



**SENSITIZING
MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (MLAS)
ON STATE BUDGET AND CHILDREN'S ISSUES**

VENUE: MLA RESIDENTIAL COLONY, JYOTI NAGAR, JAIPUR



Background

The Indian political system has public representation at all levels to make the process democratic and to address the needs of the people as well. It is a democratic system that includes membership of the representatives from the village to the central level. This process is unique for enabling the involvement of common people's contribution to the overall development of the nation. At each level elected representatives including Sarpanch, Pradhan, Pramukh, MLA, and MP are in place to plan, implement and monitor the progress and development of their villages, blocks, districts, and states. Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) are responsible for bridging the gaps in policies and programs by raising the voices and needs of people of their respective constituencies.

Introduction

Rajasthan Bal Adhikar Sanrkshan Sajha Abhiyan (RBASSA), DASHAM is a state level strong network, that works towards children & adolescents' rights, care, and protection. Since 2008 it has been raising the collective voices and influencing the policies at the state level.

Resource Institute for Human Rights (RIHR), continues to play an important role for the Alliance in convoking it at the state and national levels.

To sensitize the MLAs on the scenario of children and adolescents in the state including demography, education, health, and analysis of the allocated budget for their development, a workshop was organized in collaboration with UNICEF on 3rd July 2024 at MLAs residential Society, Jaipur. A total of 29 MLAs representing Kaurali, Bharatpur, Bundi, Bhilwara, Jhalawar, Baran, Pali, Jalore, Sirohi, Jodhpur districts, and the representatives from the partner NGOs participated in the workshop.



Proceedings

Welcome:

Shri Jogeshwar Garg- Government Chief Whip, Jalore and Shri Hari Mohan Sharma-Senior Veteran MLA chaired the program.

The MLAs and participants were welcomed by Mr. Vijay Goyal, General Secretary, RIHR. He briefed about RIHR, specifically on demonstrating the nation's first One Stop Crisis Management Centre for Children "Sneh Angan" for providing counselling, legal aid, and representation for children facing abuse, exploitation, or any violation of their rights. Also, about a state level strong network, Rajasthan Bal Adhikar Sanrkshan Sajha Abhiyan of 270 NGOs that raises collective voices and influences the policies on rights, care, and protection of children and adolescents. The network is actively involved with MLAs to understand the budget and raise questions in the assembly to make the policies impactful.



State Economy, Budget, and Loan Analysis:

Mr. Nisar Ahmed, Budget Analysis and Research Centre Trust (BARC) presented the Rajasthan state budget analysis of the fiscal years from 2020 to 2024.

The state income is of three types including from tax revenue, non-tax revenue, and grants or donations. The state earns about 48% of its total income including GST, VAT, and land revenue while the rest earns from indirect taxes and central taxes & grants. In terms of the structure of revenue, expenditure includes general, social, and economic expenses. While presenting about the outstanding liabilities and debt of the state, is in loss, which is 9% of the state's total income.



Scenario of Children in the State:

Mr. Vijay Goyal presented the status of children in the state through data from the last ten years, from the years 2011 to 2022. In these years the crime against children increased fivefold, sexual abuse has increased ninefold, the cases of abduction have been increased to fivefold, while cases under the Juvenile Justice Act have increased to three times. In the years 2023-24 every day, 12 children are victimized by sexual abuse, 3 cases are registered under JJA and 1 case is registered under the Child Labour Act. Also discussed are the laws of government for the safety and protection of children against labour work, crime, abuses, child marriage, gender discrimination, as well as free and compulsory education for children. It was highlighted that in our country about 93% of children are mentally and sexually abused by about 83% of people who are known to them.



Health Status of Children in the State:

Dr. Narendra Gupta, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan shared that in the state about 30% of infants are born with lower body weight during childbirth, which is directly to their physical and intellectual that ultimately leads to less contribution to familial and state development. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of village panchayat and parshad to ensure no child is born underweight by decentralizing the health services. In 2022 the government of India has approved a list of 384 essential medicines, out of which 20 are mixed medicines. However, the clinicians are prescribing other than these medicines. Thus, the state should force the entire clinical community to prescribe the medicines from the approved list, and at the end, he emphasized the implementation of the Right to Health Act, of 2022.



Concerns of SC/STs:

Mr. Satish Bairwa, Centre for Dalit Rights expressed that human rights violations against Dalits continue to be a critical concern in the State which restricts the freedom and development of this particular community. The organization has been defending and protecting the rights of Dalits in Rajasthan by focusing on human rights violations for more than 15 years. It has been experienced that crime and atrocity against SC/STs have increased in the state, and protection of such children's safety and protection is also a menace. In the state, the compensatory job against killing SC/ST is not implemented. He emphasized that the State should allocate proper fund allocation for their upliftment from the budget. Also, need to address the quality of education and health index for such communities.



Vote of Thanks:

Mr. Manish Singh, Manjari Sansthan expressed gratitude to MLAs on behalf of Rajasthan Bal Adhikar Sanrkshan Sajha Abhiyan. He emphasized that collectively we NGOs and MLAs can work towards the betterment of children in the State.

Further, the MLAs were requested to raise the voices of children in the Vidhan Sabha to influence their policies and programs for their overall growth and development.