Chapter 5

Strategies of Prominent Non-governmental Organisations in Delhi

In this Chapter, I describe the activities / initiatives of 17 NGOs in Delhi working with child labourers. As stated in the introduction, this study includes under the definition of child labour any child in the age range of 5 to 15 years, who is doing labour, either paid or unpaid, and is kept working at any hour of the day, within or outside the family, and thus being deprived of the right to education and childhood. This definition assumes that all out-of-school children are child labourers in one form or another. Hence, all those children, who are not working, but who are also not attending schools, are potential child labourers. And the NGOs aiming to promote education for children are seen to be indirectly helping in the eradication of the problem of child labour and therefore, fall under the present study.

The reason why so much emphasis is being given to schooling is because education – compulsory primary education – is an important tool to tackle child labour. Historically, abolition of child labour was closely linked with the introduction of compulsory education. This was the experience of several countries described very vividly by Myron Weiner.¹ Compulsory primary education means that for at least a part of the day children would mandatorily have to remain in school. Education will by itself not eradicate child labour but it will reduce and discourage it. Child labour and compulsory education cannot co-exist. Employers will find child labour uneconomic if it is available for only half a day and if the working child becomes more visible by virtue of being a student. Despite

this, Indian government has not made headway towards universalisation of primary education. The policy makers have not paid due attention towards mass education. The popular view in India is that child labour is necessary for the well being of the poor when the State is unable to provide relief and thus, the abolition of child labour must await poverty alleviation. However, poverty has not prevented governments of other developing countries from expanding mass education or making primary education compulsory. Many countries of Africa with income levels lower than India have expanded mass education with impressive increases in literacy.\(^2\)

Universal primary education is not given the importance it deserves. India spends just 1 percent of its GDP on education of the weaker sections, almost 85 percent of this 1 percent goes to just 15 percent people.\(^3\) The Indian government has the capacity to make education compulsory but lacks the political leadership that is prepared to do what is necessary. And here, the role of non-governmental organisations becomes important. They not only have to make people understand about the role of education, but also to clear the misconception that compulsory education means that children will not be allowed to work at all. Children in all societies which have introduced compulsory education have combined schooling with work, but the priority has been education first and work later and not the other way

\(^2\) Botswana, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Reunion, Rwanda, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe have literacy rates in the 50 percent to 75 percent range. China, which had an illiteracy rate comparable to that of India fifty years ago, now has half the illiteracy rate of India. South Korea and Taiwan moved toward universal and compulsory education while their per capita incomes were close to that of India. (Source: Myron Weiner, The Child and the State in India, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1991).

around. 4 This is precisely what most NGOs surveyed in Delhi were doing, providing non-formal schooling to children who work and also to those who presently are not working and not going to any school either, and who are very likely to absorbed in the labour force sooner or later. This is not to say that NGOs in Delhi are not performing their all important functions of raising awareness and consciousness among the masses and policy makers or are not doing any release and rescue operations for the release of child labourers. This will become clear in the description of the activities of the NGOs surveyed.

1. NGO Study in Delhi

I collected data on the following NGOs during August – October, 1997:

Child Relief and You (CRY), South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SAACS), Bandhua Mukti Morcha (BMM), Mobile Creates, Street Survivors India Jagriti (SSI), Ankur, Butterflies, Bal Sahyog, Deepalaya, Centre of Concern for Child Labour (CCCL), YWCA- Asha Project, Delhi Brotherhood Social Development Society (DBS), Prayas, Community Aid and Sponsorship Programme (CASP), Salaam Baalak Trust (SBT), Angaja Foundation and Vidya.

I interviewed the Chairperson/General Secretary/Director of the NGO concerned about their strategies to deal with the problem of child labour, difficulties faced in the course of their work, examples of what they consider as good work in this field, about the shortcomings in tackling the problem and future plans. I also collected Brochures, Annual Reports and other published literature from these NGOs and

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visited a few project sites to have a better grasp of the strategies pursued by them.

All these organisations were set up to cater to the children who have to wage a daily survival and who live amidst squalor, ignorance. Many of them are working in the slums and providing non-formal education, health care and recreational opportunities to the slum children. In Delhi, most of the child labourers are found in the informal sector, i.e., they are working in the roadside restaurants or dhabas, in teashops, in private houses as domestic workers, vendors, car cleaners, rag pickers, porters or coolies, shoe-shiners, etc. Organisations like, BMM and SACCS, with their branches in different parts of the country, are mainly engaged in release and rehabilitation of child labour in the sectors notorious for engaging child labour, e.g., carpet industry, match-making industry, lock-making and pottery industries, etc.

Out of the 17 NGOs studied, two organisations, viz., Ankur and Vidya did not claim to be working for child labourers, their objective being educating children of the slums, who may or may not be working. It had to be convinced to them that since education is a powerful tool of eliminating child labour, they are playing a role in the direction of eliminating child labour. Similarly, NGOs, such as CASP, Angaja Foundation and Mobile Crèche, which are helping needy children and their families are, although, engaged in the protection of child labour, do not consider themselves organisations combating the menace of child labour. The organisations such as Butterflies and Delhi Brotherhood Society, which are working with street children, proposed a clear demarcation between child labour and street children on the plea that the situation of street children is totally different from that of child labourers living in a family environment.
All these NGOs are engaged in sensitising the general public, government officials and politicians regarding the problem of child labour so that a new awareness about the rights of child workers is created. They are also utilising electronic media such as Television and radio for the purpose.

Of these NGOs, CRY is a unique organisation in the sense that it networks with other NGOs and individuals working for the rehabilitation and elimination of child labour and provides them financial and non-financial support. CRY is not an implementing agency, but only supports programmes and projects of like-minded organisations needing support. Its non-financial support to NGOs consists of training materials, access to information, developing communication materials, professional expertise and consultancy.

The NGOs surveyed have entered into arrangements with schools run by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, the National Open School and government run vocational centres such as Shramik Vidyapeeth, Small Industries Service Institute and Industrial Training Institutes (ITI), so that their child beneficiaries get proper education and training. They have also developed linkages for referral services and professional health care inputs with for example, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Ranbaxy, Indian Cancer Society, TB Association, and the like.

The survey revealed that the workers/staff and personnel have not absorbed the basic aim of these organisations. They look upon themselves just as paid employees.

2. Target Group

The organisational projects are mostly for the children engaged in marginal economic activities e.g. market vendors/street hawkers, shoe shining, car parking, scavenging, and so on. The poor slum children who
neither work nor go to the school are also the targets. I have included them in my study since I consider all children out of school as potential child labourers. BMM works for children of the released bonded labourers from the stone quarries. Both BMM and SACCS are working for the release and rehabilitation of children working in industries such as carpet weaving, fireworks, lock making, etc., situated in various States.

The most common category in the survey was of slum children, followed by street and working children and lastly by children engaged in industrial work.

In general, the research literature suggests that child labourers come from families with many children. Couples in poor households have more children, partly because child labour reduces the cost of having children. High fertility, in turn, is a vicious cycle. It increases the need for the income provided by child labour; it also reduces education levels of the future generations, thereby helping to ensure that future generations will have high fertility since parents’ education is one of the most important determinants of fertility. It is, therefore, important that family planning should be an important complementary policy tool for child labour programmes. However, none of the organisations, except Angaja Foundation and SBT, include family planning programmes in their efforts to help working and street children.

3. Area-wise Operation

The survey reveals that area-wise the offices of these NGOs are spread throughout Delhi. However, it is not always the case that project sites and offices are located at the same place. The offices of BMM and SACCS are in Delhi while their area of operation is throughout the country in regions where child labour is rampant. BMM has set up a
school for children of slum areas of Garhi, South Delhi. SACCS has a Rehabilitation Centre at the north-eastern part of Delhi in Ibrahimpur. Asha Project and Mobile Crèches are projects that are not location specific, they are mobile in all the parts of Delhi. Since CRY is a supporting organisation, its area of operation like BMM and SACCS is spread throughout the country, providing financial and non-financial support to development workers who need these resources to work with deprived children. All this becomes clear from the following table on the area of operation of the NGOs surveyed.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the NGO</th>
<th>Area of operation within Delhi</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMM</td>
<td>South Delhi Slum</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACCS</td>
<td>North-east Delhi (Ibrahimpur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deepalaya</td>
<td>South and Central Delhi (Slums of Chittaranjan Park, Sanjay Colony, Okhla Industrial area, Panchsheel Colony, Azadpur, Govindpur, Ramnagar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayas</td>
<td>West and South Delhi (Slums of Jahangirpuri, Patel Nagar, Kirti Nagar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asha Project</td>
<td>Mobile – throughout Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Crèches</td>
<td>Mobile – at construction sites all over Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSI</td>
<td>Central Delhi (Slums of Motia Khan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBT</td>
<td>Central Delhi (Paharganj, in and around the New Delhi Railway Station)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angaja Foundation</td>
<td>South and Central Delhi (Slum areas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBS</td>
<td>East Delhi and Old Delhi (Slum areas of Jama Masjid, also at Interstate Bus Terminal, Hanuman Mandir and Red Fort)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASP</td>
<td>South Delhi (Slums of Govindpuri)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCCL</td>
<td>East Delhi</td>
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Based on the interviews and literature of the NGOs under study.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bal Sahyog</th>
<th>West and Central Delhi (Resettlement colonies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ankur</td>
<td>South Delhi (Slum areas in R.K. Puram, Munirka)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Butterflies</td>
<td>Central Delhi</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, it is clear that projects for slum children and street and working children are present in all parts of Delhi – North, West, East, South and Central. However, the concentration of projects are largely located in the slums of South Delhi and Central Delhi, which are the places where the influx of migrants has been overwhelming, who come here seeking a better life, a job and home.

4. Philosophy and Aims

With regard to the philosophy, aims and objectives, three of the organisations namely Deepalaya, CASP and BMM are inspired by the ideals of equality and social justice. BMM under the influence of Arya Samaj movement for social reform does not only condemn child labour and wants it to be banned; it also strives for fairness and equality, regardless of caste, creed and gender.

The mission of Deepalaya and CASP is to create an environment conducive for academic, physical, mental and social development of children. CASP’s vision is of a world in which children realise their full potential in societies, which respect people’s rights and dignity. Deepalaya aims to establish a new peaceful socioeconomic, politico-cultural order which will help and enlighten communities to transform themselves into self-reliant, self-governed and exploitation free social structures that will foster a healthy and appropriate environment for the development of disadvantaged, especially the children.
The remaining organisations have been established with the aim of restoring childhood back to the disadvantaged and working children. Prayas goes to the extent of saying that “the most fundamental right of a child, particularly the disadvantaged and neglected, is restoration of childhood”. These organisations believe that the needs of care and protection, shelter and home, education and Counselling, nutrition and health are fundamental to the child’s existence. Organisations such as the SSI, Deepalaya, CASP and Ankur believe that work with children must be participatory in character. Just charity nurtures a dependency complex. SSI holds the belief that “projects for street and working children have a self-sustaining future only if the child beneficiaries themselves become the resource persons to run these”.

5. NGOs and Funding

Since the focus of my study is the types of initiatives and interventions for protection and rehabilitation for child labour, I have only marginally dealt with the funding aspect of the NGOs to get an idea of who are the major funders of the activities and projects of the NGOs surveyed. The main sources of funding for these NGOs are the government and foreign agencies. The names of some of the donors are: the Ministry for Social Welfare, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the Directorate of Social Welfare (Delhi Administration), Delhi Social Welfare Advisory Board, International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations International Children and Education Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children’s Fund (SCF), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), British High Commission, OXFAM6, Charities in U.K.7 and PLAN International. The organisation Bal Sahyog, being funded by the Delhi Administration is running a Boat Club at the

6 Oxfam (US) in case of Prayas.
7 For instance Friends of the DBS (UK) and Wye and Brooke India Trust (UK).
India Gate and the income derived from the Boat Club is utilised for the care and welfare of boys at Bal Sahyog Home and its various contact clubs.

All of these NGOs have sponsorship schemes through which they appeal to the community to sponsor a child’s monthly or annual expenditure on education, nutrition, clothing and health care. They also have schemes of one time corpus donation\(^8\), the income of which takes care of a child’s needs forever. This apart, donation of any amount is asked for by the NGOs. They give the concession of exempting the amount donated from the Income Tax under 80 G and tax exemption under the 35 AC for specific projects from corporate bodies and those who have professional income. An 80 G Certificate allows donors to deduct the contribution to charitable organisations from their income tax. At present, there is an incentive of 50% tax deductibility under 80 G. Under Section 35 AC/80GGA one can avail of 100% tax exemption. This tax benefit is available only for donations in cash.

The funding in case of BMM and SBT has been described in Chapters 6 and 7. An account of the NGO’s views regarding difficulties with the funding agencies has been provided later in this chapter.

Here, I would like to briefly describe the unique effort of resource generation by two of the organisations, namely Deepalaya and CRY. Deepalaya established a ‘Communication Division’ in 1990, with the aim of raising funds at low cost within the country and to build a broad based domestic support to build public awareness through wide ranging participation in fund raising efforts. Some of the areas and strategies evolved by it during 1996-97 are:

\(^8\) The sponsorship amount is specified by the concerned NGOs in their Sponsorship Forms. For instance, Deepalaya appeals for a Perpetual Sponsorship for Rs. 13,000 (India) / 16,000 (NRI), $ 560 / 400 Pounds.
• Placing donation boxes on the counters of leading chemists, shops, hotels, departmental stores, and ice cream parlours and garment shops. These have been sources of regular income and it also gives an opportunity for the organisation to communicate its mission and objectives to people at large through these chains of outlets.

• Shop-n-share, is an innovative fund raising venture which was launched with some of the leading retail outlets to help Deepalaya by means of asking Rs. 2 from each customer per purchase.

• Airing TV Chat Shows and Radio programmes to sensitise masses on the issue of child labour. The aim being that if people are aware of the hardships of child labourers, they would donate generously for the cause.

CRY has its own structure of fund raising activities. The Resource Generation function of CRY is divided into - Corporate Partnership and Individual Partnership. This is to provide its supporters (i.e. individuals who donate to its schemes and corporate houses who generally buy its cards and fund some of its projects) with more opportunities to participate in its work.

CRY’s Fundraising Schemes

The different CRY schemes to which one can donate and thus reach out to deprived children are as follow:

(a) Child Sponsorship Scheme (CSS) - Where the donor’s money goes to support the education and health of children in CRY supported projects all over India.

(b) Child Development Fund (CDF) - is the foundation on which CRY stands. Thus, when support is extended to CDF, it ensures the stability of CRY’s support to its project partners.

(c) Helping Hand Scheme (HHS) - is a scheme, which focuses on creating a better future for disadvantaged children by sponsoring a child’s education and other basic needs. Donations to this scheme go to support activities which help in the all round development of the child. When an advertisement encouraging people to ‘try giving once for a needy child and see the difference it can make’ was aired in major satellite channels on the television, CRY received overwhelming responses not
just from people in India but also from people living in Bahrain, Dubai, Kuwait, Muscat, Abu Dhabi, Nepal and even from Holland.

(d) Adopt-a-Project: This project involves corporate houses and organisations. Under this scheme organisations can identify a CRY supported project whose work interest them and then choose to fund the entire initiative or part of it. For instance, Kurd Consultancy selected 'Sharan', a project that runs primary schools, crèches, community organisation programmes etc. in the slums in West and South Delhi. Kellogg's contributed Rs. 4,35,480 for 'Doorstep School', which runs education centres for children who work in fisheries in Sassoon Docks.

CRY's Products: CRY markets its products for the benefit of the deprived children. These products include greeting cards (for Diwali, Christmas, Id and New Year), paintings, gift bags (containing an assortment of delightful gifts which include an easy to assemble mobile, table mats, a jigsaw puzzle, a poster on nature and a special story book for children), presentation sets (containing a file, telephone and address book, letter pad, note pad and 5 cards), desk calendar, scribble pads and telephone and address book.

During the financial year 1995-96, CRY was able to raise Rs. 2.31 crore by the sale of its products. On the other hand, it successfully raised Rs. 3.69 crore by the donations from both individuals and corporates, which is an impressive figure.

6. Initiatives for Child Labourers

On the basis of the survey of activities/strategies, the following typology has been prepared, as evident from the table on the types of activities for protection and rehabilitation of child labourers.

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9 CRY in Action, 3 (2), 1996.
10 Ibid.
11 CRY in Action, 3 (2), 1996.
Table 5.1 Types of Initiatives by the NGOs Surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Total No. of NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Raid/Release/Rehabilitation of Child Labourers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Provision of non-formal education and recreational opportunities</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Establishing Primary Education Centres</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Facilitating school attendance by providing food, clothing, books, waiver of school fees, admitting children in local schools</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Counselling and health care services</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Protective Measures such as providing gloves, sunglasses, I-cards to children to use in their work, forming credit-unions, cooperatives for child labourers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sponsorship programmes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Establishing 'Shelter Homes' for street &amp; working children</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Establishing vocational-cum-rehabilitation centres</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Sharing government responsibility like running its Children's Observation Home &amp; Child Helpline Service</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Skill development activities and flexible schooling</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Income-generating activities for families or communities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Other community development activities</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Documentation and publication</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Networking</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Conducting workshops/seminars on child labour issues</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Conducting campaigns, marches, demonstrations for mass sensitisation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Financial &amp; non-financial support to projects on child labour</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1 Provision of Non-formal Education and Recreational Activities

The provision of non-formal education (or NFE) and recreation activities, designed to break the cycle of child labour and to help ensure their entry into schools, is the most common kind of activity of the NGOs surveyed. These activities do not replace any income children forego, but have the aim of persuading children to reduce their hours of work or leave their work altogether. When implemented
in a slum situation where there are no schools, these activities tend to prevent children from becoming child labourers. While the purpose of some organisations, like Deepalaya, Prayas, Angaja Foundation is to mainstream children into regular schools some other organisations like SBT and SSI, believe that the formal education system is inadequate to meet the educational needs of street and working children and hence there is the need to provide basic non-formal education tailored to suit and meet the needs of such children.

According to SSI, the needs of such street children and working children are not just confined to non-formal education. They need support services tailored to meet their educational, nutritional, health and vocational needs. The SSI wants to equip these children with skills and information to enable them to a living wage and fight for their survival. The SSI regards that rapidly increasing number of school dropouts is a sign of the irrelevance of the formal system. It does not, according to the SSI, train children in employable skills. The organisation believes that there is an urgent need for evolving plans at the grassroots to address the needs of local communities.

To realise this need, the SSI built up a low-cost school called “Jagriti”, in the slums of Motia Khan (Central Delhi) in 1990, using wooden poles, bamboo frames and matting – much like the shanties that children lived in all their lives. From these modest beginnings with a single class of 25 children, “Jagriti School” has since grown and diversified into a campus of several low-cost buildings within the slum. It accommodates a programme of primary education in two shifts between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., five days a week, benefitting 350 children mostly in the age group of 5-12 years. The majority are 7 to 12 years old, about half being girls. The organisation realises that personalised and non-formal teaching methods help children
overcome the handicaps of formal schooling. For instance, even tiny girls, in the poor community, are burdened with the responsibility of taking care of younger siblings. To help them the school allows them to bring their younger siblings to the school.

The daily regimen of the school consists of a morning assembly of physical exercise and singing followed by a programme of functional literacy and social awareness in Hindi, as well as basic arithmetic. For the more advanced learners, there is also nature study, geography and history. Other activities include clay modelling or drawing, and the use of theatre workshops to conduct a dialogue with the children on their day-to-day problems. This is done to instill an awareness of the world at large and their place within it.

Deealaya also holds the belief that “education is the key to social transformation”. The education pattern followed by Deealaya is interactive in nature and aims to meet the varied needs of the community. It has the distinction of being accredited to National Open School\textsuperscript{12} to get the students certified by the appropriate authorities in education and vocational training. The dynamic character of the learning programmes provides the appropriate environment for educating children outside conventional schools and colleges through a specially designed self-study programme.

Another organisation, Prayas considers NFE as its area of excellence. Some of the features of Prayas NFE programme are as follows. It is a three-year compiled course designed on BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) model. In this programme, children are taught with the chart and card board

\textsuperscript{12} The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, to offer academic, general and vocational programmes upto pre-degree level, established national Open School in 1989 as an autonomous institution. It is also empowered to hold its own exams and certify students who qualify for external examinations.
method. They are provided with specially designed NFE books, a pair of uniforms, mid-day meal besides educational trips to museums and places of historical interest. The trips for children are to expose them to the outside world. After their three-year NFE course is completed, those children, who want to continue studies, are enrolled in the municipal corporation (MCD) schools through the mediation of Prayas which gets their birth-certificates (necessary for admission) made for them. For those children who are between 12-14 years of age, vocational training is provided. There is also the provision for admission into 'National Open Schools' and the 'Foundation Courses of Open Schools' for interested children.

Ankur also needs a special mention here. Ankur runs educational programmes with children in five slums in South Delhi. Its educational programme stress on fun and games, stories and theatre, singing and dancing, reading and writing, drawing and painting, talking and laughing, picnics and exposure trips, workshops and meetings. Ankur focuses on primary education. It seeks to understand the child's point of view vis-a-vis experience of education and initiates a dialogue between school-teachers and educational authorities and the slum children and their siblings and parents. It also networks with individuals and groups concerned about improvement of the education system. Instead of offering incentives to the children who come to study, as some other NGOs do, Ankur charges rupee one per month as a fee. It weaves in the curriculum issues of communalism, gender bias, housing rights, current issues, rising prices, and such other topics. Children are encouraged to talk on important issues and are given assignments such as of writing the history of their slum. The emphasis is on creativity rather than on rote learning. Ankur advocates a 'feminist-humanist' perspective and it gives priority to gender issues.
The NFE package offered by the all NGOs surveyed is usually of 3 years duration, after which children are encouraged admission in government schools. This is a serious flaw in the approach followed by the NGOs because the standard of education in the government schools is very low and whatever the children learn under the auspices of the NGOs are soon unlearnt in these schools. This points to the fact that to secure a good future for children, the work of the NGOs needs to be supplemented by strengthening and improving the standards of education in government schools as well.

6.2 Flexible Schooling

It comprises of providing vocational training to children along with the non-formal education. These activities are practical, emphasising skill acquisition. School-work programmes allow children to go to school, e.g., in the morning, and work during the afternoon to earn some money. Schools can have flexible hours to enable children to work and include for instance vocational training components in the curriculum to support the work. School-work programmes do not cause opportunity costs in the form of lost earnings. Most of the organisations surveyed, except BMM and SACCS, are positive in attitude towards them. These programmes do not eliminate child labour but instead seek to provide an alternative which helps build human capital through school, while at the same time reducing hours of work and allowing for the poor family's need for income. However, this approach is based on the understanding that poor children need to work to supplement the family's income and thus, this approach in a way legitimizes child labour.

Out of the 17 NGOs surveyed, 14 of them, as is evident from the table, emphasized the importance of adding vocational training in children's education. They rightly believe that education should have a vocational training component to enable the children to become self-
reliant. Some of the commonly taught vocations are: candle-making, screen-printing, scooter-repairing, beauty care, cutting and tailoring, in-house electrical wiring, plumbing, detergent making, incense stick making, chalk making, clay-modelling, theatre arts, carpentry, welding, repairing of electrical gadgets, leather work, motor mechanics, computer courses, embroidery, book-binding and making of sweet boxes. Regular exhibitions are held by the NGOs to display and sell the items made by the children.

The NGOs, despite their avowedly progressive ideals, have been unable to shake off gender stereotyping of occupations. Training in carpentry, welding, motor mechanics, repairing electrical gadgets, in-house electrical wiring is still imparted to remains boys whereas embroidery, cutting and tailoring, screen-printing and the beauty care course are earmarked for girls.

The vocational training as provided by Bal Sahyog needs mention here. The training is provided in its Shelter Home for boys. The duration of the training is three years with simultaneous schooling upto 7th standard. It also offers short-term course in book-binding and electronics. Vocational training is imparted by the trained personnel of the government of India through the Small Industries Service Institute (SISI). After the successful completion of the course, boys are awarded a certificate by the SISI. These certificates entitle them for admission to Industrial Training Institute (ITI) courses which allow the trainees to become highly skilled in specialized branches. The Delhi Administration reserves two seats for the trainees from Bal Sahyog.

Although, the NGOs are unable to provide many examples of children who have benefited from their training programmes, it is clear
that the children seem to acquire employable skills through such programmes.

6.3 Opening Primary Education Centres or Model Schools

Although, all the organisations surveyed believes in the need of education for child labourers, most of them are satisfied with short-term non-formal education. Only five of them, viz., Deepalaya, SACCS, SSI, DBS and Bal Sahyog make special efforts to educate the child workers and street children. They have either established Primary Education Centres or have established their own chain of schools, e.g., Deepalaya Schools.

Some of the schools, primary as well as secondary, established by Deepalaya in South Delhi slums include: (a) Deepalaya School at Sanjay Colony; (b) Ramditi Jr. Narang Deepalaya Schools; and (c) Deepalaya School-Govindpuri. These schools provide a broad-based education that combines extra-curricular activities with academic inputs, to ensure holistic development of the child. The Deepalaya School at Govindpuri is its latest initiative. Its location is such that it is accessible to nearly nine surrounding slum clusters of South Delhi, with a population of over fifty five thousand. It is envisaged as the main school for higher and comprehensive learning in academic and in vocational streams.

SACCS, with its objective of universal primary education, is running 20 primary schools in different states from where it has released child labourers. These schools are catering to the educational needs of those child labourers for whom education was otherwise a distant dream.

Mention may also be made of the Bal Sahyog Middle School. It provides schooling upto the 8th standard. The school is duly recognised by the Directorate of Education. After completion of schooling till 8th
standard, children are given full assistance for enrollment to the National Open Schools.

Butterflies, a rather prominent NGO working with street children does not accept the need to set up alternative education centres. As the Director of Butterflies puts it, “there is no need to set up new schools, the educational standard of the already existing Municipal Schools should be improved and people should be mobilised to do that”. But this statement assumes that street children and working children do not have special needs that have to be addressed. For a variety of reasons – poverty, discord, violence or child abuse in the family, kidnapping and so on – street children have left their homes to seek refuge in the other towns or cities. Their situation is, thus, relatively unalienable to either the introduction of compulsory education or the implementation of labour laws.\textsuperscript{14} It is in dealing with such children that NGOs could play a major role in terms of providing non-formal education, vocational training, shelter, access to counselling, health services and so on.

6.4 Providing Incentive to Increase School Attendance

Of the 17 NGOs surveyed, 12 support the children in school by paying their books, notepads and pencils, uniforms, shoes, transport, etc.\textsuperscript{15} The idea is to ensure that the children stay on in school and reduce the drop-out rate and absenteeism. The organisations like Prayas and SSI of serves hot cooked meal at the school itself to ensure children eat nutritious food at least once a day.

BMM goes to the extent of demanding from the government that each school going child be given 1 kg of cereal for each schooling day

\textsuperscript{14} Burra, Neera, Born to Work: Child Labour in India, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1995, p. 245.

\textsuperscript{15} NGOs such as Butterflies, Ankur and CASP do not agree with this kind of charitable teaching. They want the community, too, should contribute for their children’s education.
both as an incentive and as a measure of food security for their poor families.

Such financial support to children runs the risk of misuse; there are adequate incentives for unscrupulous people to siphon off the funds in a variety of ways. For instance, in-kind payments of school materials such as clothing or pads and pencils may be sold instead of being used by the child designed to attend school.\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{6.5 Counselling and Health Care}

These are two important needs of the child labourers or slum children. Children who have been burdened at an early stage to work, develop a low esteem about them and develop a variety of complexes. Their self-confidence is also low. They need to be counselled on their psychological problems. Counselling helps them to understand life, the environment and human dynamics and equips them with coping skills. Most of the NGOs surveyed (11 out of 17) realise the psychological needs of working children and have employed qualified psychologists for the purpose.

However, since the counsellors consider themselves only as paid employees, like a true professional they are not genuinely concerned with the welfare of children. I have observed in the case of SBT that these counsellors are not effective since they are not very successful in encouraging children to open up and discuss their problems.

As these children live under unsanitary conditions they suffer from numerous ailments and NGOs working for such children organise regular health check-ups and provide for their treatment and

\textsuperscript{16} Although, no such incidence can be cited in absence of data, in the case of BMM where I did in-depth study, it was found that biscuit packets meant for distributing to children attending one of the BMM schools, were consumed by its teacher himself.
hospitalisation. They also network with the local health clinics run by the MCD and the local hospitals so that whenever the children have a serious medical problem, they can be taken to these hospitals.

Prayas has acquired three Medical Mobile Vans, which takes a round of all of its 9 slum centres to attend to the health needs of the children. For serious cases, it has an indoor facility - a Nursing Home with 10 beds and a regular doctor. Some doctors, specialists in their field, also serve here voluntarily. Prayas is networking with other NGOs in running its health programme.

Although these health programmes are laudable, they are only curative and are ineffective in preventing ailments by improving their environment.

6.6 Protective Measures

To minimise occupational hazards the working children are given safety training and are provided safety equipment. Only two of the NGOs viz., DBS and Butterflies are adopting this strategy. Both these organisations work for street and working children. DBS tries to regulate the working conditions of such children. For instance, for the ragpicker children, the organisation provides sun-glasses, gloves and has formed a cooperative for them so that they may work in a systematic, organised and hygienic way. Similarly, Butterflies has started a savings scheme and a credit union to mobilise and empower child workers. Since street children are highly mobile and keep migrating from one city to the other, Butterflies gives identity cards to those street children who ask for it. With these Identity Cards, these children feel secure, safe and have a sense of belonging to the organisation concerned.

The ideology behind such protective measures is that ‘child labour is a necessary evil’, hence children’s working conditions have to be
regulated. However, such a strategy only serves to ameliorate the problem besides legalising child labour.

6.7 Sponsorship Programme

Sponsorship programme is like self-financing scheme; it aims to fulfill the needs of education, health and recreation of working children through mobilising community's financial resources. In this scheme, a sponsor virtually adopts a child by paying for the upkeep of the child and his/her health and educational needs. In order to attract big businessmen and corporate houses, the donations are exempted from income tax. Prayas elaborates the motivating philosophy behind sponsorship ventures as follows:

- Biological parenthood does not automatically confer the desire, skill and capacity to care for children, but the children should not be separated from their parents. Sponsorship is the only alternative to care for such children by allowing the transfer of responsibilities and privileges of parenting from the biological parents to God-parents.  

The concerned NGOs try to create a bond between the child and his/her sponsor by encouraging them to correspond through and by the exchange gifts on special occasions and festivals, through letters and cards and through arranging meetings between them at regular intervals.

Thus, the monetary relationship between the child and his/her sponsor is sought to be converted in an intimate relationship, based on love and affection. Procedure of sending money to the child is tried to be strengthened by the ties of love and affection.

\[17\] Prayas Brochure.
The sponsorship programmes are a unique way of mobilising local resources for the betterment of children. However, not many people come forward to sponsor a child through NGOs. The sponsorship scheme is not very successful as it is not easy for the NGOs to convince the potential sponsors that their money will be utilised for the stated purpose.

6.8 Establishing Shelter Homes

In order to make available a secure space where street and working children can live, study, play and enjoy their childhood, some NGOs have attempted to provide institutional care in the form of Shelter Homes. In the absence of these Homes, street and working children are forced to spend their nights on pavements or railway station platforms or any public place or open space, where they not only have to brave the harsh weather conditions but also are vulnerable to sexual harassment. Such shelters are of several types:

(a) 24Hours Drop-in-Shelter, where children can drop in any time, avail bathing and toilet facilities, take rest or sleep at night. There are certain formalities and rules with regard to the use of such shelters. For instance, the boys coming to the 24 hour Drop-in-Shelter are observed for one month after which they are admitted in the Shelter. Their educational and medical need is taken care of. The boys who wish to study further are helped in getting admitted to formal schools. Vocational training is also imparted and further the boys are helped in job placement.

(b) Shelter Homes. These are just like homes for shelters and working children. Here complete care of children, right from their nutrition and education to their proper up bringing is taken.
Night Shelter. As the name suggests, its purpose is to provide shelter to children with basic facilities at night, it runs from dusk to dawn. Some organisations like DBS have both a Shelter Home and a Night Shelter. Briefly, I will describe here the DBS Night Shelter. DBS Night Shelter is for those children who do not want to come to the Home since they do not like its disciplined life. It is open from 6 p.m. to 10 a.m. Its daily routine includes bathing, washing, cleaning of the room, recreation, sports, study and dinner. In here, children are also given orientation for 3 hours, in which they are taught social education, literacy and are provided recreational facilities. Such ‘homes away from homes’ are a need for shelterless working children who run away from their homes due to various reasons and are in extremely vulnerable situations.

However, it has certain shortcomings. NGOs may give the best help within the Institution/Homes to the street and working children, but when they are sent out of these closed shelters in the mainstream society, they may feel totally out of place, without any protection and without any place to turn to. Hence, NGOs must make efforts to help such children to settle down in life. The Drop-in-Shelters and Night Shelters, which allow children to work outside and avail of the basic facilities from the shelters, tend to legitimise child labour. Another drawback is that such “institutional care” needs much financial investment for setting them up, and therefore, it is not economically viable to set up such Homes all over the country. Also, the above account leads us to conclude that there exists a dilemma of sorts—either free the children from work and ‘protect’ them or allow them to work and support them to achieve a better quality of life.
6.9 **Raid and Rescue Operations**

Raid and rescue operations are the main strategy adopted by the “radical” NGOs like BMM and SACCS. These activities aim to eliminate child labour from the country and these organisations conduct raids in whichever industries or operations, from where they get information from local populace and release or rescue the children below the age of 14 years working in such occupations. These also include bonded child labour. In its operations, they seek assistance of judiciary, police and the local officials. How BMM conducts raids to rescue child labourers has been described in Chapter 6. Here, I would briefly refer to the raid and rescue operations conducted by SACCS.

SACCS activists try to make their presence felt in areas notorious for the practice of child labour through consistent propaganda. After winning over the confidence of the local population, the relatives of the child are informed. The possibilities of the rescue operations are then worked out in association with the legal bodies/individuals. Often the help of the government machinery is also sought in the process. Efforts are then made to provide the rehabilitatory benefits entitled to them under the various governmental schemes.

Although rehabilitation is a very important component of release and rescue operations, due to governmental apathy and insufficient follow-up by the concerned NGOs, the released workers soon join the labour market.

6.10 **Establishing Vocational-cum-Rehabilitation Centres**

Realising the fact that rescue loses its value without proper rehabilitation, some of the NGOs engaged in releasing children from bondage and from hazardous and non-hazardous occupations feel the need for establishing ‘rehabilitation centres’. The aim of such centres is
to “mitigate the battered feeling of child labourers and provide them with basic education and vocational training along with making them aware of their rights and obligations”. In this context the “Mukti Ashram” set by SACCS needs mention. Established in 1991 for the freed child labourers, this transitory vocational-cum-rehabilitation centre has an intake capacity of 60 trainees at a time. The entire cost, right from bringing these trainees from their villages, provision of food, accommodation, training and returning them back home is borne by the Ashram. The children receive basic literacy, health care and hygiene, social training and vocational training in different trades and crafts. SACCS proudly says “most of the trainees become economically independent in their native villages, besides helping the community to unite and struggle for their rights”.

Such centres are need of the hour but they cater to only a miniscule population of freed child labourers. Also, they require the mobilisation of huge amounts of financial resources.

As long as children continue to be exploited and abused, whether in hazardous industries, in menial and degrading jobs, as bonded labour or as domestic help – such rehabilitative programmes can succeed only in a few cases.

6.11 Sharing Responsibility with the Government

This is a unique attempt of partnership between the government and NGOs. The government invites the NGOs to manage its badly managed Observation Homes or to involve them in operating the telephonic child helpline service for children in distress. For instance, Prayas and SBT have been asked to manage Observation Homes for Destitute or Juvenile
children. Similarly, SBT, Prayas and DBS are operating the child helpline service.\textsuperscript{18}

Prayas took over the non-custodial function of the government-run-custodial home on 1\textsuperscript{st} October 1996 and entered into collaboration with the Government of Delhi in taking care of neglected juveniles. On 1\textsuperscript{st} April 1997, it took over even the custodial function as a pilot project in Delhi. Its activities are – non-formal education for 200 children, vocational training, nutrition, and provision of bedding, clothing and shelter, counselling, regular health check-ups and referral services.

The idea behind such partnership is that NGOs are more sensitive to children and can be more effective in handling children.

\textbf{6.12 Income-generating Activities for Families or Communities}

Income-generating activities for families and communities include support for micro-enterprises, credit schemes and employment training for mothers and or/fathers. They are designed to improve the economic situation of families and communities to reduce the family’s reliance on child labour. Although an important activity, only four out of the seventeen NGOs studied are engaged in such activities. These NGOs include Deepalaya, Bal Sahyog, SSI and CASP. From this, it is obvious that some NGOs like the four mentioned above, adopt multi-pronged strategies, whereas others prefer to be selective in their methods.

Deepalaya is running different skill enhancement and income generation programmes to help the slum dwellers augment their meager incomes and manage their resources well. Monetary assistance is also given to set up business ventures and necessary market tieups are made available. For such purposes, the trade/ventures identified are—

\textsuperscript{18} The Helpline Service has been discussed in detail in Chapter 7.
chalk making units, petty trading and micro-enterprises, embroidery and handicraft units. The NGO has also established corporate linkages to find jobs for the personnel who have successfully undergone training.

On a smaller scale, Bal Sahyog, CASP and SSI is attempting such a programme. While SSI has started an evening adult literacy-cum-savings cooperative, Bal Sahyog provides interest free loans to families of the child labourers to make them self-supporting.

In initiating such activities, questions such as who to target and how, what kind of training to provide in connection with income-generating activities; and how to ensure cost-effectiveness, need to be raised. Regarding cost-effectiveness, income-generating activities are clearly not designed to be welfare schemes, but to give families the tools and skills to escape from poverty. Therefore, when successful, they have a sustainable impact on a whole group of people, not only the targeted child.

6.13 Other Community Development Activities

Community development programmes are often comprehensive including other activities besides income-generation. They are aimed at the introduction of some new idea – be it girls' education, limiting the size of the family, treating girls and boys equally, teaching people to keep their slums neat and clean, helping the community to become self-reliant and slum dwellers in getting basic necessities, like drinking water and toilets.

For any programme on working children to succeed unless one also focuses on the environment in which these children live also needs attention. Communities have to be helped to develop the means, abilities and motivations necessary to meet their own needs. The ultimate aim of community building programmes is to build strong, cohesive
communities capable of achieving self-sufficiency. In this regard, CASP through its community based organisations (CBOs) tries to give extensive training to the people so that they can participate in the development process. CASP considers its success in being able to pull out of the community after the community itself takes charge of the project.

Similarly, objective of Deepalaya is to make its CBOs self-reliant, self-managed and self-sufficient. Its CBOs are nurtured with women trained to play an active role in decision-making bodies. Special programmes for their active participation is organised. Girl child projects, skill training units, thrift and credit for women, mother and child care centres are examples of some of the projects it has taken up. Deepalaya, from the very beginning of its intervention practises the approach of phasing-out and the experience has been encouraging.

Another important community welfare activity is that of family planning programme being run by Angaja Foundation and SBT. Angaja believes that it is important to curtail the number of children being born to parents already overburdened with looking after many others in the family, since fewer children means a better living standard. Angaja has, therefore, taken up the urgent programme of family planning.

Community building programmes have long gestation periods because the kind of communities that are attempted to be built require heightened awareness and a spirit of participation, which is not easy to find especially in urban settings.

6.14 Documentation and Publication

Research, documentation and publication of news items, articles and material on major issues relating to child labour is being done by some of the NGOs, viz., SACCS, Prayas, CRY, CCFCL and Butterflies. In order to promote social awareness on child labour issues, CCFCL, under the
Human Rights Education Programme, sends out a monthly letter to intellectuals, concerned citizens, doctors, lawyers, engineers, businessmen, women executives, media personalities, policy- implementers, trade-unions, environmentalists, feminists, policy makers and social activists.

On the other hand, SACCS, through its publications, like, 'Break the Chains: Save Childhood', 'Rugmark: A Brief Resume of Concept to Reality', and through its regular reports and pamphlets aims to dispel misconceptions relating to child labour and to develop a clear and correct perspective among the masses.

SACCS also undertakes research, which forms an integral part of its activity. It has been undertaking surveys and research work on other aspects of the problem.

CCFCL undertakes action research to collect micro-level information on the situation of child workers in various occupations and to create public opinion through public education programmes especially against the exploitation of girl children, children in hazardous occupations, child prostitutes and street children.

CRY has a Documentation Centre at Mumbai. The Centre collects information on child labour and shares the same with other organisations and individuals working on this issue in order to build a common platform. CRY also encourages other individuals and organisations to set up regional documentation centres to disseminate information to the public.

Research and documentation as well as publication are important activities. Apart from publicising the issue of the child labourer, it highlights the magnitude of the problem and the varieties of ways in which the practice of child labour perpetuates so that appropriate
strategies for the elimination of child labour could be evolved. It tends to explore various aspects of child labour. However, documentation and publication on child labour has limited value in a country where half of the population is illiterate.

6.15 Campaigns/Marches/Demonstrations/Mass Sensitisation

The gravity of the problem of child labour may be publicised in the masses in wider way and masses may be mobilised through campaigns, marches and demonstrations. Six organisations – BMM, SACCS, CRY, Butterflies, CCFCL and Ankur – are engaged in one or the other of such activities. Two of the organisations studied, viz., BMM and SACCS, are also engaged in direct action by bringing pressure on the police to conduct raids and rescue operations as well.

For instance, SACCS has been organising a number of marches to raise the awareness of the masses on the issue of child labour and enlist their support. Several marches had been organised over the years. Some of them are:

- A 1,500 k.m. long march from Bihar to New Delhi in 1993.
- ‘Bharat Yatra’, covering a distance of 5,000 km from Kanyakumari to Delhi in 1994.
- A 1,600 km long Child Labour Elimination March from Calcutta to Kathmandu in 1996.
- ‘Mukti Rath Yatra’ which aims at sensitising the masses against the evils of child labour in the various child labour prone areas through street plays, songs, dramas, etc.

- ‘Global March against Child Labour’ was organised in 1998 in collaboration with many organisations from around the world with the aim of placing the problem of child labour on the top of the world’s agenda.
SACCS has launched various campaigns at national as well as international levels to sensitis various sections of society about the gravity of the problem and to demand concrete action to solve it. Some of the campaigns are:

**Campaigns at the International Level:** SACCS participates in various international fora, UN hearings etc., to draw global attention towards the problem of child labour in the South Asian region and the deplorable conditions of children in servitude. SACCS launched a Global Campaign, 'the carpet consumers awareness campaign' to highlight the plight of child labourers in carpet weaving. SACCS has been supported in this movement by organisations such as 'Bread for the World', 'Terre Des Hommes', Miserior' and German Trade Unions. Together with representatives of carpet industry, Indo-German Export Promotion Programmes (IGEP - a trade promotion organisation), UNICEF, carpet manufacturers (who do not employ children), NGOs, a certification system, named Rugmark Foundation, was developed to certify carpets made without the use of child labour.

**The Rugmark Foundation:** The Rugmark Foundation (RMF) was registered on 5 September 1994 as a private limited company under section 25 of the Indian Companies Act of 1956. The RMF is a non-commercial, independent, international and professional body with legal power to verify, inspect, monitor and subsequently affix a trade mark label, that is Rugmark logo, to the carpets which are not made by children. The Rugmark label provides the importers and consumers a visual guarantee that these carpets are manufactured without child labour. Any carpet manufacturer/exporter who voluntarily agrees to produce carpets free of child labour can apply for critical inspections and issue of licence from RMF. The cardinal criterion is that the manufacturer/exporter should employ only adult labour for the
manufacture of his product. His workplace will be liable for inspections at any time. The firm will apply Rugmark Foundation along with the fees for the issue of licence. Once the Foundation is satisfied that the applicant has fulfilled all the required conditions after inspections and scrutiny, a licence agreement is made out and this would hold legally. After obtaining the licence, the manufacturer/exporter is free to use the Rugmark label in his carpet. To ensure that child labour is not used, there are regular and frequent inspections. The certification criteria covers the following:

- That the applicant is a bonafide dealer, manufacturer or exporter of carpets.
- That the applicant agrees to remove child labour, if any, from his production unit from the date of application.
- That the applicant has furnished an updated list of all the looms, loom owners and other allied work place related to carpet manufacturing. The loom units should have been registered with Carpet Export Promotion Council.
- That the applicant shall certify about the correctness of the list and intimate the RMF in the event of any change. Updating should be done every 6 months to facilitate the inspection team.
- That the applicant shall certify that the carpets submitted for inspection are not produced by children (under 14 years of age).

Another condition that needs to be fulfilled is declaration that applicant will not pay less than the official minimum wages to the loom owners. In turn the loom owner has to submit an affidavit to the applicant indicating that no child is employed in his workplace and that
all the employees are being paid as per minimum wages declared by the Government.

SACCS is presently making further attempts to replicate this certification system in other industries.

Campaigns at the National Level:

(a) School Campaign: In order to motivate the young minds against the evils of child labour, SACCS organises competitions (essay writing, painting, plays, songs and debates in schools) on the topic of child labour. This gives an opportunity to the children to express their views on the prevalence of child labour.

(b) Advocacy with Political Parties: Its main aim is to persuade the political parties to include the issue of eliminating child labour, and imparting free, compulsory education in their election manifestoes.

(c) Campaign for Universal Primary Education: SACCS realises the importance of education as a liberating force. Hence, it has launched a nationwide campaign, ‘Liberation for Education, Education for Liberation’. This is primarily to pressurise the government to take requisite steps to achieve the goal of universal primary education.

(d) Domestic Consumer Boycott Campaign: SACCS organises consumer boycott campaigns from time to time, against industries and establishments employing child labour such as glass and bangles produced in Firozabad (Uttar Pradesh), fireworks of Sivakasi (Tamil Nadu), tea shops, restaurants, garages, etc. The purview of these campaigns is not restricted to industries alone, but also includes households where in people are motivated to boycott the hospitality of such households which employ children as domestic servants.
Despite these attempts made by SACCS and certain other NGOs the practice of child labour persists with impunity. This calls for campaigning and demonstration much more vigourously so as to increase awareness and consciousness among the general public and the policy makers.

6.16 Conducting Workshops and Seminars

Such activities are intended to create awareness about the various aspects of the problem of child labour. SACCS, BMM, CCFCL, Butterflies and Ankur are engaged in such activities. For instance, SACCS has been organising workshops and seminars with participants from various national and international organisations such as ILO, UNICEF, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), and the like, with the aim of building a network among the various organisations. These apart from creating awareness about the various aspects of the problem of child labour, also foster experience sharing and acts as a platform to evolve strategies to effectively deal with the problem.

The strategies of awareness raising by the publication and documentation, campaigns and demonstration and seminars and workshops are all preventive in nature. In the context of resource raising, preventive programmes usually face many problems. The concern for accountability poses a major hurdle in implementing programmes of a preventive nature mainly because the yard sticks for assessing the effectiveness of such programmes not only tend to be invisible but also are not easy to determine. Besides, it is usually more difficult to make a community understand the value of preventive programmes.

6.17 Networking

Networking is another crucial and effective activity. Networking with other like-minded organisations fosters experience sharing and acts as a
platform to evolve strategies to effectively deal with the problem. Networking among organisations strengthens their position in influencing public opinion and finally changing government policy in favour of protecting the rights of children. In theory, a majority of NGOs surveyed, 11 out of 17 viz., BMM, SBT, Ankur, Bal Sahyog, CCFCL, DBS, CRY, Prayas, SACCS19 and Deepalaya are networking with other organisations engaged in the elimination of child labour, protection of children and rehabilitation of the freed child labour. However, there are few forums where these NGOs meet. Also, the mutual cooperation, which is necessary in such an activity, is missing and is replaced by competition among the organisations, hence networking is not successful and does not serve the intended purpose.

6.18 Financial and Non-financial Support to Individuals and Organisations

This is the activity of CRY, which is basically a support organisation. CRY acts as a link between people who have resources of money, skills, materials or time and development workers who need these resources to work with deprived children.

CRY reaches children through the Programme Support Division by giving support, which is both in terms of financial as well as non-financial, to projects, resource centres, and fellowships and by networking.

Here, it is necessary to understand a little about financial and non-financial support of CRY.

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19 In the case of SACCS, networking is very important activity. Being a coalition of 470 NGOs, human rights organisation, trade unions and child rights groups, it is imperative of SACCS to create a network between them to foster optimum results.
**Financial Support:** Funds to the projects are channelised by the Programme Support Division to the small NGOs for the implementation of their projects and to cover their administrative costs.

**Non-Financial Support:** The underlying aim of providing non-financial support by CRY is to enhance the quality of its partner’s work with children. Such support activities include the following:-

(a) Training of project personnel in the critical areas of education, health, project and financial management, income generation programmes and organisational development.

(b) Giving on-going professional guidance in the areas of project planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as constant moral support and encouragement.

(c) Creating communication material such as brochures, documentation of their successful methodologies, etc. to help professionals and NGOs devoted to the protection of children.

(d) Encouraging networking between projects, so that projects not only learn from each other’s experiences but also work together on larger issues.

(e) Providing material support like educational materials, toys, clothes, etc., from the Material Bank in Delhi, for which a nominal community contribution is collected.

(f) Disseminating relevant information on new techniques and methodologies with regard to children’s issues from the documentation centre based in Mumbai.
Activities that CRY supports through its Programme Support Division (PSD)

1. **Projects**: CRY supports small struggling and medium sized projects. Every project supported by CRY is carefully selected, monitored and evaluated by the PSD, CRY supports projects financially, as well as provides non-financial support in terms of training, materials, information, developing communication materials, professional expertise, constancy and networking opportunities. The objective is to improve the quality of the programmes/projects provided to the community. CRY ensures through its monitoring systems, that the money is well spent and impacts the lives of children. Priority is given in the areas of education, health, vocational training, income generation and community development.

   For instance, the M V Foundation (as discussed in chapter 1) is being supported by CRY since 1988. It has been providing financial as well as crucial non-financial assistance, such as training of project staff in capacity building, effective communication and play way method of teaching; providing information support, especially about funding agencies; professional inputs for consolidation and planning for documentation as well as inputs on financial management.

2. **Resource Centres**: CRY supports Resource Centres that have developed, or are likely to develop, expertise in areas which would enhance the quality of child focused development. These Resource Centres serve as a guide to the projects and individuals supported by CRY as well as non-CRY supported initiatives through the development of innovative model teaching methods, materials and training programmes. Priority is given to Resource Centres working in the areas of education and health.
3. **Fellowships** : CRY introduced the Rippan Kapur Fellowship Programme (in memory of its founder) in 1994 to encourage more and more people to take up or remain in child development as a career.

The underlying philosophy behind CRY is the belief that individuals can make a difference in changing our unjust social structure. CRY, too, was started by an individual—Rippan Kapur. India needs many more people to work in the field of social development. However, the lack of financial security and moral encouragement are often the two obstacles preventing individuals to pursue social work.

CRY is awarding Fellowships to individuals all over India who is working with children. The Fellowships enable them to concentrate completely on the task at hand without having to worry about personal finances.

Women and individuals working in rural areas and on the issue of child labour and child prostitution are given special consideration.

Ultimately the success of CRY is linked with the success of its partners in transforming the lives of children.

The kind of support function undertaken by CRY needs huge amount of financial resources and professional expertise. CRY has developed its own strategy of fundraising for meeting the cost. But NGOs cannot undertake this kind of function on a large scale, since they have limited money and manpower. It should be the government that should be performing this role of supporting well-intentioned voluntary effort.

7. **Future Plans**

Almost all the 17 NGOs surveyed, except Ankur, wanted to either carry out their existing work on a much larger scale or take up some new initiatives such as programmes on awareness generation, research into
the untouched aspects of child labour and carry out other rehabilitative works, with the availability of funds. According to Ankur, funds are not going to make any difference to the existing scenario unless there is also a political will, commitment and a vision.

Some interesting and noteworthy future plans deserve mention. For instance, Deepalaya plans to have a Deepalaya Gram Complex, which is envisaged to provide services to 3000 street and working children in a span of 10 years. A comprehensive project proposal has been submitted to the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) with a copy to Directorate of Social Welfare, Government of NCT of Delhi to obtain five acres of land to realise this project for street and working children. According to the Chairperson of Deepalaya, Deepalaya would establish a chain of education centres with life-education and basic education as components.

SSI is trying to buy a land in a village since the land in which it is functioning is illegal and the government officials are time and again asking them to vacate the place they have occupied. It is being offered land near the Indira Gandhi International Airport for Rs. 18 lakhs, but the organisation does not intend to buy at such skyrocketing price. Instead it is planning to buy a 30 Acres of land in a village. Out of this, it would use 2 Acres of land for its project-site, the remaining 28 Acres land would be used as bamboo plantation and the income would be utilised for the projects so that the organisation becomes self-sufficient and self-sustaining.

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20 CCFCL would like to take up a comparative study of China and India, investigate how child labour problem is being tackled in China and through what policies and implementation machinery. Similarly, SACCs wants to undertake child labour studies in those industries such as sports industries in which very little work has been done till now.

21 As told by Ms. Jaya Srivastava, Director of Ankur
The DBS is conducting a research study on children working in ‘dhabas’ (roadside eating-places). In the second stage of this study, it is planning to generate public awareness within a 5-km radius of the ‘dhaba’ through pamphlets, organising seminars for the public to mobilise adults against the idea of child labour. The target of the awareness generation campaign would be the middle classes (who employ children as domestic servants), the public sector, shops and schools, etc.

CASP with the availability of funds intends to do more programmes in the nature of income-generation activities, wants to start “open schools” and “recreation rooms” for child workers.

CCFCL plans to do a comparative study of child labour in India and China. China is the only country, which is comparable to India in terms of its size and population. It would investigate how China has tackled the problem of child labour, what are its policies and how it has implemented them. This research would be an action-oriented one since CCFCL would like to follow-up its research into the policies and implementation of laws/programmes/projects of China in the field of child labour, with a propagation of such policies in India. It would like to implement them in India to tackle the problem of child labour in the hazardous industries.

8. Best Strategies identified by NGOs

According to the NGOs studied, some of the best practices in the field of child labour are as follows:\footnote{The NGOs were asked to list some examples of best practices in the field of child labour in order to know their opinion, and to get an idea as to what theoretically they want to be done for child labourers and what they are practically engaged in.}:

\footnote{The NGOs were asked to list some examples of best practices in the field of child labour in order to know their opinion, and to get an idea as to what theoretically they want to be done for child labourers and what they are practically engaged in.}
1. SACCS and BMM, which are asking for a complete ban on child labour and are engaged in releasing and rehabilitating children out of the work force, consider the work for advocacy for a total ban on child labour and of rehabilitating the existing child labourers, as the best example of work for child labour.23

2. Prayas24, Angaja Foundation, Delhi Brotherhood Society (DBS), Bal Sahyog, considers that package of non-formal education along with vocational training, nutrition, health care, reaching out to the children, motivating them away from work, as good and replicable strategy.

3. The Vidya considers the kind of awareness generation on child labour issue created by CRY through its advertisements as good work.

4. Deepalaya considers the strategy of providing support services to the children who have to work as being done by Butterflies, DBS, Prayas, SBT and Deepalaya itself, as the best.

5. According to the Street Survivors India, the best practice of work is that which do not decide about the children by on its own but involves children in formulating plans for them.


7. Two of the organisations viz., SBT and YWCA's Asha Project considers that all the different NGOs helping child labourers are contributing their best and their work is important in their own way.

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23 Mobile Crèche has praised the work of Swami Agnivesh of BMM.

24 Prayas considers itself as a replicable model.
8. The awareness generation campaign at the global level, which has resulted into the Rugmark Foundation, is a good example of work, according to SACCS.

9. Difficulties Faced

The NGOs under survey listed the following difficulties encountered by them in working in the field of child labour.

1. One of the major difficulties for the NGOs is that they are not clear who constitutes child labour and children under what age groups constitutes child labour.

2. Child labour is viewed as a necessary evil. This sort of pessimistic approach hampers the work of those NGOs who want the total elimination of child labour without waiting for the economic development since it is the child labour which is the cause for poverty and not the other way around. At the same time, people are not willing to accept child labour as exploitation. According to the Director of Ankur, the difficulties they face are the fundamental problems of society and unless the mindset of the common people about the issue of child labour is changed, any work in this regard will not be successful.

3. There is no comprehensive Act banning child labour of any kind. The 1986 Act on the Protection and Regulation of Child Labour has not been revised (as demanded by the NGOs) till now.

4. Another problem is that of improper implementation of the existing laws on child labour due to corrupt and inefficient enforcement

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25 According to the Director of Mobile Crèches, “definition of child labour is very politicised and blown out. We employ our beneficiary children for cleaning up of the creche but are criticised for using child labour. This is because anything and everything is labelled as child labour”.

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agency. There is a lack of political and administrative will because of the nexus between employers, politicians and bureaucrats, which makes it easy for employers of child labourers to bribe the enforcing authorities for letting the child to work. Also there is a vested interest in employing children for the employers, since children can be coaxed, can be made to work for meager sums, which prompts the employers to engage children into work. And thus, the problem perpetuates.

5. NGOs also complain of the failure by the Government to understand their intervention. The government adopts a non-participatory approach and does not invite the NGOs at the policy planning stage.

6. For the NGOs, there is insufficient information on the best strategies or examples of work being done for the prevention of child labour, because of not being able to participate in major international forums where there could be an exchange of views and experiences.

7. The prevailing atmosphere of insensitivity towards the rights and needs of the working children by police, employers, government officials, social workers and the general public, especially the middle classes, hampers the work of NGOs. Those NGOs that are working with street children have problems due to the unsympathetic attitude of the police officials. Police harass these children; beat them up, and charge them for crimes, which they have not committed. When the street educators and other staff go there for intervention, the police do not simply listen to them, are rude, argue, do not talk with respect and sometimes, even, keep the staff in its custody for no genuine reasons.

8. Illiteracy is a major problem. As the parents are uneducated they do not understand the value of education for their children and thus it is
difficult for the NGOs to motivate people to send their children to school.

9. Proper rehabilitation of child labour is a difficult task and it is not a part of the Government Programmes. There is also the difficulty of not being able to give a viable atmosphere to the children after they complete their education and training. The level of literacy provided by the NGOs are not recognised by the Government which demands Matriculation or Intermediate Certificates for its Diploma Courses.

10. Voluntarism in field of child labour has proved to be a failure, since the volunteer social workers come and go according to their priorities, but the children whom these NGOs are trying to help remains in the same situation.

11. There is also a lack of efficient, committed and humane social workers as staff, who are willing to suffer with the child and be able to develop confidence in them. There is more of career orientation, people come only for jobs and on getting better opportunities they leave the organisation.

12. A major problem faced by the NGOs is that of funding; there is a lack of sufficient funding for the running of the project till its completion. There is irregularity and red tapism in the release of funds by the government. Also the funding agencies gives funds for a short period; as a result the NGOs work in an atmosphere of uncertainty about the continuation of their projects.

13. For a supporting agency such as CRY, the major difficulty is of not being able to take any strong step regarding the project since it is only the support agency and not the implementing agency.
14. For organisations which are based in slums, there are difficulties of surviving in a slum environment since such organisations have to pay for those social workers who have come before them and made false promises about working with them and improving their conditions of life. The General Secretary of Street Survivors India, summed up these difficulties in the following words, “there are many difficulties of surviving in the slum environment. The slum has a politics of its own, there is criminalisation, politicians have their own stakes in the slums. Slum dwellers are suspicious of every outsider. They do not respect anybody just because of their being educated or being well dressed. One has to pay for everybody (social workers and politicians) who came here, made promises and did not deliver the goods. Since education is always associated with justice, the local dons and criminals fear that if the slum dwellers become educated, questions would come up which would require answers, also they would stand up against exploitation. When we work here and gain people’s confidence, the innocent people, who have till now been living under constant fear, feel that now they have at least somebody who can listen to them and fight for them. By getting involved in people’s problems, with the real life issues, we come face to face with anti-social elements of the slums. In this kind of a tussle, our school has been demolished twice. The idea of simply reading and writing does not appeal to the people. Talking of motivation in the principled term does not work. Involvement in the day-to-day practical life issues is the biggest strategy for motivating people”.

15. The organisations working with the street children and operating at the street level itself have the problem of invisibility. For instance, Butterflies do not have Shelter Homes where institutional care could be provided. It works at the ground level in the slum itself. Because of
inaccessibility to its activities, there are fewer funding agencies to fund its projects.

16. At the same time, a very low priority is given to street children by the government. Street children are most affected from the environment, in which they work and live. Life has very little to offer: street peddling, street warfare, begging or theft. Due to their misuse for illegal and immoral work, such as smuggling, prostitution, and so on, their personality development is impaired and suffer from character-disorder, a disability which cannot be seen visually. Hence, there is not much sympathy for them as is the case with, for instance, the disabled children. Out of the 27 priority areas of work in the field of children, street children have been accorded the 23rd priority. The work for helping such children requires sensitivity from the police, employers, the government and the general public, which is often lacking. All runaways working children have the basic requirement of secured spaces and a secure childhood. Neither the different organisations perceive these needs and do work in this area nor do our cities have the required infrastructure to cope with the needs of street and working children.

10. Summary

The organisations studied differ in their opinion regarding total elimination of child labour and this accounts for the diversity of aims and approaches to the problem. For instance, while BMM and SACCS aim at the elimination of child labour and restoring to all children the right to primary education, Butterflies, SBT, SSI do not want an immediate ban on all forms of child labour since they believe without work poor children face starvation. I would like to label the first category of NGOs as "radical" and the second category of NGOs as "protectionist", since the former group wants to alter the social structure and create one
in which there is no child labour, while the latter wants to help the child labour within the existing setup by regulating their working conditions and fulfilling their basic needs of education and health care.

Advocates of the strategy of putting an outright ban on child labour system believes that such radical action is needed when a section of the society continuous to be socially and economically exploited. They view child labour as a part of the larger system of inequality and exploitation present in the Indian society. “Radical” NGOs believe that it is not sufficient to just providing relief to the child labourers. One has to strike at the very root cause of the problem of child labour. In order to achieve this, besides releasing, rescuing and rehabilitating child labourers, these NGOs get engrossed in reforming the existing unequal structure of the society by fighting against the social problems like the caste system, the bonded labour system and alcoholism, that causes and perpetuates child labour.

The “protectionist” organisations believe that the working children need support to meet their educational, nutritional, health and vocational needs. They also believe that these children need skills and information necessary to earn a living wage and fight for their rights to survive with dignity. These organisations, just like the “radical” organisations, consider child labour as bad and exploitative. However, their strategy of dealing with the problem differs significantly. They, instead of joining together to create a revolution in the society against child labour, want to wait for the situation when child labour is totally eliminated and until then, they prefer to fulfill the working children’s needs of “food, security, health, love and education, a place to play and per chance to dream”.

These “protectionist” NGOs have the stereotypical notion about the prevalence of child labour. Poverty is recognised as one of the main
causes of child labour, since children are often required to make significant monetary or labour contributions to their families. That poverty has not deterred other countries in eliminating child labour has been shown earlier in this chapter. Besides poverty, the tradition of child labour is a strong incentive for the continuation of child labour— for both employers and parents frequently do not see anything greatly wrong in the traditional practice of child labour. Also, there are many shortcomings in the education system of our country that helps perpetuate child labour. Schools may not be available near home; curricula and teaching may be of poor quality and do not provide useful labour market skill. Given these ground realities, it is felt that any attempt at banning of child labourers, without eliminating the underlying reasons for the supply of child labour, is bound to fail as such dismissed children are likely to end up in another job. Thus, it is being increasingly recognised by most of the NGOs studied, except BMM and SACCS, (which want an outright ban on the system of child labour), that while the abolition of child labour should be an overriding objective of the public policy, sustained efforts should be carried to provide protection and assistance to the children who are at work.

However, there is a basic similarity among the projects taken up by the NGOs, in their conception of child worker’s needs and the ways of meeting them. The policies and programmes are conceived with a clear appreciation of, and certain assumptions about, the role of the child in a developing society and the many constraining factors with which the child has to cope. Almost all of the NGOs studied view the child workers as having several needs for their emotional, intellectual and physical development. The approach taken, therefore, is one, which aims at meeting the developmental needs of the child through a package of services, ranging from recreation to participation in community life.
The survey has also revealed that the NGOs are greatly dependent on institutional funding sources particularly the foreign contributions and governmental funding. This dependency leads to an atmosphere of uncertainty among the NGOs about the continuation of their projects and plans. NGOs surveyed have not been able to become self-sustainable in funding. They have tried to generate resources by way of motivating the community to sponsor their target children. But very few people come forward to sponsor a child. NGOs are not able to successfully convince and guarantee the people that their donations, if channelised through them, will be utilised properly.

The NGOs surveyed also faces the problem of proper rehabilitation of child labourers. Through their NFEs and their shelter homes, they try to protect and mainstream these children with the society, but they are not able to give a viable atmosphere to them after they complete their education and training. At the same time, these NGOs integrate their NFE children with the children of the government schools, in spite of the fact that the standard of education in the latter is very poor, and that these children soon unlearn whatever they have learnt in the NFE centres of these NGOs.

The “radical” NGOs which are engaged in rescuing child labourers from the clutches of their exploitative masters do not pay similar importance to the rehabilitation of the rescued children, who in turn, again join the labour market. This is because of the governmental apathy as well as the improper follow-up of the rescued children by these NGOs.

These “radical” NGOs are not able to achieve their goals since the general attitude of the masses is an acceptance of child labourers as a necessary evil. There is insensitivity towards the rights and needs of the working children by police, employers, government functionaries, social workers and the general public. Part of the fault lies with the NGOs
themselves who have not been able to sufficiently sensitise the masses against the evil of child labour system and its consequences for the concerned child labourers and the society. They have also not been able to make the issue banning of child labour on a non-negotiable agenda with respect to the government sector.

Despite these limitations, what we see from the analysis of the activities of the NGOs is that all these organisations are doing their best in their own way by making use of the limited resources at their disposal. They are trying to ameliorate the conditions of working children but, with a few exceptions, are not making a dent at the underlying causes that lead to child labour. Also they are working in isolation, seldom coming together to share their strategies, experiences and achievements with others. Thus, there is a need of some sort of a co-ordination among the NGOs in order to strengthen dispersed activities and direct efforts into commonly agreed action programmes.