care mechanisms. Future initiatives must prioritise awareness and training on these critical services.

Lesson 5: Child-friendly Spaces Matter - Establishing child-friendly police stations and conducting child rights camps demonstrate innovative approaches to child protection. Such initiatives create safe, supportive environments for vulnerable children.

Lesson 6: Flexibility and adaptability are vital - The dissolution of BDCs and Panchayats in Jammu and Kashmir underscored the importance of flexibility. Future initiatives must be adaptable to evolving contexts and challenges.

Lesson 7: Sustainability Requires Continuous Effort - Sustaining momentum demands ongoing commitment, resources, and effort. Continuous capacity building, community engagement, and advocacy will ensure child protection remains a priority.

11. Challenges

1.1 The dissolution of Block Development Councils (BDCs) and Panchayats in Jammu and Kashmir presents a significant challenge to the operation of Block Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (BCWPCs) and Village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (VLCWPCs). This is because the chairpersons of these committees are generally the BDC Chairperson and Sarpanchs, respectively. In Jammu and Kashmir, the government structure includes District Development Councils, which are elected bodies. However, the dissolution of BDCs and Panchayats would affect the leadership and functioning of BCWPCs and VLCWPCs. The National Development Foundation (NDF) did manage to hold the first meeting of VLCWPCs before the dissolution of Panchayats, but this development could hinder future progress.

Key implications:

- **Leadership Vacuum:** The dissolution of BDCs and Panchayats leaves a gap in leadership for BCWPCs and VLCWPCs.
- **Disrupted Functioning:** The committees' ability to protect and promote child welfare may be severely impaired.
- **Future Uncertainty:** The impact of the dissolution on the committees' long-term viability is uncertain.
- To mitigate these challenges, alternative leadership arrangements and support systems may be necessary to ensure the continued functioning of BCWPCs and VLCWPCs.

1.1 The Block-Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (BLCWPCs) and Village-Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees (VLCWPCs) were established through a government order, but their implementation and activation are still pending across the Union Territory (UT). This indicates that while the committees have been formed in writing, they have yet to become operational, which could hinder the effective delivery of child welfare and protection services.

It would be beneficial to understand the specific reasons behind the delay in induction and initiation, such as:

- **Lack of Resources:** Insufficient funding, infrastructure, or personnel to support the committees.
- **Bureaucratic Delays:** Slow decision-making or clearance processes hindering the committees' activation.
- **Capacity Building:** Need for training or capacity building among committee members to ensure effective functioning.
- Other reasons

Addressing these challenges will be crucial to ensuring the committees can fulfil their purpose of protecting and promoting child welfare in the UT.

1.2 Government officials and community members have a significant knowledge gap regarding alternative care mechanisms. This is concerning, as alternative care includes various options, such as foster care and kinship care (care by extended family members), which are vital for supporting vulnerable children. Kinship care is a common and culturally valuable practice where children are looked after by relatives or family friends. However, it is essential for officials and communities to understand the complexities of these care mechanisms to ensure the best interests of the child.

Key Alternative Care Mechanisms:

- **Institutional Care:** Providing 24/7 care in a residential setting, but this option is not regarded as the best and should only be relied upon as a last resort.
- **Foster Care:** Placing children with trained foster carers families.
- **Kinship Care:** Caring for children within their extended family or community.

Bridging the knowledge gap between government officials and communities is vital to effectively implementing these alternative care mechanisms and ensuring the well-being of children in need.

1.1 The project was led and facilitated by the National Development Foundation, a civil society organisation supported by UNICEF. Without this facilitation, critical gaps in child protection mechanisms and services would likely have persisted longer, leaving vulnerable children without access to essential support and care. This would have undermined the government's efforts to strengthen child protection systems, ultimately hindering the realisation of children's rights and well-being in the region.

Effective facilitation played a key role in driving positive change. Although the lessons learned from this project are now available, NDF recognises the need to continue the journey, sustain the initiative, and support stakeholders for some more time to realise the impact of the outcomes and to replicate and scale up the initiative at the union territory level. While the project has all the necessary elements to sustain itself without external support, in the absence of continued assistance from NDF, it is suspected that the following challenges will be faced.

Challenges likely to be associated with Result Area 1: District Level Child Protection Mechanism Strengthened

- Resistance to change from entrenched stakeholders.
- Difficulty in maintaining engagement and motivation among trained officials.
- Limited reach and accessibility of training programmes for rural areas.
- Ensuring effective coordination and convergence among stakeholders.

Challenges likely to be associated with Result Area 2: Community-Based Prevention/Protection Mechanism Capacitated

- Limited community awareness and understanding of child protection issues.
- Difficulty in mobilising community participation.
- Cultural and social barriers to reporting child protection cases.
- Maintaining the sustainability of community-based initiatives.

Challenges likely to be associated with Result Area 3: Capacity Building of Police Officers

- Resistance from police officers to adopt child-friendly procedures.
- Difficulty in changing entrenched police culture is considered high-handedness.
- Ensuring consistent application of child-friendly procedures.
- Limited infrastructure for child-friendly police stations.
- Addressing these challenges will require strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, resource mobilisation, and continuous monitoring and evaluation.

12. Conclusion and way forward

In conclusion, the project marked a significant milestone in strengthening child protection mechanisms in the region. Through capacity building, community engagement, and the establishment of child-friendly spaces, the project addressed critical gaps in the existing system. The training of police officers, JJB, CWC, and DCPU officials enhanced their understanding of child rights and protection, leading to improved service delivery.

The formation of Block Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees and Village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees fostered community ownership and participation. However, the dissolution of BDCs and Panchayats in Jammu and Kashmir posed challenges to the sustainability of these committees. The knowledge gap among government officials and communities regarding alternative care mechanisms underscores the need for sustained efforts.

Despite these challenges, the project demonstrated the power of collaborative efforts. The National Development Foundation's expertise, UNICEF's support, and the commitment of government stakeholders converged to create a lasting impact. The establishment of child-friendly police stations and the conduct of child rights camps exemplified innovative approaches to child protection.

The project's emphasis on capacity building and community engagement ensured that benefits extended beyond the project's lifespan. Empowered communities, sensitised officials, and strengthened institutions will continue to promote child rights and protection. The project's success highlights the crucial role of civil society organisations and donor agencies in supporting government initiatives.

Moving forward, sustaining momentum requires addressing emerging challenges, reinforcing existing gains, and scaling up interventions. Continuous capacity building, community engagement, and advocacy will ensure that child protection remains a priority. The National Development Foundation, UNICEF, and government stakeholders must build on this foundation, leveraging lessons learned to inform future initiatives.

As we look to the future, we must reaffirm our commitment to child rights and protection, ensuring that every child grows up in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment. The project's legacy serves as a testament to the power of collective action, inspiring continued efforts to safeguard the well-being and dignity of all children.

Key Takeaways:

- Collaborative efforts between civil society, National and international agencies, communities and government stakeholders are crucial.
- Capacity building and community engagement are essential for sustained impact.
- Addressing knowledge gaps on alternative care mechanisms is vital.
- Child-friendly spaces and innovative approaches enhance child protection.
- Sustainability requires continuous efforts and commitment.

Recommendations: Building on the project's success, future initiatives should focus on

- a) Strengthening child protection mechanisms.
- b) Address emerging challenges.
- c) Reinforce existing gains.
- d) Leverage the lessons learned.
- e) Foster continued collaboration.
- f) Prioritise capacity building.
- g) Enhance community engagement
- h) Address knowledge gaps on alternative care.
- i) Create child-friendly spaces
- j) Engage local organisations.
- k) Ensure robust follow-up and monitoring.
- l) Scale up successful interventions

The project's conclusion marks a new beginning – an opportunity to build on successes, address challenges, and accelerate progress toward a safer, supportive environment for all children.



12.1 Press Releases

NDF conducts workshop on strengthening child protection

■ TNN BUREAU

JAMMUI: Senior Kumar Chellia, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India called upon to strengthen Mission Vatsalya and Child Protection Mechanism and service delivery in Jammu and Kashmir.

He was speaking in a workshop organized by the National Development Foundation Jammu, in collaboration with the District Administration Jammu and the Directorate of Mission Vatsalya, J&K organized a One Day Convergent Workshop for Strengthening Child Protection Mechanism in session in Mission Vatsalya and the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act 2015.

Around 120 participants from the Department of Police, Education, Labour, Health, Mission Vatsalya, Mission Foundation, Care Governance Civil Society Or-



ganizations attended the Programme. Harvinder Kaur, JKAS, Director Mission Vatsalya and Sanjeev Reddy, Additional DC, Jammu, attended the workshop as Guest of Honour and addressed the participants highlighting the efforts of District Administration & Mission Vatsalya for the Care & Protection of the Children. The Technical Session was facilitated by Bilal Bhat, Child Protection Specialist, JKAS, UNICEF India while the Panel Discussion on the Roles and Responsibilities of Stake Holders is facilitated by Dr. Sanjay

Shukla. He called for strengthening Child Protection Mechanism, Jammu is emphasized that all Departments have schemes and mechanisms for Children, the need of the hour is to ensure convergent action to support and sustain children in difficult circumstances.

Sanjeev Kumar Chellia in his address said that Government of India is open to support all proposals of Mission Vatsalya for building a robust infrastructure for the children in need of Care & Protection and the children in conflict with law.

He asked the Mission Director Vatsalya to involve the Civil Society Organizations like National Development Foundation to strengthen the Child Protection Mechanism at Village, Block & District Level.

He asked the Mission Director Vatsalya to hold similar workshops for promoting coverage of approach of district level also.

Khajuria calls to strengthen Three-Tier Child Protection Mechanism

■ TNN BUREAU

RAJOURI: Rajiv Kumar Khajuria, President of National Development Foundation Jammu here on Saturday called for strengthening the Three-Tier Child Protection Mechanism as envisioned in Mission Vatsalya to supplement the principles laid down in Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act 2015. He was speaking at an awareness camp organized by the Village Child Welfare and Protection Committee Handan in collaboration with the National Development Foundation Rajouri, District Child Protection Unit Rajouri and Tehsil Social Welfare Office Nowshera. More than 100 women, youth and



members participated in the camp. Elaborating, Rajiv Khajuria sensitized the community members on various provisions of Mission Vatsalya and called upon the communities to contribute to ensuring the children's best interest. He emphasized that the Juvenile Justice Act is about catering to the basic needs of Care, Protection, Development, Treatment and Social Integration of the Children in need of Care & Protection and Children in Conflict with Law in a Child-Friendly

manner with an objective of their overall rehabilitation.

Complementing the role of District Magistrate (DM) Rajouri OP Bhagat, Rajiv Khajuria said that District Administration is fully committed for the welfare and development of children. He said District Magistrate Rajouri, in a recently held meeting of the District Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee, has directed all the concerned Departments and stakeholders to ensure the best interest of the children in the district. Khajuria assured technical support and assistance from the National Development Foundation for strengthening the Child Protection Mechanism in the district.

SSP Pitches for Child-Friendly Policing in District Rajouri

LIAQAT ALI KHATANA

RAJOURI, Feb 13: Sr. Superintendent of Police Rajouri Amritpal Singh IPS called upon all Police Officers in District Rajouri to adopt a Child-Friendly approach while dealing with Children in difficult circumstances.

He was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the Police Training on Juvenile Justice Act organized by the National Development Foundation Jammu/ Rajouri in collaboration with the district police office Rajouri and the District Child Protection Unit Rajouri.

Additional SP Nowshera presented a welcome address while the Vote of Thanks was presented by Ab Raheem, District Social Welfare and District Child Protection Officer Rajouri.

Mr Rahim gave a detailed account of the functioning of DCPU CWC and JJB in Rajouri. Ms. Nimisha



Srivastava, ED CSJ acted as a Resource Person and sensitized the participants on the procedures laid down in the Act.

Mr. Sunny Kumar, Programme Manager NDF conducted the proceedings of the Training Programme. Prominent among others present include Adtl. SP Rajouri, Musadik Basu, DYSPs, SDPOs, SHOs, Child Welfare Police Officers and reps of CWC

JJB, DCPU and one-stop centre.

Mr. Rajiv Khajuria, President National Development Foundation in his address gave an introduction to the Child Rights and Juvenile Justice Act and highlighted the Role of Police in the principle of Diversion laid down in the Juvenile Justice Act.

He said that children can't comprehend consequences, the need is to understand the

underlying reasons for their offending nature and link them with the Juvenile Justice System to integrate them into Family and Community. He lauded the Role of J&K Police for their Humane and Child-friendly face in dealing with the children.

He thanked SSP Rajouri for his keen interest in implementing Child-friendly Policing. He also thanked UNICEF India for their sup-

port. Amritpal Singh SSP disclosed that District Police Rajouri and the National Development Foundation will together make Police Station Rajouri a Model Child-Friendly Police Station which can receive the children involved in Petty and Serious offences or the victims of POCISO in a child-friendly manner.

He informed that as envisioned by the Prime Minister of India, DGP J&K has given standing instructions for child and women-friendly Policing strictly following the Laws. He appreciated the efforts of the National Development Foundation and thanked Mr. Rajiv Khajuria for imparting training to Police officers of the Rajouri district.

He asked the officers to clear all their doubts from the resource persons concerning the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act 2015 as amended in 2023.

BCWPC training held at Nowshera

VINOD SHARMA NOWSHERA, FEB 23: A training of Block Level and Village level Child welfare and Protection Committees constituted under Mission Vatsalya was held at conference Hall Dak Bangalow Nowshera in which members of the Block level child protection committees and representatives of the five Village level child protection committees participated.

The training was organized by National Development Foundation Jammu/Rajouri in collaboration with District Child Protection Unit, Rajouri and Tehsil Social Welfare Office Nowshera.

Around 60 people including Suresh Choudhary CWC Member Rajouri, ZEO, Kabir Hussain- Tehsil Social Welfare

Representative from Block health, Mission Poshan, Lambardar, Children repre-



A training programme in progress at Nowshera.

sentatives and Ex Rajiv Khajuria, Sarpanches Participated. President National Development Foundation in his address detailed sensitized the participants about their role and responsibilities as the members of Block level and Village level child welfare and protection committees. He lauded the role of District Magistrate Rajouri Om Prakesh Bhagat for conducted the first ever meeting of District level child Welfare and protection committee and issuing instruction to the district and sectoral officer for strengthening child protection mechanism in Tehsil Nowshera.

He called upon the committee members to dedicatedly work for strengthening child protection mechanism in Tehsil Nowshera.

He called upon the committee members to dedicatedly work for strengthening child protection mechanism in Tehsil Nowshera.

13. Annexures

13.1 Annexure 1: Memorandum of Understanding between National Development Foundation (NDF) and Rajouri District Administration



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER RAJOURI
(Tele) 01962-262244 (Fax) 01962-262481 Email dmrajouri@gmail.com

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU) BETWEEN DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION RAJOURI AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION (NDF)

No: PS/DDCR/839-900

Dated: 20-01-2015

Reference: DDC Rajouri Office No: PS/DDCR/2009-10/5453-54 dated: 16 Nov. 2009 (MoU signed between DDC Rajouri and NDF) & No: PS/DDCR/2011-12/1022-81 Dated: 27 June 2011 (Correction).

MoU Objective:

1. Setting arrangements for liaisoning and effective working relationship between District Administration Rajouri and National Development Foundation, NDF Jammu having district office in Rajouri.
2. To facilitate implementation of programmes of NDF in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir including those funded by in partnership with State Govt, Govt. of India and other National or International organizations/ donors, hereinafter.

BACKGROUND:

National Development Foundation hereinafter referred as NDF is a registered and development organization (NGO) of National repute. NDF has a full fledged district office in Rajouri and has credit of organizing children, youth, adolescents, women, rural and urban communities towards sustainable development. The programmes of NDF, either their own or funded by State Govt., various Ministries of Govt. of India or in partnership with other National and International organizations, in the last more than twenty years have yielded excellent results. The programmes were conducted in close coordination with the district administrations and State Govt. NDF contribution has been acknowledged and appreciated at District, State and National level from time to time. This MoU have been signed to provide impetus, effectiveness to all the activities/ programmes being carried out by NDF within the territorial jurisdiction of District Rajouri.

MoU approaches:

1. That by virtue of this MoU NDF will cooperate district administration in organization of various developmental activities carried out by various Govt. Departments by way of providing technical support and expertise of whatever kind is required and all other possible cooperation.
2. That by virtue of this blank MoU ALL Govt. Deptts. (at all levels)/ PSUs/ autonomous organizations and heads of Educational/ Technical Institutions (Govt. / Private) working in the district will extend full cooperation and all possible support to NDF in implementation of their programmes/ activities whenever approached for by NDF.
3. That by virtue of this MoU, NDF staff can approach the officers of various Deptts/ Organization mentioned in point 2 with a photocopy of this MoU alongwith a cover letter signed by a responsible officer of NDF on the original letter head of the organization for seeking support and cooperation, and the officer concerned will provide all possible support and cooperation.
4. That by virtue of this MoU, NDF can approach any Deptt. organization mentioned in point 2 for signing of MoU/ ToR/ developing joint implementation strategy to facilitate a particular programme and the concerned officer will sign the MoU/ ToR/ implementation strategy mutually agreed upon as the requirement of the programme.


Chief Functionary, NDF
Jammu


Distt. Dev. Commissioner,
Rajouri
District Development Commissioner
RAJOURI.

13.2 Annexure 2: Government Order dated 12 September 2022 for constitution of a Committee for implementation of Mission Vatsalya & Juvenile Justice Care (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 – Constitution of District Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee thereof.

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT,
Civil Secretariat, J&K.**

Subject:- Constitution of Committee(s) for Mission Vatsalya and Juvenile Justice Care (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

**Government Order No: 1051 -JK(GAD) of 2022
Dated: 12-09-2022**

Sanction is hereby accorded to constitution of committee(s), comprising the following, for implementation, monitoring and review of the Mission Vatsalya and Juvenile Justice Care (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015:

I. UT Level Monitoring and Review Committee:-

1	Chief Secretary	Chairperson
2	Administrative Secretary, Home.	Member
3	Administrative Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development.	Member
4	Administrative Secretary, Department of Skill Development.	Member
5	Administrative Secretary, Department of School Education.	Member
6	Administrative Secretary, Department of Labour & Employment	Member
7	Administrative Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.	Member
8	Administrative Secretary, Department of Social Welfare Department.	Member Secretary
9	Administrative Secretary, Department of Health & Medical Education.	Member
10	Administrative Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs & Sports.	Member
11	Administrative Secretary, Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.	Member
12	Any other domain expert/statutory body/departments	Co-opted Member

Terms of reference:

- The Committee shall monitor and review the implementation of the scheme in UT.
- The Committee shall make special efforts for convergence so as to ensure benefits under all possible government welfare schemes for the children.
- The committee shall closely monitor and review working of structures, services and progress under various components of the Mission Vatsalya.
- The Committee shall ensure full and unhindered implementation of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, and Rules thereof.
- The committee shall also review implementation of all other laws applicable for welfare of children such as Right to Education Act, 2009, Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 etc. and all schemes being run by the departments for the benefit of children.

II. UT Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee:-

1	Administrative Secretary, Department of Social Welfare	Chairperson
2	Representative of the Home Department (not below the rank of Additional Secretary)	Member
3	Representative of Department of Housing and Urban Development (not below the rank of Additional Secretary).	Member
4	Representative of Department of Skill Development (not below the rank of Additional Secretary).	Member
5	Representative of Department of School Education (not below the rank of Additional Secretary).	Member
6	Representative of Department of Labour & Employment (not below the rank of Additional Secretary)	Member
7	Representative of Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (not below the rank of Additional Secretary).	Member
8	Representative of Department of Health & Medical Education (not below the rank of Additional Secretary).	Member
9	Representative of Department of Youth Affairs & Sports (not below the rank of Additional Secretary).	Member
10	Representative of Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (not below the rank of Additional Secretary).	Member
11	Mission Director, Mission Vatsalya	Member-Secretary
12	Any other domain expert/statutory body/departments	Co-opted member

Terms of reference:

- The Committee shall prepare an annual action plan including financial proposal for the UT and submit to the Government for approval.
- The Committee shall closely monitor and review the working of structures, services and progress under various components of the Mission Vatsalya.
- The Committee shall hold quarterly review meetings with District Child Welfare and Protection Committees for effective implementation of the scheme.
- The Committee shall take needful measures for advocacy, awareness, generation, capacity building, of all stakeholders on child rights and child

welfare and address road-blocks, issues, complaints received regarding care and protection of children in the UT.

- The Committee shall make special efforts for convergence so as to ensure benefits under all possible government welfare schemes for the children.
- The Committee shall ensure that all institutions are set up under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, and Rules thereof.
- The Committee with the assistance of UTCPS (Union Territory Child Protection Scheme) may also frame a media and communication plan to generate awareness among the public on various aspects of the Mission for the rehabilitation and procedures for better protection of children.

III. District Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee(s):-

1	District Magistrate	Chairperson
2	Additional District Development Commissioner	Member
3	Superintendent of Police	Member
4	Representative from District Legal Services Authority	Member
5	District Programme Officer, Poshan Abhiyan	Member
6	Chief Executive Officer, Urban Local Bodies	Member
7	Chief Planning Officer	Member
8	Chief Medical Officer	Member
9	Chief Education officer	Member
10	Assistant Labour Commissioner	Member
11	District Youth Services and Sports Officer	Member
12	District Social Welfare Officer	Member-Secretary
13	District Skill Development Officer	Member
14	Child Development Project Officer HQ	Member
15	Representative of SC/ST/BC Corporation	Member
16	Any other domain expert/statutory body/departments	Co-opted Member

Terms of reference:

- The Committee shall closely supervise and monitor the activities as well as the overall implementation of Mission Vatsalya at the District level.
- The Committee, with the assistance of DCPU (District Child Protection Units) shall conduct periodic and regular mapping of all children related services in the district for creating a resource directory and making information available to the Committees and Boards from time to time.
- The Committee shall assess the number of children in difficult circumstances and create district specific data bases to monitor trends and patterns.
- The Committee shall also facilitate the implementation of non-institutional care programmes including sponsorship, Foster Care and After Care at the district level.
- The Committee with the assistance of DCPU may also frame a media and communication plan to generate awareness amongst public on various aspects of the Mission for rehabilitation and procedures for better protection of children.
- The Committee shall make special efforts towards convergence with other government departments to ensure the benefits of welfare schemes for children percolate to the concerned stakeholders in the district.

By order of Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sd/-
(Dr Piyush Singla) IAS
Secretary to the Government

GAD-ADM0IV/81/2021-09-GAD

Dated: 12.09.2022

Copy to:-

- All Financial Commissioners (Additional Chief Secretaries).
- Director General of Police, J&K.
- All Principal Secretaries to the Government.
- Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, J&K.
- Joint Secretary (Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh) Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.
- Principal Resident Commissioner, J&K Government, New Delhi.
- All Commissioner/Secretaries to Government.
- Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir/Jammu.
- All Deputy Commissioners.
- Director Information, J&K.
- Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museum, J&K.
- Private Secretary to the Chief Secretary, J&K.
- Private Secretary to Advisor (B) to the Lieutenant Governor.
- Private Secretary to Secretary to the Government, GAD.
- Government Order/Stock file/Website, GAD


(Mohit Raina) JKAS
Under Secretary to the Government

13.3 Annexure 3: Demi Official Letter (DO) dated 6 April 2023 written by Commissioner / Secretary, Social Welfare Department of the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir to Commissioner / Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj of the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir

शीतल नंदा, भा.प्र.से.
आयुक्त सचिव



समाज कल्याण विभाग
केन्द्र रासित प्रदेश
जम्मू और कश्मीर

Sheetal Nanda, IAS
Commissioner / Secretary



Social Welfare Department
UT of Jammu & Kashmir
e-mail : socialwelfare.adm@gmail.com

D.O. No. PS/Comm/Secy/SWD/32/2023

Dated: 06-04-2023

Dear Mandeep Mam,

To ensure the safety and security of the children, the **Mission Vatsalya Guidelines** emphasize on creating synergies between state and local government bodies. The local bodies must be able to reach out to children, engage with communities and encourage them to take ownership of the wellbeing of Children in their areas. In this regard, the function of child welfare and protection has been assigned to the Panchayati Raj Institutions. For aforementioned reasons, '**Block Level Child Protection Committees and Village Level Child Protection Committees**' are to be constituted. These Committees should work to strengthen the framework of child protection through effective implementation of different child care programs.

For adopting child friendly practices, the best performing Gram Panchayat/ Village Council is awarded with '**Child Friendly Gram Panchayat Award**' on National Panchayati Raj Day celebrated on 24th of April every year. The constitution of these committees would be a step in the direction. Therefore all Panchayats should exhort to adopt conducive atmosphere for healthy growth and development of children.

For Gender Budgeting the '**Ministry of Women and Child Development**' seeks to promote Gender Budget Cells at the Panchayat Level. These Gender Budget Cells are aimed at ensuring that a certain percentage of Panchayat Funds are set aside for Women and Children related functions. There is immense scope within your department to plan and budget for women and child related activities right down to the grass root level, given the opportunities in enhancing child and women participation and empowerment.

In this regard, I request you to direct the concerned to constitute Block Level Child Protection Committees, Village Level Child Protection Committees and Panchayat Level Gender Budgeting Cells to ensure welfare and wellbeing of Children and Women in their respective areas. The details of the committees/ cells so constituted may kindly be shared with District Social Welfare Officers in all districts. The suggested composition of the committees is enclosed.

With Regards,

Yours Sincerely,
Sheetal
(Sheetal Nanda) IAS
6/4/23

Ms. Mandeep Kour, IAS
Commissioner/ Secretary to the Government
Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, J&K

Annexure-I

1. COMPOSITION OF VILLAGE LEVEL CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

S.No	Designation	Position in Committee
1	Sarpanch	Chairperson
2	Panchayat Secretary	Member Secretary
3	Child Representative (Boy)	Member
4	Child Representative (Girl)	Member
5	Anganwadi Worker	Member
6	School Teacher	Member
7	Asha Worker	Member
8	Women (actively involved in child & women related issues)	Member
9	Civil Society Representative	Member
10	Chowkidar	Member

2. COMPOSITION OF BLOCK LEVEL CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

S.No	Designation	Position in Committee
1	Head of the Block Development Council	Chairperson
2	Concerned Block Development Officer	Member Secretary
3	Representative of DCPU	Member
4	Concerned Child Development Project Officer	Member
5	Representative of Education Department	Member
6	Representative of Health Department	Member
7	Chairperson (s) of Village Level Child Protection Committee (s)	Member
8	Respected Community Members	Member
9	Child Representative (Boy)	Member
10	Child Representative (Girl)	Member

Sgr. (May-Oct) : 0194-2506067 / 0194-2506279 (Fax) | Jmu. (Nov-April) : 0191-2579126 / 0191-2542759 (Fax)



BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO

13.4 Annexure 4: Circular issued by the Directorate of Mission Vatsalya on 23 May 2023 to senior government officer for Strengthening of Child Protection Mechanisms in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K)

13.5 Annexure 5: Government Order by the District Development Commissioner of Rajouri dated 16 February 2024 for constitution of a Committee for implementation of Mission Vatsalya and Juvenile Justice Care (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015 – Constitution of District Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee thereof.



**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF MISSION VATSALYA, J&K**

SDA Colony, Bemina, Srinagar-190018 / Hajj House, Rail Head Complex, Jammu 180012 Phone/Fax: 0191 2479333 (U). Mail id- psicpsgr@jamaail.com www.jkicps.org

Subject : Strengthening of Child Protection Mechanism in Jammu & Kashmir.

CIRCULAR

In reference to your office No. NDF/ESTT-2D/801 and in Continuation to this office earlier Circular No.MD/ICPS/2018/7005-44 dated: 06-04-2018 and SMD/ICPS/PS/2018/1410-1468 dated : 13-10-2018 regarding the collaborative work and activities by the Mission Vatsalya and National Development Foundation (NDF), Jammu. Whereunder National Development Foundation has proposed to support and facilitate further the Strengthening of the Child Protection Mechanism in Jammu & Kashmir.

The Directorate of Mission Vatsalya J&K and National Development Foundation have decided to collaborate further to strengthen Child Protection activities as envisioned in Mission Vatsalya and Juvenile Justice Act by way of identifying the Mechanism for Rehabilitation of Children Under CCI after 18 years of Age and also submit a draft plan for skills to be introduced in the CCIs Therefore, the National Development Foundation will facilitate enhancing the capacities of the three-tier protection mechanism, i.e VCWPC, BCWPC and DCWPC. Apart from this, it will facilitate to build the capacities and promote the convergent approach of different stakeholders, including CWCS, JJBs, SJPU, DCPUs, Civil Society Organization; Academicians. Furthermore, NDF will also carry out IEC Campaigns and Events on Child Protection. Therefore, all concerned are requested to extend all possible Cooperation and support to National Development Foundation for strengthening the child protection mechanism.

**Harvinder Kour(JKAS)
Mission Director,
Mission Vatsalya
J&K**

No.: PS/MV/CIRCULAR/81/2022/678-686

Dated:- 23-05-2023

Copy to the:-

1. P.S to Commissioner Secretary to the Government, Social Welfare Department, J&K for kind information of the Commissioner Secretary.
2. All District Development Commissioners for information.
3. All Senior Superintendents of Police for information.
4. Director Health Services Jammu/Kashmir, for information.
5. Director School Education, Jammu/Kashmir, for information.
6. Deputy Labour Commissioner Jammu/Kashmir for information.
7. All District Child Protection Officers for information and necessary action.
8. National Development Foundation J&K, Jammu, for information and necessary action.
9. All Concerned



**UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER RAJOURI**
Tel./Fax: 01962-262547 Email: dpcrajouri@gmail.com

Sub: Constitution of Committee for Implementation of Mission Vatsalya and Juvenile Justice Care (Care and Protection of Children) Act. 2015- Constitution of District Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee thereof.
Ref: Govt. Order No. 1051-JK(GAD) of 20222 dated 12-09-2022 issued by the General Administration Department.

**O R D E R No 38-DDCR OF 2024
DATED 16-02-2024**

Pursuant to Govt. Order referred above, District Level Child Welfare and Protection Committee with the following composition is hereby constituted with immediate effect for ensuring effective implementation of **Mission Vatsalya and Juvenile Justice Care (Care and Protection of Children) Act. 2015 in the District.**

1	District Magistrate Rajouri	Chairperson
2	Superintendent of Police, Rajouri	Member
3	Addl. District Development Commissioner, Rajouri	Member
	Representative from District Legal Services Authority	Member
4	District Programme Officer, Poshan Abhiyan Rajouri.	Member
5	Chief Planning Officer, Rajouri	Member
6	Chief Medical Officer, Rajouri.	Member
7	Chief Education Officer, Rajouri	Member
8	Asstt. Labour Commissioner, Rajouri.	Member
9	District Youth Services and Sports Officer, Rajouri	Member
10	District Social Welfare Officer, Rajouri	Member Secy.
11	Principal ITI Rajouri (Nodal Officer Skill Dev.)	Member
12	CDPO Rajouri	Member
13	District Manager, SC/ST/OBC Corporation Rajouri.	Member
14	Executive Officer, Rajouri, Thannamandi, Nowshera, Sunderbani & Kalakote	Member
15	Sh. Rajiv Khajuria, President National Development Foundation	Co-opted Member

Terms of reference:

1. The Committee shall closely supervise and monitor the activities as well as the overall implementation of Mission Vatsalya at the District level.
2. The Committee, with the assistance of DCPU (District Child Protection Unit) shall conduct periodic and regular mapping of all children related services in the District for creating resource directory and making information available to the Committees and Boards from time to time.
3. The Committee shall assess the number of children in difficult trends and patterns.
4. The Committee shall also facilitate the implementation of non-institutional care programmes including sponsorship, Foster Care and After Care at the District Level.
5. The Committee, with the assistance of DCPU, may also frame a media and communication Plan to generate awareness amongst the public on various aspects of the Mission for rehabilitation and procedures for better protection of children.
6. The Committee shall make special efforts towards convergence with other Government Departments to ensure the benefits of Welfare schemes for children percolate to the concerned stakeholders in the District.

**(Om Prakash Bhagat)
District Dev. Commissioner
Rajouri**

No: DDCR/P&S/JJC Act./2023-24/11095-11067 Dated: 16-02-2023

Copy to the:-

1. Senior Superintendent of Police Rajouri for Inf. & n/a.
2. Addl. District Dev. Commissioner, Rajouri for Inf. & n/a.
3. District Programme Officer, Poshan Abhiyan Rajouri for Inf. & n/a.
4. District Information Officer, Rajouri for Inf. & n/a.
5. District Social Welfare Officer, Rajouri for Inf. & n/a.
6. _____ (All concerned) for Inf. & n/a.
7. PA to Dy. Commissioner, Rajouri for kind information of the District Dev. Commissioner and with the request to **inform all the concerned officers to attend the meeting on scheduled date, time and venue telephonically.**

13.6 Annexure 6: Minutes of a meeting dated 17 February 2024 held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri to review implementation of Child Welfare Services and Juvenile Justice Act in District Rajouri

Minutes of the Meeting of District Level Child Protection Committee held under the chairmanship of Sh. Om Prakash Bhagat, JKAS Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri to review implementation of Child Welfare Services and Juvenile Justice Act in District Rajouri.

A meeting to review implementation of Child Welfare Services and Juvenile Justice Act in District Rajouri was held today on 17-02-2024 under the chairmanship of **Sh. Om Prakash Bhagat, JKAS Deputy Commissioner Rajouri** in the office chamber of Deputy Commissioner Rajouri.

Following Officers/non official members were present in the meeting.

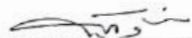
1. Additional District Development Commissioner Rajouri
2. Additional Deputy Commissioner Rajouri
3. DPO ICDS Rajouri.
4. Additional Superintendent of Police Rajouri
5. Chief Medical Officer Rajouri
6. Chief Education Officer Rajouri.
7. District Social Welfare Officer Rajouri.
8. District Youth Services and Sports Officer Rajouri.
9. President National Development Foundation

At the very outset District Social Welfare Officer, Rajouri (Member Secretary) appraised the committee regarding the legal framework in the District for the implementation of Juvenile Justice Act and achievement made so far with respect to various welfare schemes for children in difficult circumstances. It was intimated that Both Child Welfare Committee and juvenile Justice Board are in place in District and all measures are being taken to safeguard the interest of the children in difficult circumstances.

After threadbare Discussion and detailed deliberations following decisions were taken and instructions were issued.

1. The chair directed Chief Education Officer to conduct a survey across the District so as to come up with exact number of children who are in difficult circumstances and ensure that all these children are necessarily enrolled in Educational Institutions.
2. The chair directed to conduct special camps in and around slum areas and counsel children, parents and other stakeholders for better future of the children.
3. District Child Protection Officer was instructed to create awareness among the common masses regarding the welfare schemes of Government meant for Juveniles.
4. Chief Medical Officer was instructed to conduct special medical camps for the screening of the children of slums.
5. The chair directed DCPU to develop foster care guidelines. He asked President National Development foundation to extend technical support for the same.
6. It was directed that separate orders be issued to ADMs/ADCs for monitoring of Block and village Level Child Welfare and Protection Committees and implementation of Mission Vatsalya and JJ Act at village/Panchayat Level.
7. The chair Directed DCPU to keep surveillance at all the prominent locations and ensure that no child is involved in begging, rag picking and child labour.
8. It was emphasized upon all the departments to work in close coordination so as to properly implement the Mission Vatsalya in District Rajouri.
9. The chair desired to have another review meeting after one month so as to introspect the achievement with regard to the set targets.

Meeting concluded with vote of thanks to the chair.


Wakeel Ahmed Batt (JKAS)
District Child Protection Officer
Rajouri

No:- DCPU/R/2024/95-98.
Dated 19-02-2024
Copy to

1. Deputy Commissioner Rajouri for kind information
2. Mission Director Mission Vatsalya J&K Jammu for information.
3. All the committee members for kind information and necessary action.
4. President National development foundation for information.

**13.7 Annexure 7: Development of child friendly police station in Police station Rajouri,
letter No: DCPO/MV/R/2024/008-/011 dated: 27/06/2024.**

**13.8 Annexure 8: Agenda of the training of Police Officials on child friendly
police station in Rajouri.**



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER RAJOURI
email:- dcpolcpr@gmail.com



**Training of Police Officers on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of
Children) Act 2015**

Date: 13th February 2024

Venue: Conference Hall, DPL, Rajouri

Sh. Rajiv Khajuria
President
National Development Foundation
Jammu

No:- DCPO/MV/R/2024/008-/011

Dated:- 27/06/2024

Subject: Development of Child Friendly Room In Police Station Rajouri.

Sir,

In light of the minutes of the meeting on 21-06-2024 held at the Police Station Rajouri and the meeting held between us on 27-06-2024 the following amendment is made in the minutes of the meeting:-

1. That instead of transferring budget (as mentioned in point 10 of the meeting) in favour of District Social Welfare Officer Rajouri by NDF, DSWO/DCPO will constitute a three members committee which will conduct a market survey and will procure the items billed directly to NDF as finalized in the meeting. DCPO will forward the bills to NDF for payment directly.

Other decisions taken in the meeting of 21-06-2024 will remain the same.

Abdul Raheem (JKAS)
District Child Protection Officer
Rajouri
27/6/24

Copy to the :-

1. Sh. Om Parkash Bhagat (JKAS) Deputy Commissioner Rajouri for kind information.
2. Sh. Amrit Pal Singh (IPS) SSP Rajouri for kind information.
3. Sh. Aejaz Wani, SHO Rajouri for information and with a request to keep the mutually finalized room vacant for the establishment of Child friendly Space.

Programme Schedule

S. No.	Time	Activity/Session	Facilitator
1.	10:00 – 10:30 am	Registration	NDF
2.	Inaugural: 10:30 – 11:30 am a. Lighting of Traditional Lamp & Pledge (10:30 – 10:35 am) b. Welcome & Brief Intro to JJ System by Rajiv Khajuria, President NDF (10:35 – 10:55 am) c. Introduction with Participants and Understanding their Training Expectations by Nimisha Srivastava, Resource Person/ ED CSJ (10:55 – 11:10 am) d. Address by Sh. Amritpal Singh IPS, SSP Rajouri (Chief Guest) (11:10 – 11:20 am) e. Presentation of Momentos (11:20 – 11:25 am) f. Vote of Thanks by Mr. Abdul Rahim, JKAS, DSWO/Distt. Child Protection Officer, Rajouri. (11:25 – 11:30 am)		
3.	11:30 – 12 Noon	TEA BREAK	
4.	12:00 – 1:30 pm	Interactive Session on Handling Juvenile Cases by Ms. Nimisha Srivastava (Resource Person), ED Council to Secure Justice. a. Procedures for dealing with Children in Conflict with Law b. Recording & Reporting of Juvenile Cases c. Brief Role of JJBs and CWCs	
5.	1:30 – 2:30 pm	LUNCH	
6.	2:30 – 3:30 pm	Interactive Session on Dealing and Communication with Juveniles by Ms. Nimisha Srivastava a. Unique Needs & Vulnerability of Children b. Required Communication Skills & Do's and Don'ts for Police Officers when dealing with Children c. Collaborative Approaches	
7.	3:30 – 4:00 pm	Feedback and valediction.	
8.	4:00 pm	TEA	

13.9 Annexure 9 : Deputation order of police officials by District Police office Rajouri for attending training.

DISTRICT POLICE OFFICE RAJOURI
 Phone No. 01962-262240 e-mail ID: ssprajouri-jk@nic.in
 Fax No. 01962-264068 (PERSONNEL SECTION)

Subject:- Training of Police Officers on Juvenile Justice Act at Rajouri on 13th of February, 2024.

ORDER

The National Development Foundation (NDF) is organizing Capacity Building training Programme for Police Officers/Officials on Juvenile Justice, Act from time to time in all the Districts of Jammu Zone. A training session on Juvenile Justice Act is scheduled to be conducted on 13th of February, 2024 at 10:30 AM sharp in the Conference Hall DPL Rajouri. The training shall be imparted by the National Level Resource Person who imparts trainings to Judicial/Police Officers in various parts of the Country.

Therefore, the below mentioned Police Officers including Juvenile Police Officers of this District shall attend the said training on 13th of February, 2024 at 10:30 AM sharp in Conference Hall DPL Rajouri:-

S NO.	RANK NAME AND NOS OF POLICE OFFICERS	POSTINGS
1.	Shri Musadique Majeed Basu, JKPS	Addl. SP Hqrs Rajouri
2.	Shri Mohd Rafi Giri, JKPS	Addl. SP Nowshera
3.	Shri Anurag Daru, IPS	Trainee Officer (Prob)
4.	Shri Mudassar Hussain, JKPS	Dy. SP Hqrs Rajouri
5.	Shri Sayed Zaheer Abbas Jafri, JKPS	SDPO Nowshera
6.	Shri Tussif Ahmed, JKPS	SDPO Manjakote
7.	Shri Shami Kumar, JKPS	Dy. SP PC Rajouri
8.	Shri Khaliq Hussain, Dy. SP	SDPO Thanamandi
9.	Shri Mohd Shoket, Dy. SP	Dy. SP, DAR Rajouri
10.	Shri Deepak Jasrotia, Dy. SP	Dy. SP CIO Rajouri
11.	Shri Naveed Shoket Qazi, JKPS	Dy. SP (PC) Darhal
12.	Shri Vikram Sarmhal, JKPS	Dy. SP (PC) Kandi
13.	Shri Sumit Bhagat, JKPS	Dy. SP (PC) Kalakote
14.	Shri Latief Ahmed, Dy. SP (M)	Dy. SP Admn.
15.	Inspr Mohd Alyas No. EXJ966437	DPL Rajouri
16.	SI Mohd Aslam No. EXJ875534	DPL Rajouri
17.	Inspr Niku Ram	SHO PS Budhal (JO)
18.	Inspr Shakil Ahmed Manhas	SHO PS Kandi (JO)
19.	SI (Dvr) Zakir Hussain No. EXJ-945519	DPL Rajouri
20.	SI Riyaz Shah No. EXJ855514	DPL Rajouri
21.	SI Varinder Singh No. EXJ875750	DPL Rajouri
22.	ASI Abdul Matin No. EXJ905536	DPL Rajouri
23.	W/ Inspr Sushma Kumari	SHO W-PS Rajouri (JO)
24.	ASI Ab. Rashid No. EXJ977336	DPL Rajouri
25.	Inspr Abrar Khan	SHO PS Manjakote (JO)
26.	Inspr Ranbir Singh	RI DPL Rajouri (JO)
27.	Inspr Mustaj Ahmed	DPL Rajouri (IC PCR)

28.	Inspr Vishal Kumar	DPL Rajouri
29.	Inspr Tahir Yousaf Khan	DPL Rajouri
30.	SI Ishtiaq Ahmed No. EXJ935968	PS Rajouri (JO)
31.	SI Mohd Ayoub No. EXJ845764	PS Nowshera (JO)
32.	SI Ved Vias No. EXJ885682	PS Kalakote (JO)
33.	ASI Kuldeep Sharma No. EXJ935696	PS Sunderbani (JO)
34.	PSI Ch. Mohd Faisal Bin Rashid No. EXJ196564	PS Thanamandi (JO)
35.	ASI Jahangir Iqbal No. EXJ925564	PS Darhal (JO)
36.	ASI Vipran Kumar No. EXJ855710	PS Dharamsal (JO)
37.	PSI Surjeet Sargotra No. EXJ196763	PC Rajouri
38.	PSI Lalit Kumar Salaria No. EXJ196697	PS Manjakote
39.	PSI Salam Ul Din No. EXJ1966746	PS Darhal
40.	PSI Vikas Kullar No. EXJ196582	PS Nowshera
41.	PSI Anees Choudhary No. EXJ196720	PS Kalakote
42.	PSI Manish Singh No. EXJ196656	PS Rajouri
43.	PSI Chander Kant No. EXJ196571	IC PP Peeri
44.	PSI Shankar Sharma No. EXJ196769	PPFCP Rajouri
45.	PSI Akash Sharma No. EXJ19679	PC Rajouri
46.	PSI Sahil Bhagat No. EXJ196736	IC PP City Rajouri
47.	PSI Maan Singh No. EXJ196565	IC PP Chingus
48.	PS Rajat Jasrotia No. EXJ196315	PS Rajouri
49.	W/PSI Farah Jabeen Magray No. EXJ196242	PS Rajouri
50.	PSI Fida Hussain No. EXJ196436	PS Rajouri

[Signature]
 Sr. Superintendent of Police,
 Rajouri

No:Pers/J-2/2024/ 4254-64/06v

Dated: 31-01-2024

Copy to:-

- The ADGP Jammu Zone Jammu.
- DIGP of Police R-P Range Hqrs Rajouri
 ---for favour of kind information please.
- Addl. SP Hqrs Rajouri/Nowshera.
- Shri Anurag Daru, IPS, Trainee Officer.
- National Development Foundation J&K Jammu for information. This is in reference to letter No.NDF/OGPS-3B/2024/1016 dated 29-01-2024.
- SDPO Thanamandi/Manjakote/Nowshera.
- Dy. SP DAR/Admn/Hqrs/PC Rajouri/PC Darhal/PC Kandi/PC Kalakote.
- All SHOs in District Rajouri.
- IC Accounts/IT Sections DPO Rajouri
- Lines Officer DPL Rajouri.
- IC PCR Rajouri

---for information and necessary action.

[Signature]
 Sr. Superintendent of Police,
 Rajouri

13.11 Annexure 11: IEC Material on Violence against Children No longer tolerated.

13.10 Annexure 10 : Press release of police training of JJ Act .

SSP Pitches for Child-Friendly Policing in District Rajouri

LIAQAT ALI KHATANA

RAJOURI, Feb 13: Sr. Superintendent of Police Rajouri Anantpal Singh IPS called upon all Police Officers in District Rajouri to adopt a Child-Friendly approach while dealing with Children in difficult circumstances.

He was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the Police Training on Juvenile Justice Act organized by the National Development Foundation (NDF) in collaboration with the district police officer Rajouri and the District Child Protection Unit Rajouri.

Additional SP Nowshera presented a welcome address while the Vote of Thanks was presented by Ab Raheem, District Social Welfare and District Child Protection Officer Rajouri.

Mr. Rahim gave a detailed account of the functioning of DCPU CWC and JJB in Rajouri. Ms. Nimisha



Srivastava, ED CSJ acted as a Resource Person and sensitized the participants on the procedures laid down in the Act.

Mr. Sunny Kumar, Programme Manager NDF conducted the proceedings of the Training Programme. Present among others include Addl. SP Rajouri, Musaddiq Bava, DYSPs, SDPOs, SHOs, Child Welfare Police Officers and reps of CWC

JJB, DCPU and one-stop centre. Mr. Rajiv Khajuria, President National Development Foundation in his address gave an introduction to the Child Rights and Juvenile Justice Act and highlighted the Role of Police in the principle of Diversion laid down in the Juvenile Justice Act.

He said that children can't comprehend consequences, the need is to understand the

port. Anantpal Singh SSP disclosed that District Police Rajouri and the National Development Foundation will together make Police Station Rajouri a Model Child-Friendly Police Station which can receive the children involved in Petty and Serious offences or the victims of POCSO in a child-friendly manner.

He informed that as envisioned by the Prime Minister of India, DGP J&K has given standing instructions for child and women-friendly Policing strictly following the Laws. He appreciated the efforts of the National Development Foundation and thanked Mr. Rajiv Khajuria for imparting training to Police officers of the Rajouri District.

He asked the officers to clear all their doubts from resource persons concerning the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act 2015 as amended in 2023.

13.12 Annexure 12: IEC Material on Mission Vatsalya (Zero Child Labour).

13.13 Annexure 13: IEC Material Pamphlet on United Nations Convention on the rights of child (UNCRC).

13.14 Annexure 14: Case Study 1

Background: Ganya village is a border village of Nowshera. Two minor brothers were left to fend for themselves after their father's sudden death. With their mother's deteriorating health and limited resources, the family relied solely on a small plot of agricultural land for survival. Their only source of income was subsistence farming, yielding barely enough for basic needs. With no access to education or proper nutrition, the brothers faced an uncertain future, bound by poverty and a lack of opportunity.

Challenges Faced

- Financial Constraints: The family lacked a steady income source. Due to financial constraints, they couldn't invest in improved farming techniques, fertilizers, or seeds.
- Educational Deprivation: With the need to work in the fields, both brothers struggled to attend school regularly, compromising their education.
- Lack of Support and Guidance: Without a father figure, the brothers lacked adult guidance in handling farming responsibilities, financial management, and navigating educational needs.

Intervention by NDF

The National Development Foundation (NDF) is working in this village to strengthen child protection we have formed the VCWPC in the village and also gave training to the members of the committee regarding the safeguarding of children. VCWPC, after training, identified their pressing needs. They briefly described this case to NDF staff, and after going through the whole case, we found that these children are in need of care and protection. here comes the role of the sponsorship scheme by Mission Vatsalya. Mission Vatsalya is a Government of India initiative aimed at protecting and supporting children in need of care and welfare, aligning with the broader goals of child rights and protection in India.

Results of the Intervention

NDF staff consistently provided hand-holding support in submitting documentation as required in sponsorship schemes. The case was further referred to the concerned person. Through this intervention, the sponsorship scheme under Mission Vatsalya has been identified as an optimal support mechanism for the children.

- a) Increased protection and support: Through VCWPCS's efforts, the application is submitted under Mission Vatsalya's sponsorship component. and the children's immediate and long-term needs for care, protection, and welfare are now being addressed.
- b) Enhanced community-based safeguarding: With the support of trained VCWPC members, the village community's capacity to protect children is reinforced, creating a sustainable safeguarding mechanism.
- c) Formal pathway for child welfare: The involvement of CWC and NDF ensures the children's cases are formally monitored and supported, enabling a structured response through government schemes.
- d) This coordinated intervention not only addresses the children's immediate needs but also strengthens the local child protection ecosystem, ensuring long-term support and well-being for vulnerable children within the community.

Conclusion: This case highlights the profound impact of a comprehensive intervention that combines financial sponsorship, educational assistance, and community mentorship to empower vulnerable families. Through the collaborative efforts of the National Development Foundation (NDF) and the Mission Vatsalya scheme, two children's lives have been transformed from one of hardship and uncertainty to a path of self-sufficiency, stability, and hope. The integration of resources not only provided them with immediate relief in terms of nutrition, health, and education but also equipped them with essential skills and knowledge for a sustainable future.

13.15 Annexure 15: Case Study 2

Saroj Bala - A Village Advocate for Child Rights

Saroj Bala, a 30-year-old resident of Bhawani village in Jammu and Kashmir, embarked on a life-changing journey as a member of the Village Level Child Protection and Welfare Committee (VLCWC).

Initially hesitant due to limited education, Saroj's resolve to contribute to her community led her to attend training organized by the NDF and district administration. The training covered child rights, juvenile justice, counselling, and trauma management. Through interactive sessions, she learned to identify signs of abuse and provide emotional support to children.

Equipped with new knowledge, Saroj began conducting awareness sessions on child protection for parents, teachers, and community members. Her efforts have encouraged increased reporting of child-related issues and inspired other women in her village to join VLCWC initiatives.

The training also boosted Saroj's confidence and leadership skills, earning her recognition as a change-maker within her community.

Key Takeaways

- Training VLCWC members strengthens local child protection mechanisms.
- Community awareness is essential to prevent abuse and exploitation.
- Empowering women fosters leadership and community transformation.

Recommendations

- Expand training programs for VLCWC members.
- Strengthen partnerships with local authorities.
- Encourage more women to join child protection efforts.
- Saroj Bala's journey highlights the potential of rural women in advancing child protection initiatives, making her an inspiration for others.

13.16 Annexure 16: Case study 3

Raj Mohd. – Advocating Child Protection in Education

Raj Mohd, a 40-year-old Education Department representative from Nowshera block in Jammu and Kashmir, began his child protection journey as a member of the Block Level Child Protection and Welfare Committee (BLCPWC).

Initially uncertain about his role, Raj attended comprehensive training organized by NDF and the district administration. He gained insights into child rights, juvenile justice, and addressing abuse in educational settings.

With newfound confidence, Raj proposed integrating child protection into school policies and curricula. He also initiated workshops for teachers to equip them with skills to identify and report child abuse. His efforts have inspired other education professionals to join BLCPWC initiatives.

Raj's commitment has transformed him into a resource person for child protection in his department, enabling systemic change in schools.

Key Takeaways

- Training enhances education sector engagement in child protection.
- Collaboration with local authorities ensures effective case handling.
- Empowering educators drives systemic change in child safety.

Recommendations

- Expand BLCPWC training programs.
- Strengthen partnerships between schools and child protection authorities.
- Promote child-friendly policies in educational institutions.
- Raj's story exemplifies the transformative role of education professionals in child protection efforts.

13.17 Annexure 17: Case Study 4

Manmeet Choudhary – A Child Rights Advocate

Fifteen-year-old Manmeet Choudhary from Hanjana Thakra village, Jammu and Kashmir, became a Child Representative in her BLCPWC. Her journey began with training by NDF and the district administration, focusing on child rights and protection.

Initially shy, Manmeet's confidence grew through interactive sessions and role-playing exercises. She learned to identify signs of abuse and provide emotional support, enabling her to address child protection concerns effectively.

Manmeet plans to form a child-friendly club in her school and conduct awareness programs for peers, parents, and teachers. Her efforts have inspired other children to join BLCPWC initiatives, amplifying their collective voice.

Key Takeaways

- Training empowers children to advocate for their rights.
- Child participation ensures inclusive decision-making in BLCPWCs.
- Community awareness is vital for preventing child abuse.

Recommendations

- Scale up training for Child Representatives.
- Encourage child participation in community protection mechanisms.
- Foster partnerships between BLCPWCs and local authorities.

Manmeet's story highlights the power of youth leadership in promoting child rights and building safer communities.

13.18 Annexure 18: About participating agencies

About National Development Foundation (NDF)

National Development Foundation (NDF) is an independent civil society organisation registered under the Society Registration Act in J&K India. It has been working at the grassroots level for communities-in-need in J&K since 1992. NDF works to empower children, youth, and women and protect wildlife and the environment. NDF works directly with the active participation of the targeted communities, and in its work, it collaborates with the government, donors, and partners. NDF works to strengthen the gaps and link marginalised communities to social protection schemes. NDF strongly advocates for children's rights as enshrined in the Constitution of India, UNCRC and the substantive Indian Child Welfare Acts and policies.

About UNICEF

UNICEF, the United Nations agency for children, works to protect the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged and those most challenging to reach. Across more than 190 countries and territories, it helps children survive, thrive and fulfil their potential. It provides and advocates for education, health and nutrition services. It protects children from violence and abuse. It brings clean water and sanitation to those in need, and it keeps them safe from climate change and disease. UNICEF has been working in India for more than 75 years. UNICEF is working in 17 states, covering 90 per cent of India's child population.

In J&K, UNICEF's child protection initiatives are comprehensive and strategic. They focus on strengthening systems, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), family-based alternative care, child-friendly spaces (CFS), and adolescent resource centres (ARCs). These initiatives are designed to empower communities to sustain their work on child protection issues. UNICEF also provides crucial support to line departments and their convergence, ensuring a holistic approach to child welfare in the region.

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN NO LONGER TOLERATED



**CORPORAL
PUNISHMENT**



**CHILD
MARRIAGE**



**CHILDREN
INVOLVED IN
SUBSTANCE ABUSE**



BULLYING



DON'T ACCEPT THESE SITUATIONS SAY NO LOUD & CLEAR

SHARE WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS/SIBLINGS/FRIENDS

MUST REPORT TO 1098 (24X7 CHILDLINE SERVICE) OR CALL POLICE AT 112

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

First Floor, Shakuntla Bhawan, Ram Janki Enclave, Udheywala, Jammu, J&K - 180018 Web: www.ndf.net.in

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