CHAPTER - VII

NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR PROJECT (NCLP) - PRAKASAM

NCLP IN ANDHRA PRADESH:

The National child labour policy was formulated in the year 1987 with the basic objective of suitably rehabilitating the children withdrawn from employment and to reduce the incidence of child labour in areas where there is a known concentration of child labour. The policy consists of three main ingredients as under.

Legal Action Plan indicates emphasis on effective enforcement of legal provisions relating to child labour under various labour laws, vigorous and effective enforcement of child labour laws is the thrust under this plan

Focusing on General Development Programs of various ongoing development programs of other ministries/departments for the benefit of child labour wherever possible, is necessary. Under this programme the government is duty bound to rescue the families who are trapped in absolute poverty and sending their children to work out of sheer economic reasons. Such families can be identified and district administration can be approached to extend coverage under SGSRY and
other employment programmes of the state and central government.

Project Based Plan of Action has its main objective of launching the project for the welfare of working children in areas of high concentration of child labour. The National child labour policy- 1987 envisages focusing of different development and welfare programs for the benefit of child labour. In the NCLP areas, an integration of such programs has been attempted. For this purpose, a project society has been established in each district covered under the project. The activities taken up in the project area are given below.

a) Stepping up enforcement of child labour laws  b) Non formal education  c) Adult education  d) Income and employment generation  e) Special schools  f) Raising public awareness  g) Survey and education.

In the special schools, non formal education and vocational training are imparted along with provision of supplementary nutrition and health care services. In addition to this, stipend is paid to children who are withdrawn from the employment.

The government of India has sanctioned project for twenty two districts out of twenty three in the state of Andhra Pradesh under the national child labour project scheme. The state government has been sincerely implementing these projects in all the twenty two districts.

These projects have opened 976 special schools for child labour withdrawn from the hazardous occupations and about 63131 children have been enrolled in Prakasam district. Sixteen schools are opened at
Markapur alone and 1000 children are enrolled. In addition to these projects the following projects and programs are launched by the government and there is a tremendous impact on the child labour in the state.

1. Back to school program

2. Integrated girl child labour rehabilitation program.

3. Literacy drive.

**BACK GROUND**

The National child labour project (NCLP-Prakasam) was started in 1988 for the benefit of children working at slate industry at Markapur. In 1986 the government has formulated the Child labour (Prohibition and Regulation) act followed by National child labour policy in 1987. It was the part of this National child labour policy, the NCLP was started at several areas of child labour concentration. The NCLP – Markapur was one of the nine such projects started in between 1986 and 1990.

The NCLP Markapur, called as Jagruthi, was started on the basis of a document prepared by the ILO at the request of ministry of labour, government of India. The report of the ILO was treated as the project document for the three NCLPs at Mandsour, Markapur and Jaipur and no separate project document was prepared.
The document of ILO prepared in 1988 is given below.

The industry in Markapur is divided into four categories as factories, commercial establishments, cottage units and mines. Much of the production of the factories is reportedly channeled into non-powered production units registered under the Andhra Pradesh shops and establishments act. Children are employed in all four categories of industrial units, even though the law prohibit the employment of children, below the age of fourteen years, in factories (Factory Act) and commercial establishments (The A.P shops and establishment act) and below eighteen years age in mines (The Mines Act) There is no estimate of children working in cottage sector units, which are usually family enterprises which under take contractual work for the factories. The child workers are in the age range of seven to fourteen years and 70 percent of them are girls. The children work from 8A.M. to 5P.M. and they are mainly used in fixing nails and in packing. They are paid on piece rate basis. The child labour in commercial establishments work up to 6P.M. The work of the operation involves electrical operations also. Children work in mines usually up to 5P.M. and carry the mud and waste stone. The child labour are not written in the records of employers.

The children working in slate mines are deprived of development opportunities, because they do not have the education. They are exposed to the risk of contacting respiratory diseases and other occupation related hazards and ailments. The agenda for action
The proposal covered four major areas. They are 1) Regulation and enforcement of removal of child worker, under the age of fourteen years, from the slate industry 2) Employment and income support to family 3) Community involvement 4) Compulsory primary schooling and non-formal education.

A Child labour Project Society (CLPS) was constituted and registered as a society under the societies act. The CLPS, which was to function under the chairmanship of the collector of the district, was expected to guide and supervise the working of the project. A project office was set up headed by a project director and assisted by supporting staff. Finances were remitted directly by the government of India to the CLPS. For the activities to be taken up under the project, the state government was expected to be involved in the supervision of the project.

**Implementation, Legislation and Enforcement:**

All the NCLPs started under old pattern in 1986 and 1990 were entrusted to the reputed local NGO (Assist India) under the direct supervision of Jagruthi Society, Markapur. This set up has been attracted the national attention due to its holistic approach which lead to successful reduction of part of the child labour from slate industry. All the organizations involved in the child labour rehabilitation
throughout the country have diverted its attention towards Markapur to have the exposure to take this project as model.

It is found that the child labour is a complex problem which does not yield quick and easy solutions. It needs a multidisciplinary approach with simultaneous interventions and by a variety of authorities such as 1) Legislation and enforcement 2) education 3) Communication and awareness generation 4) poverty alleviation.

In the legislation part, the amendments are necessary to the Child labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986. This act prohibits employment of children below fourteen years in respect of slate manufacturing units. This act also regulates working hours for child workers as six hours per day with rest of one hour after three hours of work and also children should not be allowed to work between 7P.M and 8A.M. It shows that child labour is not prohibited totally by the act. This needs an amendment.

Despite of several laws and provisions prohibiting it, child labour continues to flourish in Markapur, because of lack of effective enforcement machinery, inspections and prosecutions are done poorly and the conviction in the court is becoming highly impossible. The reasons may be many and some are listed below. a) Number of inspections are inadequate. The office of the labour enforcement inspectorate is at Günter and not at Markapur b) Inspectors say that there is a lack of funds as well as vehicle facility c) Inadequate training
and motivation to inspectors. d) Cases are not properly argued in the court by the public prosecutors  e) The public awareness is not there and it is seen that nothing wrong in children work for the support of family.

**ILO-IPEC ACTION PROGRAM:**

NCLP- Prakasam has limited its activities on child labour elimination for only twenty five villages in Markapur area. But there are forty more villages with child labour concentration as identified by the society, along the mines stretched for thirty kilometers in length. International labour organization (ILO), with the support of Department For International Development (DFID) has come forward with its International programme for the elimination of child labour to work in their forty villages also through NCLP society for the total elimination of child labour in Markapur area.

**OUTPUTS OF NCLP:**

National child labour project society (NCLPS) in the district of Prakasam is a registered society. The district collector is the chairperson of the society and the project director of National Child labour Project is the secretary of the NCLPS. Separate institutions have been identified for carrying out the implementation of different components of the programs such as education and skills training of children, economic support to families of child workers, training of program staff, training of
community leaders and parents and women. The NCLP in Markapur is working closely with an NGO (Assist India) in education of child labour who are removed from the work. The outputs are given below. Reduced child labour in Markapur slate industry through an active Tripartite Forum. A survey was conducted to identify child labour in hazardous work in Markapur. Two thousand children in the age group eight to twelve years are withdrawn from hazardous employment and provided full time (five hours) education in transitional centers. Skilled training is provided to the children, of age group of thirteen to sixteen years, who are withdrawn from hazardous work in Markapur. Community supported drives are launched for the enrollment of five thousand children, in the age group of five to eight, who would have other wise not been enrolled in schools at the time of commencement of the academic session in Markapur. Government institutions have mobilized and strengthened the support towards prevention and elimination of child labour in Markapur. All state services against child labour in Markapur are identified. One thousand five hundred mothers of rehabilitated Child labour are organized into savings credit Self Help Groups and income generation & opportunities are provided to mothers of child labourers who are withdrawn from work in Markapur. Community awareness is propagated to prevent and eliminate child labour at Markapur. Community level support structures are created in Markapur to prevent and eliminate child labour. Employers are sensitized against
the employment of children in Markapur. Trade Unions are sensitized against the employment of children in Markapur slate industry. Changes in production technology that would reduce the child labour in Markapur are explored and pilot tested for local introduction. Support structure is provided to develop a monitoring and evaluation system of the project.\textsuperscript{67}