

*Protection of Child Rights  
by Strengthening of Child Protection Systems to sustain  
“Child Labour Free Zones”*



*Implementing by:*

**kerk  
in actie**



## Background

SADHANA has been conceptualised in 1992 as a resource agency in primary education with special emphasis on the underprivileged children. The organization has been instrumental in promoting “Universalization of Elementary Education” in Medak, Kamareddy, Rangareddy, Vikarabad districts of Telangana to address the issues of child labour eradication, and child marriages to safeguard child rights. To accelerate their endeavour in this regard Sadhana, Kerk in Actie in partnership launched, an intervention namely “Creation of Child Labour Free Zones” in the year 2016, in Narsapur and Shivampet Mandals of Medak District.



## Broad Components of the Project

- Baseline Survey on child issues and Status of Education in the project Area.
- Creation of Child Labour Free Zones.
- Addressing the issues of Adolescents and Women.
- Strengthening of Education.
- Capacity Building, Trainings, Sensitization to School Management Committees (SMC), Panchayatraj Institutions (PRI), Balika Sanghas, Teachers, Child Protection Committees (CPC) and Self Help Groups (SHG) etc.
- Convergence, Coordination and Data Management in all levels.



**kerk  
in actie**

### GOVERNMENT LINE DEPARTMENTS

Education

Women and Child

Mahila Commission TS

State Child Rights Commission

Katuribha Gandhi Balika Vidhalayas (KGBVs)

**Main Partners During the Interventions**

### COMMUNITY STRUCTURES

Gram Panchayats

School Authorities

Child Protection Committees CPCs

EDU Volunteers

Balika Sanghas

Media

Networking and Lobby

## Formation and Strengthening of Committees

The Following Community based organizations were formed and strengthened for Better Results

Committee	No. of Committees Formed	Male	Female	Total
Formation of Child Forums	100	763	737	1500
Formation of Edu - Leaders	70	1120	280	1400
Formation of Balika Sanghas	100	-	2000	2000
Formation of CPC's	70	528	397	925

### Partners Associated in the Implementation of the Project

#### Potential Centers of Functioning of the Sanghas

Anganwadi Centers  
Schools  
Panchayat Offices  
Houses of Village Elders  
Houses of Women's Groups Members  
Houses of the Balika Sangha Leaders

**Sarpanches**  
**Ward Members**  
**Anganwadi Workers**  
**Women's Groups**  
**Teachers**  
**Educated Sections of Society**  
**Village Elders**  
**Children**  
**All the Dine Departments of the Government**

#### Benefits of the Sanghas

The members have an opportunity for self-development  
The Sanghas are a source of learning for out-of-school children  
The Sanghas are a bridge between children in and out of school

These Sanghas were set up to increase creativity and social consciousness among young women. The presence of such groups in every village is absolutely the need of the hour, especially as India is now younger than ever. The acute problems faced by girl-children came to the surface. Child marriage is still a norm. Women are neglected and backward. They suffer psychological stress, are illiterate and not gainfully employed. The Community Volunteer initially formed Balika Sanghas with 15-20 members each. Along with being encouraged to save, the members were trained and taken on visits to give them an exposure to different things. These measures enhanced their skills and learning. The young members of the Balika Sanghas spearheaded the spread of awareness of critical issues among the members of the regular self help groups. The young women's enthusiasm and energy was thus channeled for a positive social cause. Balika Sanghas members are very aware of the importance of issues such as health, forming self-help groups and participation in community and nation building. They also focus on. 200 Balika Sanghas were formed in Narsapur Mandal consisting of 2000 girls.

## Child Forums / Balala Vedika / Sangham

The initiation of Balala Vedika (Child Forums). Child participation was the most important component of the project. It articulates the mechanism for fostering child participation and providing voices for the children. Child Forums have been formed at various levels in all the Panchayats, Habitations Tandras to provide a forum for the children to dialogue, air their concerns with civil society and participate in forwarding the goal of achieving rights of the vulnerable children. This is an innovative feature of the Child Protection Program and must be appreciated for its potential future. It requires attention because of its strength and learning's.



Village level child forums are formed in the villages with an objective to bring together the children. They take part in an identification of out of school children, child marriages and the child labor by child to child approach. In most cases, child forums have been able persuade potential child laborers to join back to school education. Major issues identified by Child forum in the villages were - poor quality of mid-day meals, teachers absenteeism, poor infrastructure of the school, corporal punishment, lack of sanitation facilities, girl child marriages and child labor.

Child forum is essentially centered on village based school and those moving out to higher classes, located usually out of the village, have limited contact with the village based child forum. The school forums are also observed to be continued to the project villages and are not found in neighboring villages. Child forum thus lacks organic structure; hence effort have been made to make them effective in pursuing the activities on a regular basis. out of school and child laborers have little participation in the child forums and they seem to become like any other member once they are enrolled in the school. Child problems (child labor, child marriages, child abuse etc.) rooted in inequalities & vulnerabilities of marginalized sections of the community are too large issues for the child forums.



## Village Child Protection Committee (CPC)



Child Protection Committee was formed in each community, involving influential community members, representatives from community based organizations, primary health clinics, schools, police and religious leaders. Following a brainstorming session focusing on the causes of violence against children, the committees highlighted the need to intervene in the domestic, school and peer spheres through awareness-raising and capacity building, by establishing a monitoring system to detect children at risk or already affected by violence, and to create a referral mechanism.

Young adults were chosen for training to help them raise awareness of children's rights, child protection risks and the negative impact of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation on children's

cognitive, emotional and physical development. In addition, children from the three communities, supported by the members of the Child protection Committees, were asked to identify trusted individuals in the community to act as focal points for receiving children's reports and concerns and providing advice and guidance. Referral mechanisms linking the committees to health clinics, schools and other organizations were also established, both for referral purposes and to strengthen the coordination between care givers and service providers. Child Protection Committee - CPC is a



community based organization promoted by SADHANA/Kerk in Actie, to implement child rights and protection of children from all kinds of violence and abuse at village level. To initiate such process SADHANA has organized many educational and child rights sensitization training programs to its members and leaders. The members of CPC were drawn from community based organizations and government departments such as women's Self Help Groups, traditional Panchayats, youth organizations, elected Panchayat representatives, school teachers, Anganwadi teachers, and village education committee and parent teachers associations. Because of CPCs existing the violence, abuse, corporal punishments, child labour and child marriages on children have reduced. All children are attending schools, They involved many issues related to children and resolved the same. The drop outs have been totally reduced. In addition to those members of CPC involving in regular school intervention through parent teachers associations and village members of CPC involving in regular school intervention through parent teachers associations and village education committees. Because of SADHANA existence, they have become aware of Village Level Committee and District Child Welfare Committee and its functions.

## Formation of Balika Sanghas

### Norms Governing the Formation of Balika Sanghas

- The members must be aged 11-18 years
- Each Sangha must have 15-20 members
- Out of school girls, and school dropouts must be included in the Sangha
- Girls aged below 18 that have never been to school must also be included in the Sangha
- One Sanghas must be formed in each village



### Steps to Strengthen the Sangha

- Identify and overcome obstacles
- Identify positive forces and make use of them
- Identify members with leadership skills





# Achievements

- 100 Villages as Child labour Free zones by the Gram panchayats
- 318 dropouts enrolled in schools and mandal education Officer declared narsapur and Shivampet mandals as child labour free zones
- 60 child marriages have been stopped in 1st and 2nd phases of the project
- Government have approached Kerk/Sadhana to adopt child protection committees in ICPS (Integrated Child Protection Schemes)
- Formed Education Volunteers committees in 70 villages with 1500 members who are actively taking part in child and Education Issues
- Formed 200 balika Sanghas by Covering 2000 Girls as members and Balika Sanghas have been a role model to Adjacent mandals
- 20 science labs have been upgraded in 20 high schools of Narsapur and Shivampet mandals of medak district.
- 15 Libraries have been upgraded in 15 schools of project area
- Provision of sports Material have been distributed to 50 schools of project area.
- 10 distributed sanitizers, masks, sanitizer stands to 100 schools
- Under the project area medical equipment's distributed to the primary health centers of Narsapur and Shivampet mandals of Medak district
- In 6 years of implementation of child labour free zones project covered all the line department's like Education, Health, Labour and Panchayatraj institutions under the project to sustain the child labour free zones, we established strong linkages with district level child welfare committees ( CWC), District level child protection unit( DCPU) and other district level Officials.
- During the implementation of the project we developed and printed module for the EDU Volunteers, A Booklet compiled and printed for the balika sanghas members and other public distribution. We also developed 2 short films and animated Film on particularly addressing Covid-19 situations and also telecasting the messages and short films by engaging local channels by covering of 9 districts and also developed leaflets brochures on the subjects of all childrens act of state and cenentral government. The IEC material very much appriciated by the Women Commission of TS state and other District officials.

