



Launching of Campaign **Breaking the Silence....**

Combating Child Sexual Abuse in Odisha

on 4th July 2014

at
**Regional Medical Research Centre
(RMRC)**
Chandrasekharpur
Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Coordination

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Organised by

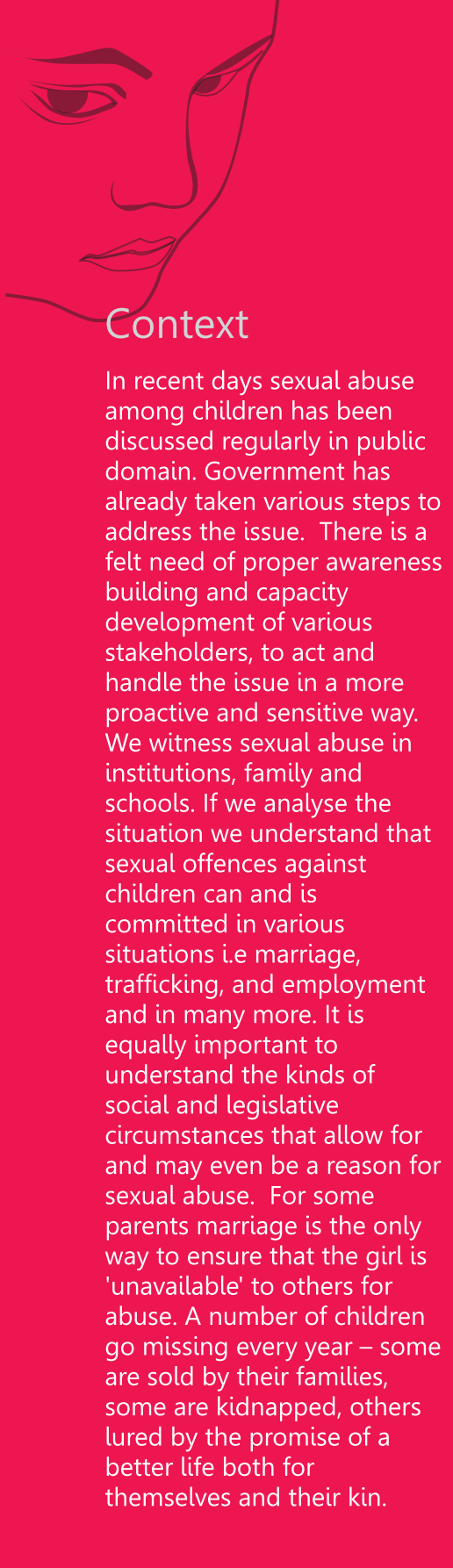
Youth Council for Development Alternatives (YCDA)

Supported by

**Women and Child Development Department,
Government of Odisha**

&

Unicef, Odisha



Context

In recent days sexual abuse among children has been discussed regularly in public domain. Government has already taken various steps to address the issue. There is a felt need of proper awareness building and capacity development of various stakeholders, to act and handle the issue in a more proactive and sensitive way. We witness sexual abuse in institutions, family and schools. If we analyse the situation we understand that sexual offences against children can and is committed in various situations i.e marriage, trafficking, and employment and in many more. It is equally important to understand the kinds of social and legislative circumstances that allow for and may even be a reason for sexual abuse. For some parents marriage is the only way to ensure that the girl is 'unavailable' to others for abuse. A number of children go missing every year – some are sold by their families, some are kidnapped, others lured by the promise of a better life both for themselves and their kin.

Legislation to protect children from sexual abuse

In order to address various circumstances and degrees of sexual offences against children, in 2012 the parliament passed the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act. This is the first comprehensive law on sexual abuse which expands the scope and range of forms of sexual offences, makes reporting of abuse mandatory and defines guidelines for child friendly police and procedures. Together with the Juvenile Justice Act, POCSO has created an opportunity to ensure greater protection to children that have suffered sexual abuse.

In Odisha under the POCSO Act, Children's Court has been declared along with appointment of Special Public Prosecutors. Apart from this we have Child Welfare Committees, Juvenile Justice Board and State Juvenile Police Unit. We need to look at how this unfolds on the ground.

The Campaign

Keeping the above situation, YCDA (Youth Council for Development Alternatives) with support from WCD Department and Unicef, Odisha is launching a stae level campaign named "Breaking the Silence... Combating Child Sexual Abuse in the State" The campaign will mobilise following key stakeholders at state and district level while organising various activities;

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|--|---|
| State Level | 1. State Commission for Protection of Child Rights 2. State Legal Service Authority 3. Women and Child Development Departments 4. Home Department, Odisha 5. School and Mass Education. |
| District Level | 1. Child Welfare Committee 2. District Child Protection Unit/Society 3. Juvenile Justice Board 4. Special Juvenile Police Unit 5. District Legal Service Authority |
| Various electronic and print media will be mobilised at state and district level to highlight the issue in the framework of POCSO Act. | |

Objectives

- The main objectives of the campaign are to:
- ◆ Create awareness among various stakeholders on the issue of Child Sexual Abuse and laws related to this.
 - ◆ Mobilise key actors of the state in implementation of Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses (POCSO) Act in Odisha.
 - ◆ Undertake and support advocacy with Government and various statutory bodies for better child protection.

The campaign will focus on addressing issues related to child sexual abuse from multiple perspectives including protection, legal intervention, and advocacy together with various stakeholders at state and District level

Combating sexual violence against children through specific legal instruments and comprehensive awareness-raising actions are two of the strategic objectives of the programme and it aims at "Building a state for and with children".

The purpose of the campaign is to equip children, their families/carers and societies at large with knowledge and tools to prevent and report sexual violence against children, thereby raising awareness of its extent.

Activities

- ◆ Preparation of a short situational analysis report
- ◆ One state level mega event launching and convention on Combating Child Sexual Abuse
- ◆ Training of Trainers for NGO partners and various statutory bodies to create a resource pool in the state.
- ◆ Preparation of IEC materials (FAQ, Campaign poster and reference material)
- ◆ District level sensitization Workshop on Combating Child Sexual Abuse

Programme Agenda

| Timings | Session | Guests/ Resource Persons |
|--|--|---|
| 10.30-11.30 am | Inaugural function | Chief Guest : Smt. Usha Devi , Honourable Minister, Women and Child Development Department Dr. Sruti Mohapatra , Acting Chairperson, Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights Mrs. Kasturi Mohapatra , Commissioner, State Commission for Persons with Disabilities, Odisha Smt. Usha Padhee , Commissioner-cum-Secretary, School and Mass Education Department. Smt. S. Aswathy Director, Women & Child Development Department, Government of Odisha |
| 11.30-12.00 pm | Tea Break | |
| Panel discussion " Breaking the silence... Combating child sexual abuse": Prevention and Response. | | |
| | Technical Session | |
| 12.00-1.30 pm | Presentation on Child Sexual Abuse(CSA) in the State, Where we stand Today... Legal provision in India :POCSO ACT 2012: Institutional Mechanisms at different level, Role and Responsibilities of different stakeholders Role of SJPU/Mahila Sisu Desk in handling the case of Child Sexual Abuse Legal and Financial Compensation in line with POCSO Act.2012:Present Practice & Future Plan | Mr. Rajendra Meher , Member, OSCPCR. (Moderator) Director, Judicial Academy DG HRPC, Home Department Secretary, SALSA |
| 1.30-2.30 pm | Lunch | |
| 2.30-3.30 pm | Prevention & rehabilitation: Role of different Stakeholders Experience sharing addressing child sexual abuse | Ms. Padmavati Yedla , Programme Manager, UNICEF DCPO , Nayagarh, Puri, Mayurbhanj & Kalahandi |
| 3.30-4.00 pm | Summing Up and Closing Remark | Smt. Arti Ahuja , Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Women and Child Development Department, Government of Odisha |
| 4.00-4.10 pm | Closing & Vote of Thanks | |